



# Michigan Foster Care Review Board Program

2021 Annual Report



Child Welfare Services  
State Court Administrative Office  
Michigan Supreme Court



## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is to engage citizen volunteers to review and evaluate permanency planning processes and outcomes for children and families in the Michigan foster care system. Based on the data collected through case review, the Foster Care Review Board advocates for systemic improvements in areas of child safety, timely permanency, and family and child well-being.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Foster Care Review Board will be viewed and valued by the courts, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, private child-placing agencies, the legislature, tribes, and the citizens of Michigan as a credible source of information and data on the performance of the child welfare system. In addition, citizens of the state will use the data to shape public policy and promote awareness regarding Michigan's foster care system.

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## Background and Purpose

The Michigan Legislature created the Foster Care Review Boards Act in 1984 (MCL 722.131-140) as a means to ensure additional oversight of child protective proceedings, with the goal of promoting safety and well-being in the foster care system, and to help cases progress towards timely permanency.

The Act requires the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) to provide independent third-party review of foster care cases. The FCRB also hears appeals by foster parents who believe that children are being unnecessarily moved from their care. The FCRB program includes 12 regional boards and is housed within the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) in an effort to support juvenile courts in fulfilling their responsibility of monitoring the care and supervision of children placed into foster care, as well as the agency's efforts to ensure safe, permanent homes for children as quickly as possible.

SCAO establishes the program's framework, including uniform policies and procedures, criteria for the selection of cases to be reviewed, and local citizen review board membership recruitment and training. In addition, SCAO maintains a statewide advisory committee to assess needs within the foster care system and make recommendations to address those needs. Recommendations are published in this annual report to the public, the legislature, and the governor.

## Annual Report Requirements

MCL 722.139 requires the State Court Administrative Office to publish an annual report of the FCRB program that includes all of the following information:

- A summary, with applicable quantitative data, of the activities and functioning of each local review board.
- A summary, with applicable quantitative data, of the activities and functioning of the aggregate of all local review boards.
- An identification of problems that impede the timely placement of children in permanent placements, and recommendations for improving the timely placement of children in permanent placements.
- The statistics and findings regarding its reviews of permanent wards, and identification of any barriers to permanency.

**Note from the State Court Administrative Office  
Child Welfare Services Director, Kelly Wagner**



Thank you for your interest in Michigan's 2021 Foster Care Review Board Annual Report! 2021 was another busy year for the FCRB Program, with 17 new members joining the boards. We thank those who retired after significant commitment and contributions to the children and families of Michigan, and welcome our new board members!

This annual report reflects the numbers, statistics, and scope of work conducted by board members and program staff throughout 2021, but it is important to note that data alone cannot show the real impact of the FCRB program. Throughout 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impose continuous uncertainty as we prepared for the virus's second, then third major waves but the board members remained incredibly committed, providing consultative recommendations for 482 children in foster care, and investigating 83 foster parent appeals.

Unknown prior to the pandemic, we learned that using remote meeting technology can greatly increase participation from interested parties. This leads to more thorough and informative discussions, resulting in better-informed recommendations from the boards. In addition, board members actively participated in the development of new continuous quality improvement processes to ensure we continued to provide high quality service to our stakeholders.

I am grateful to the FCRB board members and program staff for their collective dedication to helping children and families in the Michigan foster care system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly Wagner." The signature is written in a cursive style.



## FCRB Board Members

The State Court Administrative Office would like to express its gratitude to the volunteer board members and Advisory Committee members from throughout the state for their time and dedication in helping to ensure that children are safe and well cared for while in the state foster care system, and that their cases continuously move towards permanency in a timely manner. As shown in the chart below, 25 of the 74 board members have volunteered for the FCRB program for at least 10 years or longer.

Region 1	Year Joined	Region 2	Year Joined	Region 3	Year Joined
Emily Barrett	2022	Dana Bennett	2021	Colin Buell	2011
Brenda Boyd	1990	Fonda Brewer	2017	Ginger Coleman	2021
Katrina M. Dixon	2001	Diane Dugan	2021	James Goodwin	2021
George Eason	2002	Thye Fischman	2021	Gary Holik	2006
Michael Eberth	2001	Rika Gaylord	2019	Gary Madden	2006
Michael Greene	2013	Jackie Igafo-Te'O	2021	Shirley Norman	2005
Carolyn Harris-Render	2022	Kelly Schafer	2021	Sharon Norman	2022
Darryl V. Hunter	2001	Mark Jackson	2021		
Darryl Lewis	2011	Janet Olsen	2016		
Marie Lumpkin	2022	Egypt Otis	2021		
Lashawna Morman	2016	Darshelle Pierce	2020		
Cameasha Muhammad	2019	Stephanie Williams	2007		
Elizabeth Oliver	1988				
Paul Smith	2021				
Rita Smythe	2009				
Region 4	Year Joined	Region 5	Year Joined	Region 6	Year Joined
George Botbyl	2021	Jan Foxen	2004	Lorette Adams	2019
Marcia Jablonski	2016	Merrill Graham	2016	Lynn Aronoff	2019
Michael Mondoskin	2021	Meryl Greene	2008	Carol Borich	1996
Carol Morse	2019	Daniel Groce	1995	May Boshoff	2019
Barbara Russ	2013	Regina Jones	2021	John Dodge	2019
Shannon Taylor	2021	Kelley Kellis	2021	Robert Goldenbogen	2000
Mary Weyand	2019	Brandon Nichols	2021	Eugene Groesbeck	2000
Glenn Wing	2007	Renee Orr	2019	Monica Hunt	2019
Kim Wing	2019	Mary Roberts	2020	Allison Mercer	2019
		Lisa Rodriguez	2012	Misti Rice	2021
		Tina Ryznar	2021	Rosemary Sear	2006
		Dennis Schaaf	2009	Ranya Shbeib	2021
		Lucinda Wakeman	2005	Shelley Valiier	2019
				Jerry Webb	2013

## FCRB Advisory Committee

MCL 722.133 requires SCAO to maintain a statewide advisory committee consisting of representatives from child care organizations, local boards, and other child welfare stakeholders to review the needs of the foster care system and to make recommendations to the appropriate groups and agencies.

Name	Title	Organization
Lara Bouse	Co-President	Fostering Forward Michigan
Hon. Karen Braxton	Circuit Court Judge	3rd Judicial Circuit Court, Family Division
Fonda Brewer	Ingham County	FCRB Region 2 Board Member
George Eason	Wayne County	FCRB Region 1 Board Member
Michael Eberth	Wayne County	FCRB Region 1 Board Member
Jan Foxen	Kent County	FCRB Region 5 Board Member
Rika Gaylord	Livingston County	FCRB Region 2 Board Member
Sarah Goad	Foster Care Program Manager	MDHHS
Michael Greene	Wayne County	FCRB Region 1 Board Member
Elizabeth Henderson	Court Analyst	Court Improvement Program
Terri Henrizi	Education Coordinator	Assoc. for Children's Mental Health
Monica Hunt	Oakland County	FCRB Region 6 Board Member
Gary Madden	Manistee County	FCRB Region 3 Board Member
Rubina Mustafa	Legal Guardian ad Litem	Michigan Children's Law Center
Shirley Norman	Saginaw County	FCRB Region 3 Board Member
Michelle Parra	Program Manager	Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
Seth Perksy	Deputy Director	MDHHS Office of Family Advocate
Kadi Prout	Director of Child Welfare Policy	MI Federation for Children & Families
Janet Reynolds Snyder	Executive Director	MI Federation for Children & Families
Barb Russ	Wexford County	FCRB Region 4 Board Member
Patty Sabin	President/CEO	Michigan CASA
Suzanna Shkreli	Ombudsman	Office of Children's Ombudsman
Lucinda Wakeman	Branch County	FCRB Region 5 Board Member
Jerry Webb	Lapeer County	FCRB Region 6 Board Member
Glenn Wing	Marquette County	FCRB Region 4 Board Member
Jennifer Wrayno	Director, Business Service Center 5	MDHHS

## 2021 FCRB Program Snapshot

<b>Total Number of Foster Care Cases Reviewed:</b>	<b>250 cases involving 482 children</b>
<b>Total Number of FCRB Case Reviews:</b>	<b>144 meeting days</b>
<b>Total Number of Foster Parent Appeals:</b>	<b>83 investigations</b>

Michigan's 12 Foster Care Review Boards reviewed 250 foster care cases, which included 482 children. Once identified for review, the boards are required to review the foster care case every six months until permanency is achieved.

### Requested Case Reviews

- 64 cases reviewed in 2021 were cases in which an interested party specifically requested FCRB review.
- The top reason for requesting FCRB review was based upon the child not achieving timely permanency.

### Case Reviews for Children Awaiting Adoption (“MARE” cases)

- 56 cases were selected for review involving 98 children.

### Random Selection Cases

- 130 randomly selected cases of children who have been placed in foster care for less than 90 days.
- Focused on review of the initial case service plan to ensure it is tailored to meet the unique needs of the family.

### Top Systemic Issues

- Parents unwilling to participate in or utilize services offered (134 children)
- Frequent changes in child's placement (89 children)
- LGAL not actively involved in representation of the children (88 children)

### Recommendations

- 1,705 recommendations were made related to child well-being issues
- 255 recommendations were made related to permanency issues
- 70 recommendations were made related to child safety issues

### Foster Parent Appeals

- 83 foster parent appeals conducted

### Program Structure

- 6 statewide regions
- 26 Advisory Committee members
- 12 regional boards (2 per SCAO region)
- 74 volunteer board members



## Foster Parent Appeals: The FCRB’s Role in Reducing Unnecessary Placement Moves

To reduce the number of placement moves children experience while in foster care, with certain exceptions<sup>1</sup>, [MCL 712A.13b](#) allows foster parents to appeal the agency’s decision to move a child or children from their home to the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB). The FCRB is responsible for determining if the placement move is in the child’s best interest so that children in foster care do not experience multiple placement moves, which has been shown to have negative, long-term consequences.

The law requires the FCRB to investigate eligible foster parent appeals within seven days of receiving an eligible appeal request. A report must be provided to the court, or to the Michigan Children’s Institute (MCI) Superintendent when parental rights have been terminated, within three days after the investigation stating whether or not the FCRB determined the move was in the child’s best interests.

If the FCRB agrees with the agency that the placement change is in the child’s best interests, the appeal is concluded. If, however, the FCRB agrees with the foster parent and determines that the move is **not** in the child’s best interests, the court or the MCI have up to 14 days to make the final decision about the proposed move. This quick turn-around time ensures that the proposed placement move is investigated and decided quickly.

In 2021, the FCRB held 83 foster parent appeals. A review of previous year’s data shows the average number of foster parent appeals from 2017-2021 was 107.

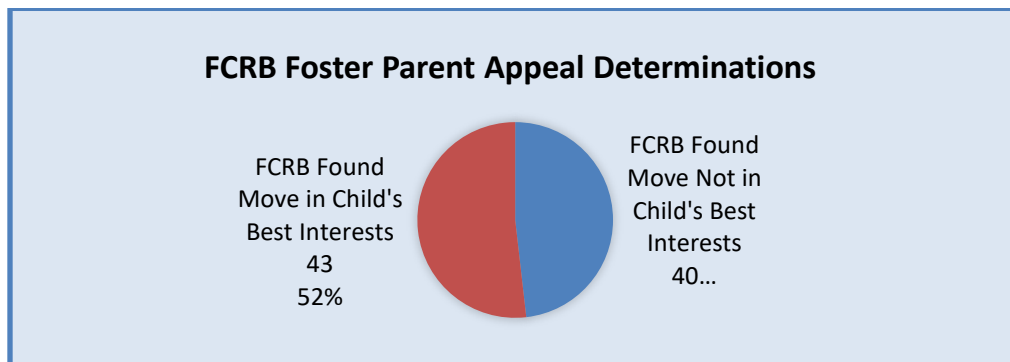
Year	Foster Parent Appeals
<b>2021</b>	<b>83</b>
2020	74
2019	127
2018	125
2017	126
<b>Average Number of Appeals per year</b>	<b>107</b>

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<sup>1</sup> A foster parent may not appeal a placement move if: (1) the foster parent requests or agrees to the move, (2) the court orders the move, (3) the change in placement is less than 30 days after the child’s removal from home, or (4) the change in placement is less than 90 days after the child’s removal from home and the new placement is with a relative.

## FCRB Foster Parent Appeal Determinations

In 2021, the FCRB investigated 83 foster parent appeals. In the 83 appeal determinations, the FCRB supported the agency's decision to move the child in 43 cases (52 percent of the time). The FCRB determined the move was not in the child's best interests in 40 cases (48 percent of the time), requiring the court or MCI Superintendent to make the final decision on the placement move.

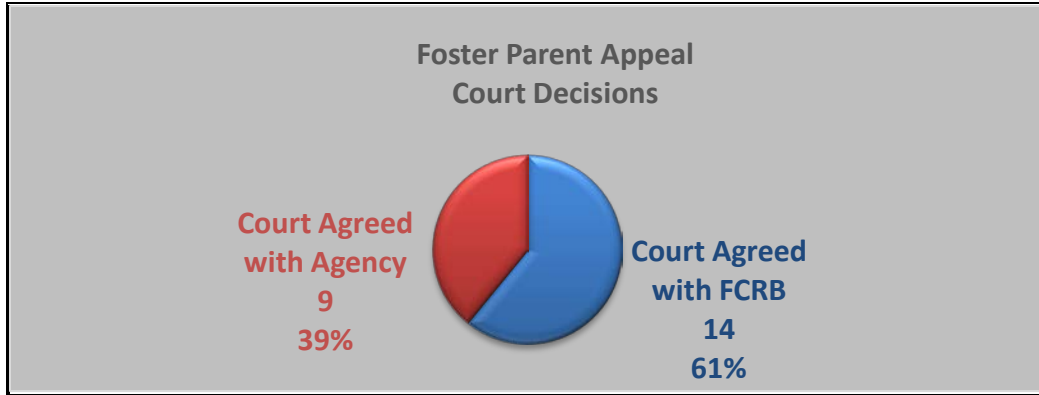


### Final Foster Parent Appeal Decisions by Court or MCI Superintendent

When the FCRB finds that the proposed placement move is not in the child's best interests, for temporary court wards, the law requires the court to hold a placement review hearing between 7 – 14 days of the FCRB's finding. In foster parent appeals involving permanent court wards, the MCI Superintendent must make the final placement decision within 14 days of the FCRB's finding.

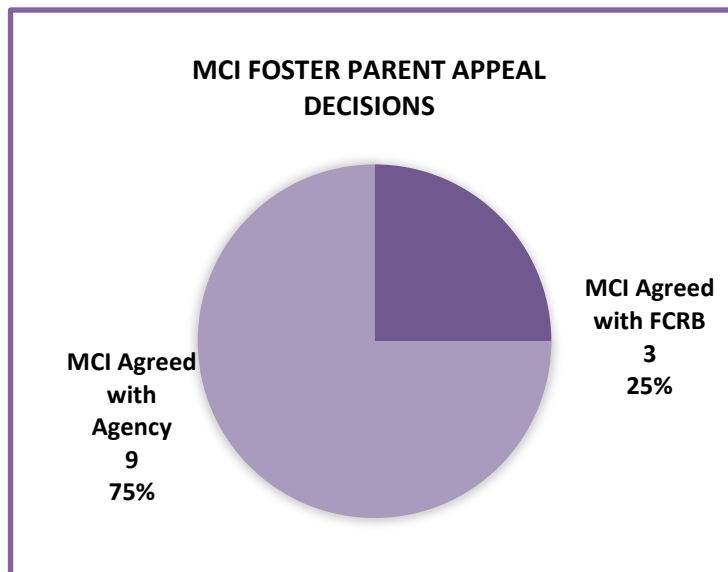
Of the 40 foster parent appeals requiring a final court or MCI decision in 2021, the courts held 23 placement review hearings and the MCI made placement decisions for 12 permanent court wards. For the remaining 5 cases, no final disposition was needed as the placement was preserved following the FCRB appeal investigation and determination.

As reflected in the chart on the following page, in the 23 foster parent appeals decided by the court, the courts agreed with the FCRB that the proposed move was not in the child's best interests in 14 cases (61 percent), thereby ensuring those children were not unnecessarily moved from their foster homes.

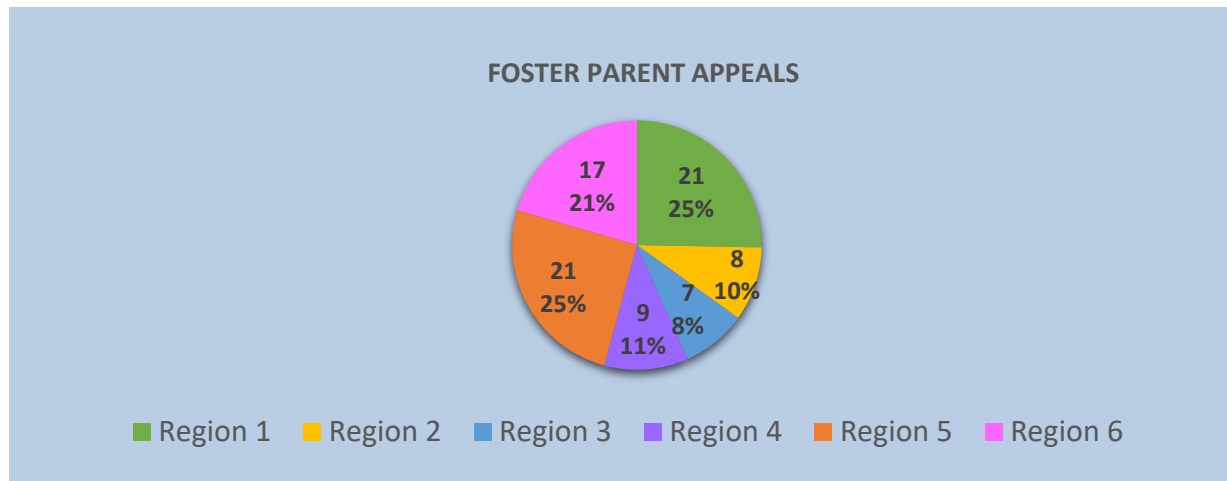


### MCI Superintendent Appeal Decisions

In 3 out of the 12 foster appeals that the MCI Superintendent decided in 2021 (25 percent), the MCI Superintendent agreed with the FCRB determination that the move was not in the child’s best interests. While 25 percent may seem like a low percentage, it is significant in that oftentimes the MCI Superintendent already agreed to the placement move prior to the appeal. This suggests that the FCRB appeal process is effective at ensuring additional consideration of children’s placement moves by the MCI Superintendent.



## 2021 Foster Parent Appeal Information by Region



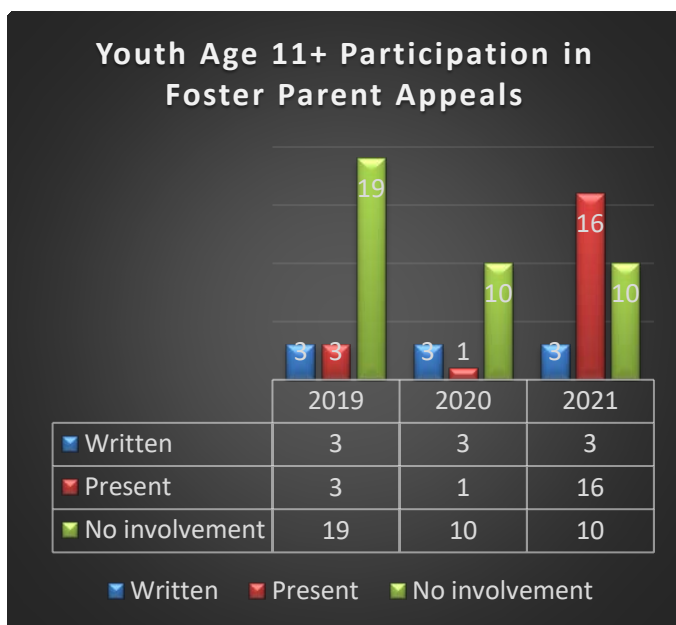
<b><u>FCRB Region</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>	<b><u>3</u></b>	<b><u>4</u></b>	<b><u>5</u></b>	<b><u>6</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
<b>No. of Appeals</b>	21	8	7	9	21	17	83
<b>FCRB Agreed with the Foster Parent - move not in child's best interests</b>	16	6	2	4	5	7	40
<b>FCRB Agreed with the Agency – move was in child's best interests</b>	5	2	5	5	16	10	43
<b>Court Agreed with the Foster Parent / FCRB decision</b>	4	3	1	2	2	2	14
<b>Court Agreed with the Agency</b>	4	0	0	1	0	4	9
<b>Court Was Not Held</b>	1	1	1	0	2	0	5
<b>MCI Agreed with the Foster Parent/ FCRB decision</b>	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
<b>MCI Agreed with the Agency</b>	5	1	0	1	1	1	9

## Youth Voice in Foster Parent Appeals

The FCRB believes that foster youth should be involved in decisions about their lives and can provide keen insight to decision-makers about their quality of care and wishes for permanency. Over the past few years, the FCRB has focused on increasing youth participation in FCRB case review meetings and foster parent appeals. The perspectives of the youth, and hearing from them directly about their needs and wishes, is very beneficial to the citizen review process as it helps the FCRB craft more meaningful recommendations to the courts, agencies, and families.

In 2019, program staff began collecting data on youth participation in foster parent appeals for youth age 11+. The focus on children age 11+ is based on the Michigan Court Rule 3.921(B)(2)(i) requirement that children age 11+ are entitled to receive notice of court hearings. Collecting and maintaining consistent data has allowed the program to determine a baseline of performance on youth engagement from which to set goals to improve upon, as well as begin to identify potential trends in youth participation in court hearings and FCRB meetings.

As shown in the chart below, youth participation has risen significantly since the FCRB began holding remote meetings via Zoom. In 2021, 19 youth age 11 and older (66 percent) participated in foster parent appeals compared to 24 percent participation in 2019. The FCRB’s Increasing Youth Engagement Workgroup is looking at strategies to further increase youth voice and encourage their participation in FCRB meetings. The workgroup will consult with the SCAO-CWS Youth Advocate, as an expert with lived foster care experience who can ensure the youth perspective is authentically represented in their recommendations. The Michigan Court Improvement Program (CIP) also has targeted projects to improve youth voice in foster care, which makes this an important cross-over priority issue for both programs to collaborate on.



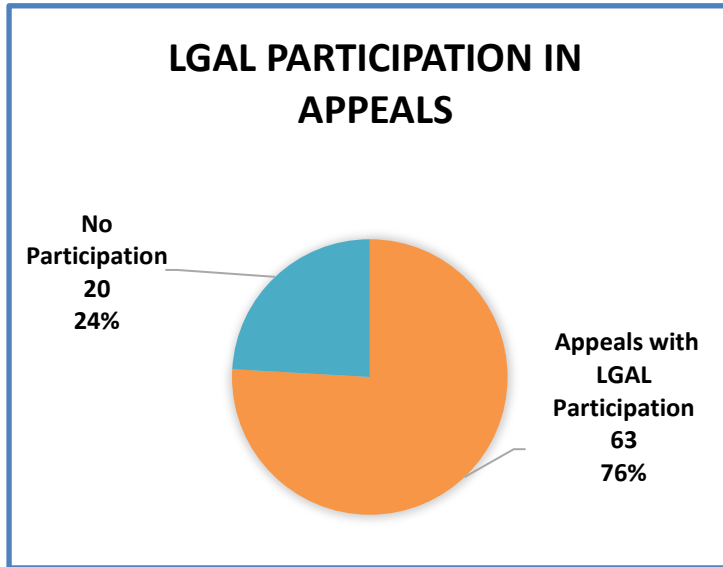
**2021:**  
**Total # of Appeals** 83  
**Appeals with Youth Participation** 19

**Youth Age 11 +**  
**Number of Appeals with Youth Age 11+** 29  
**Type of Participation:**  
 Written Statement 3  
 Present at Appeal 16  
 No Involvement 10



## Lawyer-Guardian Ad Litem Participation in Foster Parent Appeals

In 2021, Lawyer-Guardians Ad Litem (LGALs) participated in 76 percent of foster parent appeals, either by providing written information to the Boards (24 percent), attending the appeal meeting (27 percent), or both (25 percent). LGAL input in foster parent appeals is a critical component of the Board’s determination as to whether the placement move is in the child’s best interests.



**Total # of Appeals 83**  
**Appeals with LGAL Participation 63**

Written Statement	20
Present at Appeal	22
Present and Written	21
No Involvement	20

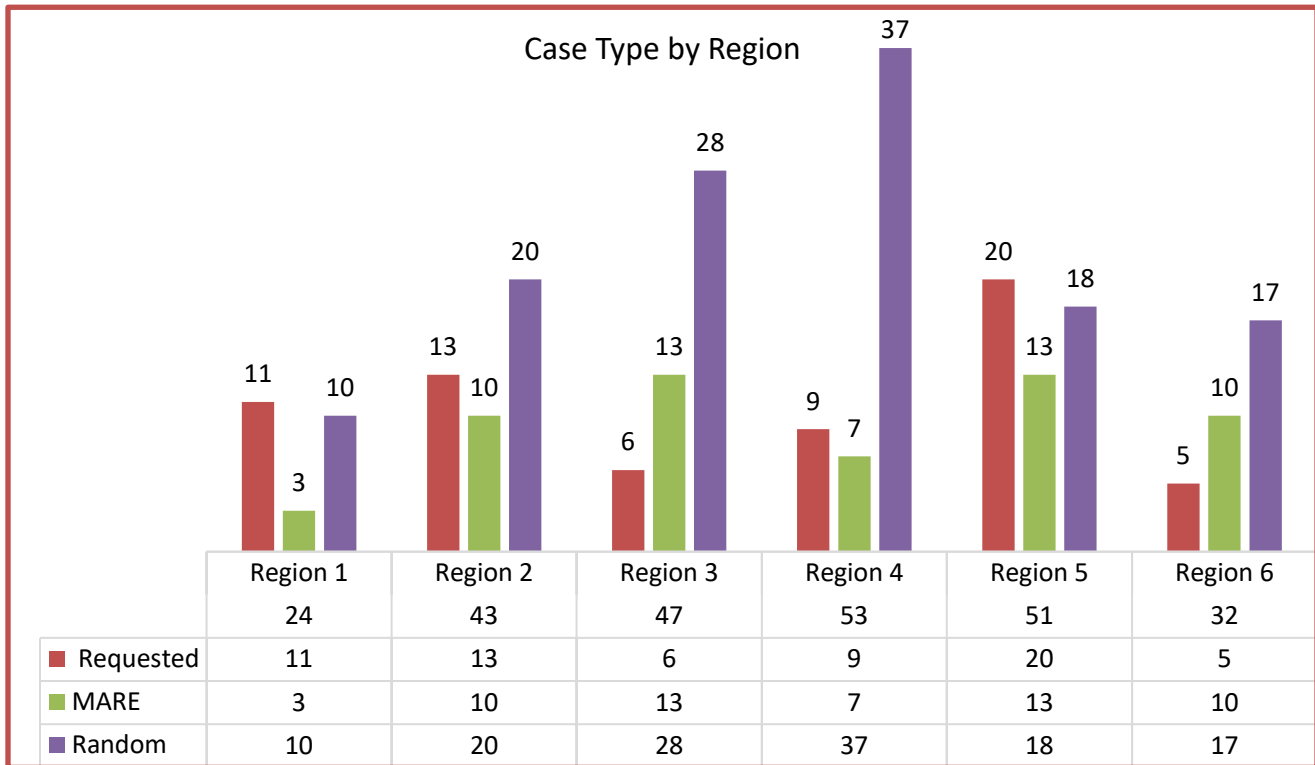
## FCRB Case Reviews: Ensuring Children Achieve Timely Permanency

Foster Care Review Board members serve on one of 12 regional boards within the 6 SCAO regions (see page 20 for a map of the SCAO regions). The boards meet monthly to review foster care cases that are either referred to the FCRB for review (requested) or randomly selected. Once a case is identified for review, the FCRB continues to review the case until the child achieves permanency and the case is closed or when the person requesting the review states that further review is no longer necessary as their reasons for requesting review have been rectified.

Board members carefully read case material to prepare for the case review meetings. During the meeting, the boards then engage in facilitated dialogue to gather input from various interested parties, with a focus on the children's safety, permanency, and well-being prior to issuing a report to the court and agency with clear and articulate recommendations. Most boards have five permanent board members, and most regions have additional alternate members designated only for foster parent appeals or who serve when a permanent board member is unavailable.

The chart below identifies the number of case reviews by region and by the case selection type. Once a case is selected for review, the Board continues to review it every six months until permanency is achieved or the requesting party no longer wishes for it to be reviewed. Cases selected from the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) are randomly-selected cases of **permanent court wards** that the Boards are required to review pursuant to MCL 722.137(1)(g), which includes:

- (i) Children who are registered with MARE and who have been on hold status for not less than 12 months;
- (ii) Children who have not been registered with MARE, have been permanent wards for not less than 6 months, and do not have a documented permanency plan in place; and
- (iii) Children who are less than 12 years of age and have been listed in the MARE photo listing book for more than 6 months and for whom no family has been identified.



**TOTAL Number of Cases Reviewed**      **250**  
**Cases Requested for Review**      **64 (26%)**  
**MARE Cases Reviewed**      **56 (22%)**  
**Randomly Selected Cases**      **130 (52%)**

### Requested Case Reviews

A local family court, Department of Health and Human Services, private child placement agency, parent, child, parent attorney, LGAL, tribe, foster parent, relative caregiver, CASA or other professional involved with a child in foster care may request a case be reviewed by a regional board. The identity of the party requesting the case is kept confidential. In 2021, the top requestors for FCRB case review were Parents and Foster Parents/Relative Caregivers, with **23 total new requested cases** accepted by the program.

The requests for FCRB case review typically include several issues. The top four reasons for case review requests in 2021 were:

- 1) Child not achieving timely permanency = **25**
- 2) Well-being concerns for the child = **13**
- 3) Safety concerns for the child = **13**
- 4) Case management concerns = **5**

## LGAL Participation in Case Reviews

The LGAL serves as the independent representative for the child’s best interests, and Michigan law (MCL 712A.17d) outlines their minimum duties. Some of the requirements include conducting an independent investigation, and meeting with the child before court hearings. The Boards find information from LGALs very informative for their case review process and encourage their participation, which may be in writing, in person at the review meeting, or both.

During case review meetings, board members will inquire as to if the LGAL supports the permanency goal, is engaging the child and advocating for his or her needs, and if they have any issues or recommendations for the case to ensure timely permanency, safety, and well-being. Over the past few years, as shown in the chart below, LGAL participation in FCRB case reviews has been increasing.

	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Present at Review</b>	25 (9%)	69 (20%)	78 (32%)	94 (37%)
<b>Completed Questionnaire</b>	100 (35%)	149 (44%)	94 (38%)	99 (40%)
<b>Both present at review and completed questionnaire</b>	10 (3%)	19 (5%)	33 (14%)	29 (12%)
<i>Total # of Reviews</i>	289	342	244	250
<b>LGAL participation all types</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>89%</b>

## Permanent Court Wards

The FCRB reviewed **56** permanent court ward, or MARE, cases in 2021. This means that all parental rights to the children have been terminated and the children remain in foster care. The top issues identified in these case reviews were:

- 1) **Frequent changes in child’s placement** (52 youth)
- 2) **Child has unmet behavioral or mental health needs** (44 youth)
- 3) **Multiple school placements** (21 youth)
- 4) **Lack of appropriate adoptive homes** (18 youth)
- 5) **Service referrals not occurring timely** (16 youth)

## Identified Child Welfare Systemic Issues

Michigan law (MCL 722.139) requires the FCRB to identify system-wide problems that impede the timely achievement of permanency for children and make related recommendations to address the problems.

In 2021, the top three barriers to permanency & systemic issues included:

### 1. Parents unwilling to participate in services (134 cases).

The FCRB makes this finding when at least one parent with a Parent Agency Treatment Plan (PATP) is not participating in required services. When this happens, the Boards typically recommend:

- a. The caseworker make and document efforts to communicate with the parent(s) and engage them in services contained in their Parent Agency Treatment Plan.
- b. The caseworker consider prioritizing services to assist the parent(s) in remaining engaged in their treatment plan.
- c. The agency increase parenting time by identifying family and friends willing and available to supervise additional visits.
- d. The agency tailor services to meet the unique needs of each family member and provide those services in a manner that is respectful of the child and the family. Services should be outcome-based and continuously evaluated.

### 2. Frequent changes in child's placement (89 children).

The FCRB makes this finding when it is reported that a child's placement was changed more than once since the previous FCRB review and/or when the Board finds that a placement change was not in the child's best interests.

The Boards typically recommend:

- a. The agency make every effort to maintain the child's placement by developing and implementing safety plans and offering the foster family services to assist with placement stability.
- b. That when the agency determines that a placement change is necessary, they follow MDHHS Placement Selection and Standards pursuant to FOM 722-03 and make every effort to develop and implement a transition plan prior to moving the child.

### 3. LGAL not actively involved in representation of the child (88 children). The FCRB makes this finding when it is reported to the board that the LGAL appointed to the case has not met with or observed the child, or has not made efforts to communicate with the foster family regarding the child's needs and progress. When this occurs, the Boards typically recommend:

- a. The court ensure that the attorney comply with each statutory duty listed in MCL 712A.17d and require the attorney to file the SCAO Form JC 82



(Affidavit of Service Performed by Lawyer-Guardian Ad Litem) at each hearing.

- b. In accordance with MCL 712A.17d (1)(k), the board recommends the LGAL consult with others involved in the case to identify common interests among the parties and, to the extent possible, promote a cooperative resolution of the matter through consultation with the child's parent, foster care provider, guardian, and caseworker.
- c. The court require the LGAL to take SCAO's Michigan LGAL Online Training to ensure he is familiar with LGAL statutory duties.

## FCRB Advisory Committee

This FCRB Annual Report Workgroup authors this section of the Annual Report. The task of the Annual Report Workgroup is to emphasize the Advisory Committee's collective expertise in providing reflective advice, insight, and recommendations when systemic and practice issues, as well as gaps in services, are identified by the FCRB.

The FCRB Advisory Committee convened four times in 2021, and continued to lead three workgroups, including an Annual Report Workgroup, an Annual Training Planning Workgroup, and the Foster Parent Participation in Court Hearings Workgroup. In addition, a new pilot was established to follow up on the status of children who were subject to foster parent appeals and were moved into a new home, called the Post Appeal Review process.

Another year of experience improved the flow and depth of conversations. FCRB case review and appeal meetings continued to all be held virtually over Zoom throughout 2021. This efficient access increased participation rates and allowed board members to respond more fully to the emotional as well as factual elements of the meetings. Continuing to hold meetings virtually increased the regional boards' effectiveness, efficiency, and participation. 2021 was also another great year for program advocacy, accomplishments, and outcomes.



### **The following is a status update on 2020 Annual Report recommendations:**

**2020 Recommendation:** SCAO publish a media release for FCRB Board Member recruitment throughout the state.

**Outcome:** Following a media release by SCAO, the FCRB on-boarded seventeen new board members throughout 2021. The New Board Member Training that was held on August 26 and 27, 2021 was also offered to veteran members as a refresher. The training was well received as evidenced by 100% satisfaction by the 26 registrants.

**2020 Recommendation:** MDHHS should eliminate the age requirement to provide credit checks for children in foster care, as identity theft is not necessarily linked to a person's age and significant harm can be made due to fraud or identity theft especially if not detected early.

**Outcome:** No changes were made to the MDHHS Foster care policy MDHHS FOM 722-06E, which requires youth Age 14+ to receive an annual credit report from each of the three nationwide consumer credit reporting agencies.

**2020 Recommendation:** The FCRB should collect data to monitor compliance with QRTP standards.

**Outcome:** The FCRB program began collecting qualitative data through interested party interviews including receipt of QRTP-related materials (including Maximus independent assessments) in the fall of 2021.

**Suggested Next Step:** As more qualitative data is collected, the FCRB program can use the information to develop an issue code to determine agency compliance as prescribed in the law (Family First Preservation Services Act/Qualified Residential Treatment Program).

**2020 Recommendation:** The creation of a workgroup to track outcomes for foster youth who are subject of a foster parent appeal to determine how placement moves impact case trajectory.  
**Outcome:** The FCRB implemented a pilot project in October 2021, called the Post Appeal Review pilot, to identify cases where subsequent FCRB case review could be beneficial. This process offers an additional method to ensure children’s moves following appeals are in their best interests.

**2020 Recommendation:** The creation of a standard form for caregivers to provide feedback about the child and case management issues to the court, and that the FCRB distribute the form through partner organizations.

**Outcome:** a) The FCRB formed the Foster Parent Participation in Court Hearings Workgroup; and b) Fostering Forward created a survey to quantify caregiver notice and ability to participate in court hearings. Preliminary results determined the following: 72.3% of caregivers receive notice of court hearings from case workers and 16.9% of caregivers do not receive notice of court hearings.

**2020 Recommendation:** All future FCRB annual trainings should be planned by a workgroup of board members and advisory committee members.

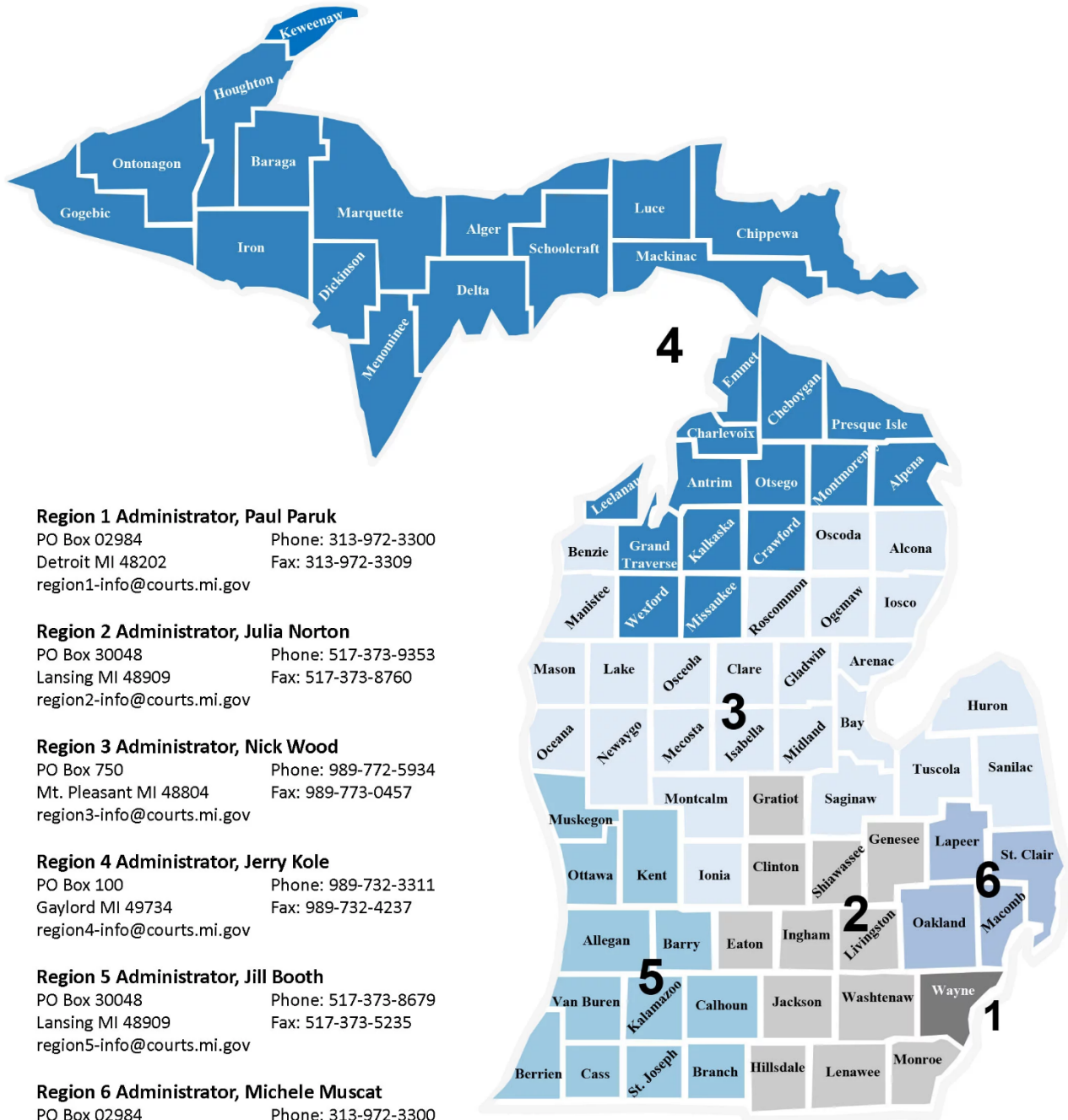
**Outcome:** The FCRB formed an Annual Training Workgroup for the 2021 and 2022 annual training programs and commits to maintaining a workgroup for this purpose.

In 2021, the Advisory Committee identified opportunities to promote Continuous Quality Improvement, which resulted in the following:

- **The FCRB implemented a Comment Card** in April 2021 to obtain real-time feedback from interested parties who participated in a case review or a foster parent appeal meeting. The Comment Card is provided to meeting participants within 30 days of the meeting. The Advisory Committee recommends the FCRB review the data to evaluate the program’s efficiency and performance.
- **Tribal Consultation on ICWA/MIFPA cases** identified areas of improvement in how to provide better consultation on ICWA cases. The Advisory Committee expresses gratitude to our tribal partners in this dialogue, and additionally recommends: a) Training for board members on ICWA/MIFPA Best Interests Factors for Indian Children; b) Update the Tribal Representative Questionnaire to ensure that content is competent and adheres to ICWA/MIFPA requirements; and c) Develop a list of tribal contacts provided by tribal partners to ensure accuracy and notification of tribal representatives for meaningful participation.
- **The Youth Advocacy Pilot Project, a Court Improvement Program (CIP) Initiative**, was initiated in June 2021 to encourage self-advocacy skills and increase youth attendance at court hearings and FCRB case review meetings; thereby enhancing decision making to improve permanency outcomes. Tuscola County volunteered to participate in this pilot project. The Advisory Committee recommends the FCRB develop strategies, tools, and resources for youth to promote self-advocacy in their experience with the child welfare system.

# State Court Administrative Office Regions

Effective May 5, 2022



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