



JJPOC Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2021

2:00 -3:30 pm

Zoom Conference Call

Attendance:

Rep. Toni Walker

Marc Pelka

Rep. Anthony Nolan

Sen. Gary Winfield

Iliana Pujols

Sen. John Kissel

Macklin Roman

Janeen Reid

Hector Glynn

Martha Stone

Bernetta Henry

Judge Patrick Carroll

Judge Dawne Westbrook

Gary Roberge

Christine Rapillo

Brian Casinghino

Vannessa Dorantes

Angel Quiros

Desi Nesmith

Amy Marracino

Lisa Sementilli

Stacy Schulman

Vernon Beaulieu

Derrick Gordon

Chief Fred Spagnolo

Sarah Eagan

TYJI Staff:

William Carbone

Erika Nowakowski

Kelly Orts

Danielle Cooper

Donna Pfrommer

Susan Cusano

Welcome and Introductions

Undersecretary Marc Pelka filled in for Deputy Secretary Kostas Diamantis of OPM.

The JJPOC members thanks Judge Conway for her contributions to JJPOC and welcomed Judge Westbrook as a new member of JJPOC. The youth and parent members from the Community Expertise Workgroup were introduced to the JJPOC.

Acceptance of Minutes for JJPOC

Rep. Toni Walker asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes from the July 15th, 2021 meeting. The motion to accept the minutes was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Overview of Meeting

CSSD was invited to provide an update on the new JD 218 form. This protocol was sent out on August 1st to all the police departments in the protection order registry platform, which is how CSSD communicates with all the police departments. Since distribution, CSSD has not received any JD 218 forms from the protocol, but there have been three calls to the residential detention centers asking for information. Law enforcement informed that if they complete the JD 218 form and send it to the Judicial Branch. The Judicial Branch will fill it out and send it back. The JD 218



form will be shared with the It was asked if they can share the questions that the police departments are asking, so they will be shared with everyone on the committee.

Overview of MYI Agreement

Center for Children's Advocacy (CCA) presented on the agreement related to Manson Youth Institution (MYI). CCA works primarily with youth who are justice involved and has a long-standing partnership with the Department of Corrections (DOC). CCA and DOC work collaboratively on the education for youth and assists with their reentry needs. In March 2020, youth were confined at the facility due to COVID-19 and spending a lot of the time in their cells with little to no access to education, mental health services, programming. As a result, CCA engaged with some national partners for their perspective on how to make improvements. CCA and DOC partnered to ensure access to education, mental health services, and out of cell time. Nearly 60% of the minor population has special education needs, many with undiagnosed mental health needs and they are the most at-risk youth population in the state. There was an initial consultation back in January 2021, which continued to turn into a signed agreement.

The agreement set forth to ensure basic provisions for all youth; they are to receive ongoing and in-person instruction, individualized packets, and establishing an internal WIFI network. The mental health services part would be ubiquitous and would ensure bi-weekly assessment of all youth, and the youth would be able to request services. Another part of the agreement was to continue ongoing expert consultations with DOC and specific recommendations from those consultations. As part of MYI, youth will receive the mandated education hours, which was a focal point of the agreement. Education will be continued in person barring any facility emergency. Recently, DOC had an increase in in COVID cases, so they were placed on a restrictive status to adhere to CDC guidelines. However, they were able to provide a distance learning for the population and towards the end they were able to create some cohorts so there can be in-person education for the youth and there were rewards for students who completed 100% of their distance learning work. The implementation of the WIFI platform is it is still being investigated, but because of COVID supply demands, DOC is limited with being able to move forward. The staff and administration are ensuring quality mental health services for the youth and currently all requirements of the agreement are being met. Family engagement has been a big push for DOC; literature has been posted to inform the over 18 population of reassessment opportunities, including mental health and medical staff to talk to them about this. An informational brochure would be offered at the time of admission regarding access to care and available programs.

The agreement also covered minimum requirements for out of cell time and access to programs during COVID operations so that they aren't running into an isolation confinement period. They



have put together a programs and activities unit, which is comprised of treatment staff officers and supervisors to develop various programming to keep the young adults busy. Some of the youth participated in an officer-led horticultural services program where they were able to take a plot of land and cultivate from seedling to growth, which gave them a sense of pride and new resources. The Manson Youth City Council has representatives of the young adult population that will sit down with administration and express their opinions and beliefs and help shape onsite policy. Lastly, the video visitation policy is continued as visitors on the outside must complete a visiting package through an electronic information transmission system. DOC continues to collaborate with child advocates, Department of Education, Department of Children and Families (DCF), and Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division.

There were some questions regarding the population and how many have been vaccinated; there are 305 people, 44 juveniles, 67 have been vaccinated, 3 juveniles have been vaccinated and all of them are age to be vaccinated. It was suggested to use incentives for the youth to get vaccinated. There was a total of 8 to have contracted COVID and 5 of them were youth, they were placed in a quarantined unit, but they still had access to all the resources.

There was a concern for the WIFI implementation and how long it would take, if there is anything that can be done to expedite the process. WIFI demand is so high, which causes supplies to be short, but they continue to push to get the equipment sooner. There was also a concern regarding short staffing and how it has affected their efforts. DOC has been impacted by staffing challenges but were able to alter operations and adjust to meet their needs. They indicated a 406 staff member vacancy, but there is an academy class with 90 corrections officers and 5 full-service supervisors. There is another academy class starting October 8th with 10 corrections officers and 40 other classifications and in the process of getting approval for a class of 100 corrections officers for the first week of November. There is a second facility closing, 110 staff members will be reallocated to the vacancies. The agency can function at 83% capacity without issues; however, this is the highest that are on workers comp. A lot of sick time usage as well because of burnt out staff and contracting COVID.

Presentation on DCF Implementation Plan

One of the recommendations that came out from the JJPOC Education Committee was the recommendation for DCF to create a unit that will oversee its educational services for children who reside in justice facilities. The intent is to create standardization and provide quality assurance and improve reentry processes for students. It was approved by JJPOC and went through the legislative process; it was passed in public act 21-174 § 2, which created an implementation team to assist DCF in creating an operational plan to implement this



recommendation. It was a collaborative effort between DCF, CSSD, CDE, DOC, public school representatives and educational experts. For the work plan, the team would meet monthly from February 2021 to September 2021. They reviewed the current educational services and programs in justice facilities, which included presentations from CSSD, USD1, SDE, and community providers. They also discussed standards, accountability, and outcome measures of the unit and identified barriers to data sharing and management. They outlined staffing budget and legal needs for implementation and sent a draft of the plan to the JJPOC Education Committee, Executive Committee and Community Expertise Workgroup. All feedback was taken into consideration and helped build the final version that was sent out to the JJPOC.

The new oversight will ensure that equitable, measurable, and sustainable child outcomes related to educational achievement are produced for the students in justice facilities. This accountability involves development and review of quarterly reports on academic performance, school discipline, attendance, and other similar issues for youth. It would also require providers of educational services to compile semi-annual performance data to ensure reporting is tailored to the experience of students in short- and long-term placement. Additionally, they are required to report performance data, attendance rates, participation, all educational programs, and document transitions to and from these facilities and the reports will be shared with the student's parents and the JJPOC. Transition specialists will manage and track educational credits of a student who is in an out-of-home placement. The timeline moving forward is to recruit the head of the administrative unit and an IT analyst, determine the job classifications for the other staff, and collaborative with CSDE and the LEAs to develop and implement the IT system. By June 2022, a research analyst will develop reporting requirements and establish data sets.

For next steps, DCF is in the process of posting for the unit administrator and have the position filled by January of next year. DCF is also working with CSDE to create the database that will share student's records with the administrative unit. DCF and CSDE will work with federal partners to ensure student records can be shared under FERPA. There was a question asked regarding a way to track previously undiagnosed special education needs from the students and why it wasn't identified earlier. The assessment to determine if a child should have been placed in special ed wasn't the issue, but more the data and information that was needed to do the quality assessment that was missing due to transitions. It is intended to cover all special education students to the age of 22. There was a comment to look at the youth who are 18 and entitled to stay in the K-12 program than being transferred to the GED program. This is based off DOC and how they handle their student body but, it will be flagged and looked into. Lastly, there is a question regarding whether DCF set standards for hours of instruction and resources or will they still be working within the custodial and operational constraints that may be placed because of other agency



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protocols. Part of the development of the group is that each stakeholder talked about each of their structures at their facilities, and to be able to see where the inconsistencies are is having the framework that looks at all of them simultaneously and the very nature of developing the administrative entity to identify the good and bad of the overall process.

Next Meeting: October 21, 2021, 2:00-3:30pm