

Connecticut Juvenile Training School
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes, 7/28/14

Present: Karl Alston, Deputy Director, CSSD; Abby Anderson, Executive Director, Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance; Debra Bond, CJTS Clinical Director; Francis Carino, Supervising Assistant State's Attorney; James Connolly, Esq., Director of Juvenile Post Conviction and Reentry Unit; Liz D'Amico, Behavioral Health Clinical Manager; John DiPilla, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Robert Francis, RYASAP/Catalyst for Community Change; Kristy Ramsey, CJTS Assistant Superintendent; Christine Rapillo, Director of Juvenile Delinquency Defense and Child Protection, Public Defender's Office; William Rosenbeck, CJTS Superintendent

Establishing a Quorum

Quorum was established with the members present.

Minutes

With a few corrections, the June minutes were accepted.

Membership

- Donald Highsmith, the newly hired Chaplain, will join the board as an ex-officio member in September. Liz D'Amico joined this meeting and introductions took place. Atty. Connolly will follow up on Sam Gray. It was suggested that we explore someone from adult parole and / or the deputy warden from Manson.

- We spent time discussing having a resident / ex-resident participate on the Advisory Board and following a conversation with Mr. Alston, Atty. Connolly is proposing rather than them coming to this meeting that the board members attend some of the Student Council meetings. The Student Council meetings are scheduled during the school year every other Tuesday at 12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. Atty. Connolly is working with Tracey Cotterell who organizes the meetings to see if the council members are open to this proposal. Board members and facility management support this and with enough notice will re-arrange their schedules to attend the meetings. The Advisory Board meeting would take place immediately following the student council meeting. It may be helpful to prepare a statement about the board which we could share with them. Each unit elects a unit representative for the Student Council.

- The terms of the board membership will begin in January and be either a 2 or 3 year commitment. Atty. Connolly asked the current board members to let him know which duration they are able to commit to and he will send out the revised by-laws to the group.

Old Business

- The minutes are currently posted on the internal DCF website. Conversations are taking place about the placement of the minutes onto the external DCF webpage.
- Ms. Ramsey confirmed that Pueblo teaming meetings are occurring within the 1st week of admission. At times if there is an established discharge plan then conversation is by telephone, if no plan then a meeting is scheduled and the residents are always involved. There was one instance where a meeting with the region took place around internal communication. The resident did not participate in this meeting but did participate in the teaming meeting. Participants sign in and meeting minutes are recorded. A question was raised whether the attorneys from the child welfare side participate and Ms. Ramsey confirmed that they are.
- Ms. Anderson sent in her input to the operational strategies to Mr. Rosenbeck.
- Mr. Rosenbeck acknowledged that conversations are occurring with JRI regarding the TRAC program; however, he does not have an update at this time.
- Commissioner Katz accepted two of the Board's recommendations and rejected two; the PBS and Ombudsman. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that CJTS did do PBS some while back but chose to commit to ACA instead which is a more comprehensive way to look at national best practices. The reason behind not continuing with PBS is it is self-reporting which does not present an accurate picture and there is no like facility in the country to compare ourselves to. The reason for this is that most states have juvenile justice under different agencies or because they are more correctional or are less secure. The nice thing about this facility is that we have an open campus where there is much more interaction. CJTS did, however, incorporate PBS standards into the CJTS standards. Mr. Alston stated that CSSD does ACA, PBS and NCCA and does see some overlap. PBS reviews their program twice a year and measures the conditions of confinement whereas ACA every three years during the accreditation process. He feels PBS enhances what is done for ACA and is a snapshot of the operation twice a year. Dr. Bond stated that the clinical department continues to track everything they used to do for PBS since we ended the practice. Mr. DiPilla also stated that he has incorporated many of the standards into CJTS operations. Atty. Rapillo asked what CJTS does with the information that is

gathered. It was clarified that Liz D'Amico's responsibilities will include creating databases from which reports will be generated. She also offered to review the PBS standards with what CJTS collects and present her findings to this board and if there is something the board feels we should be collecting we are open to it. Atty. Rapillo offered to follow up with the board and collect the suggestions for data collection. Ms. Anderson would like to see conditions of confinement data as well as data dashboards. Atty. Connolly stated that he wants to promote a level of transparency and wants all to know what is going on in this facility. Mr. Rosenbeck reiterated that he and Commissioner Katz are confident in the processes that CJTS uses and the level of transparency.

- The board shared their concerns around the Commissioner's rejection of their recommendation for an independent provider to act as the Ombudsman. Furthermore, they have concerns around the amount of time the Ombudsman spends at the facility and the girls program. Mr. Rosenbeck stated that the ombudsman does come to the facility but does not know the frequency. He also stated that the new process has been helpful whereby the DRC's are responding to the resident concerns in a timely fashion.

New Business

- Mr. Rosenbeck presented April, May and June 2014 intervention data and there is a contrast to the statement recently released by OCA. In April, the average daily census was 141 and 111 of the boys had no interventions. In May, 81 boys had no interventions and in the 3 months, 2 boys required 21 interventions. Oftentimes it's just a handful of kids that require the most interventions. We review the data and look at the interventions to see what we can do differently. We recently met with the kids and conducted a survey with them and the staff to learn more about the reasons for the fights. Liz D'Amico gathered their responses and what is interesting is the overriding reason is because it is safer here as they know staff will be there within 30 seconds. We have a number of activities where all residents participate and this is also a time when boys see an opportunity to fight. As we don't like to cancel them, we spend a lot of time working with the boys to work through their issues. We are also looking to pilot a new curriculum with the boys around becoming a man and making better life choices which is similar to the girls circle curriculum that we use at the Pueblo girls' program. Atty. Rapillo stated she would be interested to see if there is an impact once the curriculum is implemented. Atty. Carino added that if we track this data it could be included in the annual report. In addition, 52 boys are currently participating in the football program which sets high standards and expectations. Mechanical restraints are used to safely transport the kids and standing holds are applied for separation and are very brief.

- Mr. Rosenbeck reported that there is a group working on electronic records so there is a flow of information between CSSD and DCF; however, there are laws that prevent the sharing of some information. It was suggested that attorneys be included in the discussions.
- Mr. Rosenbeck presented the CJTS Length of Stay / Discharge Protocol. A lot of time was spent on developing this protocol and it applies equally to everybody and is not based on regional relationships with the program. The goals mirror the Georgetown goals. The plan is to roll this protocol out in October, however, Mr. Rosenbeck clarified that DCF is absolutely open to feedback. It was suggested that this protocol be shared with Judge Conway and the new incoming judges. Atty. Carino suggested including public safety as one of the goals. Board members will submit feedback and suggestions to Mr. Rosenbeck.

Superintendent's Update

- The Girls Program is going on 4 months being open. We are assessing what is working and what is not. We currently have 6 in residence with 3 waiting to match for a foster home, 2 matched to programs and 1 scheduled for a group home. Since opening have served 17 girls with 5 discharged home.
- At CJTS we were around 150 and are now around 135. Typically our census goes down during the summer months, but it does not seem to be that way this year.
- Construction of building 4 is slightly delayed. Anticipate completion by mid August. The construction of the school is coming along well and we anticipate completion by end of October.

Public Comments

A copy of the material discussed as well as a board packet to be made available. The Georgetown report is available on the DCF website.

Next Meeting Date

We will coordinate the next meeting date around the Student Council meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Irene Yanaros