



Successful Youth • Strong Leaders • Safer Communities

State Advisory Board Meeting

April 17, 2018

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Annapolis DJS Office
49 Old Solomons Island Rd., Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401

Conference Call # (605) 475-4700, Access Code: 300133

Meeting Minutes

Members and Guests Present

Secretary Sam Abed
Gavin Patashnick
Magistrate Lara Weathersbee
Rexanah Wyse
Heather Chapman
Dr. Kimberly Cuthrell

Hon. Sylvester Cox (Phone)
Hon. Gary Bair
Deborah Grinnage-Pulley
Nick Moroney
Melanie Shapiro
Rosemary King Johnston

I. Welcome and Introductions

Rosemary King Johnston

- New Member – Dr. Kimberly Cuthrell

Rosemary King Johnston, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. and welcomed Dr. Cuthrell as the newest member of the board. The members and guests welcomed her as well.

- Approval of January 16, 2018 meeting minutes

The members reviewed the minutes from the January 16, 2018 meeting. Minor edits were made to Rexanah Wyse's name and adding Magistrate Lara Weathersbee to list of attendees. The minutes were approved as amended. Secretary Abed joined the meeting and all members and guests introduced themselves and who they represent.

- Data Resource Guides (DRG)

DRGs were handed out to all members. Sec. Abed gave a general overview of what is contained in the DRG and the data-driven initiatives DJS is addressing. Specifically, he referenced the time needed to collect accurate recidivism data and issues with data quality and reporting outcomes due to inconsistencies in data terminology in different jurisdictions. Rexanah Wyse and Nick Moroney asked questions relating to contacts for data-related questions and the validity of recidivism data for girls in the DRG. Sec. Abed said he would get the most up-to-date data available.

II. Department of Juvenile Services Update

Secretary Abed

- Victor Cullen

Sec. Abed went over the April 8th incident at the Victor Cullen facility. He explained that staff was injured and the superintendent has been replaced by John Plummer. Sec. Abed went on to explain that before this incident there were plans to address some issues at Victor Cullen and DJS has already begun implementing changes. For example, executive staff has been providing technical and program development assistance to the facility staff and engaging with the youths and their families. Also, outside consulting is being sought to address cultural issues and to make recommendations for needed changes.

Rosemary King Johnston and Magistrate Weathersbee asked if any youth had been hurt and inquired as to the staff turnover rate at Victor Cullen compared to other facilities. Sec. Abed answered that no youth had been injured and turnover is getting better but has a long way to go. He added that recently passed legislation should also produce lower turnover rates.

Heather Chapman and Dr. Cuthrell made inquiries and recommendations regarding professional development and behavioral health training for staff and the youth. Dr. Cuthrell suggested creating a curriculum based around behavioral health for the staff which would then correlate to the youth and would be specific to each facility. Heather suggested looking across all settings, developing training and then refining that training to identify with each individual facility.

- Status of Facility Advisory Boards (FAB)

Sec. Abed went through the list of FABs and indicated that some are active and meet regularly and some haven't met in years. He would like to engage more with the FABs and the community to get all of them up and running. He suggested utilizing local humane societies so the youth can interact with the animals. Rosemary King Johnston liked that idea and added that simply asking members of the community to partake in these boards can go a long way. Rexanah Wyse, Dr. Cuthrell, Melanie Shapiro (OPD) and Nick Moroney suggested reaching out to local colleges and their staff and students, HOAs in the area and people in the building trade. Nick Moroney added that trades offer kids the chance to see a finished product.

III. Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit Report / Update

Nick Moroney

Nick Moroney emphasized the need to invest in staff and training. He asked Sec. Abed if DJS conducts exit interviews and if so, what are the results? Sec. Abed replied that exit interviews are done, typically people leave for higher pay or they dislike their managers.

Nick Moroney further inquired into the disparity of wages between a correctional officer and a resident advisor. The Sec. responded and explained that the gap has closed significantly from a few years ago due to salary adjustments that were made in the past. However, the biggest gap is in retirement benefits which again, legislation from this year should address. Nick Moroney then asked if DJS plans to add more staff

next year to that legislation? Gavin Patashnick explained that we hope to do just that but we need to look into current job classifications and tax law.

Nick Moroney then asked why DJS was not included in the correctional system implementing a signing bonus. The Sec. explained that this is a new issue that we need to look into, but DJS doesn't have a problem with recruitment, but more so with retention, which is the opposite for corrections.

Finally, Nick Moroney asked about the change in educational operation at the Noyse facility and what is currently being done. Deborah Grinnage-Pulley explained that regardless of the legislation that was put in this year creating a new pilot program, MSDE is already underway with the development. She added that currently there is no formal agreement or specific location selected but a work group meets regularly to discuss program implementation, specifically curricular support. Nick Moroney mentioned that MSDE has not been very transparent in their planning to this point, so Sec. Abed asked that a formal update be added to next month's agenda.

IV. State Advisory Group (SAG) Update

Heather Chapman

Heather Chapman updated the members on the current projects that the SAG has underway. The SAG is working on their three-year plan, outlining their goals and objectives to submit to the federal government. They are also working on some internal projects that will track the progress of the goals being set in the three-year plan. Additionally, the SAG has filled the law enforcement and youth member slots but will need to continue recruiting because some members are leaving in the near future. She asked the board for recommendations.

V. New Business

- SAB Website

Andrew Tress informed the board that he is working on the language for the SAB webpage and will send out draft language before or during the next meeting.

- SAB Appointments and Nominations / Current Vacancies

Andrew Tress informed members that the dates of appointments need to be updated and some reappointments are needed. He may be asking members individually if they have copies of their most recent appointment letters to use as a reference. He will also contact the appointments office to see if they have updated information and to be sure their records are accurate.

- Financial Disclosure Statements

Andrew Tress and Rosemary King Johnston reminded the members that they need to file out their financial disclosure statements before the end of this month.

- Date for site visit?

The members finalized the dates for a site visit where there will also be a brief meeting. The SAB will visit the Noyse facility on 06/19/2018 and Victor Cullen on 10/16/2018. Andrew Tress will be contacting the facilities to make the arrangements and inform the board once the plans are set.

VI. 2018 Legislative Session Recap

- Legislation pertinent to DJS

Gavin Patashnick and Andrew Tress went through a few keys pieces of legislation with impact to DJS from the recent legislative session. Some key bills included expanding the retirement benefits for some DJS employees. Gavin Patashnick and Andrew Tress will be looking into pathways to add even more employees during the interim. Also, the only departmental bill (SB 91) submitted by DJS passed unanimously. This bill expands information sharing of juvenile records between DJS, DHS, MDH and their local offices.

- Budget

Sec. Abed and Gavin Patashnick briefly explained the restriction of funds in this year's budget, but assured the board it will not create any operational changes.

VII. Adjournment

Rosemary King Johnston asked if anyone had anything to add and Magistrate Weathersbee mentioned that she as seen a change in her district due to the law requiring kids remain in school until 18. She would like the board to look into other academic pathways for kids to have. Melanie Shapiro mentioned that Sen. Cassilly put in legislation this year that had failed, but we can begin to work on the issue and use the bill as a starting point.

Next Meeting: Next meeting is scheduled for May 15th at 2 p.m. in the Annapolis location. Remaining meetings: 5/15, 6/19, 9/18, 10/16 and 11/20.

Staff Contact: Andrew Tress
410-230-3488 (Office)
443-504-4619(Cell)
Andrew.tress@maryland.gov