Introductions

Attendance: Donna Moore, Essie Macalister, Lasonne Hopkins, Maria Hernandez, Martha Wilson, Charles Lery, JE Terrel, Sarah Agamah, Guadalupe Valdina, Makeda Covtec, Nakasha Barlow, Pastor Tyson, Chevon Townsend, Stacci Diggs Cecil Redditt, Josephine Robinson

Updates

Ms. Moore brought everyone up to speed with the work LAN 67 is doing with the efforts to become an Immersion Site. The Proposal Letter to become an Immersion Site was sent out to the director of DCFS, and a response was received that deferred communication to Pete Digre. The response was not clear as to whether LAN 67 would be made an Immersion Site, but Ms. Moore shared that at the PEP Steering Committee meeting they were told there is strong support for Immersion Sites in the Department. However, the Immersion Site for Cook County would not go into effect until nine months from now, per Jacqui Coyler the Regional Administrator.

Considering the feedback from the Director and the Department, Ms. Moore proposed that an alternative would be to create a new proposal that would involve a community based DCFS family resource center that will be housed in schools. Ms. Moore opened the floor for discussion and feedback.

* One suggestion was to contact our representatives to partner with us. La Shawn Ford and other politicians active in the community may be able to have some influence in bringing about the Immersion Sites sooner.
* Another suggestion was to look to Healthy Families Sankofa and build on the work that is already being done there by providing more funding to this site.
* An additional suggestion built on the idea of creating an one stop shop in the schools, and using these resources to enhance the services being provided by having health education, early intervention, mental health services etc. Area codes 60624, 60651, and 60644 were identified as potential target areas to focus on existing service partnerships with schools and programs such as, Family Focus. Working within the schools would allow us to reach the wider community as well.
* The Community Schools focus was mentioned as the model for Wrap Around service development. Data is required to show what the needs are to support our case. The overall goal would be to connect the resource centers so that there is a broad network of community centers that people can access.

It was agreed that waiting 9 months for an Immersion Site was not a feasible option, as the resources for the community were needed now. Moving forward, it was determined that a meeting should take place on October 12th to brainstorm about ways community resources could become connected. It was decided that everyone should send in what the resources they have available to contribute to Sarah, and then after the next meeting send a new proposal to Pete Digre.