



State Advisory Board Meeting

November 17th, 2020

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

Join with Google Meet
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The meeting will also be streamed live and recorded for the public on YouTube.

<https://youtu.be/mXtWSsAugqs>

Minutes

Members and guests present:

Andrew Tress	Rosemary King Johnston
Heather Chapman	Walidah Yaminah
James Johnston	Crystal Fleming Bryce
Jessica Wheeler	Lynn Celestin-Antonin (PG County SAO)
Lynn Davis	Betsy Tolentino
LaMar Davis	David Phillips
Michael Guilbault	Denise Henderson
Nick Moroney	Aisha Braveboy
Sam Abed	Scott Beal

I. Welcome and Introductions

Rosemary King Johnston

- Approval of October 20, 2020 meeting minutes

Rosemary King Johnston (RKJ) called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and introduced the new AFSCME SAB member Denise Henderson. The minutes were reviewed and approved.

II. Department of Juvenile Services Update

Sam Abed

- COVID-19 Response
- Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC)

Sec. Abed responded to questions from last month's meeting regarding the Garrett Children's Center (GCC) and Mountain View (MV) girls programming. There were only two youth at GCC,

which is currently closed due to staff and youth COVID positive test results. Youth are being moved to other facilities with the appropriate space and necessary programming. DJS will reassess in the near future and utilize staff among facilities. The girls program at Mountain View has some staff vacancies and one of the staffers has been out for an extended time. To mitigate the staffing shortages, DJS is utilizing staff from other locations. The youth have been unhappy with the staffing issues, so we are working on establishing a more supportive culture in the facilities. Although the pandemic makes this more difficult, the Department is providing training specific to working with girls.

There are a number of facilities with active COVID cases. Those that don't are Noyes and LESCC. There are positive cases at all other facilities among staff and youth, but mainly staff. This information reflects community spread, and many facility cases are most likely from community spread. There is heightened concern with the likelihood of increases in cases during the holidays, so have instituted precautions. These include no more visitations for families and the continuation of attorney visits. Also we're working with the youth to ensure that education is being provided during these outbreaks.

Nick Moroney – Update on Mountain View program, and on the progress of finding a provider who can give specialized services to girls?

Sec. Abed – DJS put out a request for proposals to our licensed providers, received responses, and are currently reviewing the responses. The long term goal is to have programming in each region to offer more options for girls.

Aisha Braveboy – Sen. Benson expressed interest in programs for girls. Prince George's County is looking to submit a bill for local groups and resources for programs; we're hoping to have DJS support.

Sec. Abed – Please send a copy, DJS would love to be a partner.

III. Fatality Reviews

Scott Beal/

Rosemary King Johnston

Scott Beal presented overviews of each case, there were seven to review, and all were from Baltimore City. Each of the youth in these cases had a long history with DJS and other service providers. The Emerging Adult Initiative is a new initiative at DJS and will play a critical role for providing services to the 15-16 and older youth populations moving forward. (See Findings and Recommendations below)

Aisha Braveboy – Prince George's County has a similar program with the adult system, we would like to connect and see how the two programs can assist one another.

Findings and Recommendations from SAB:

Findings:

- Meeting the needs of emerging adults is a theme for the majority of these cases; most of the youth reviewed were not attending school, had very little educational attainment, were not employed, and were involved in the criminal justice system.
 - DJS has responded by starting a new program specific to addressing the emerging adult population. The program addresses youth aged 16 – 23 years old and is based on a model used by ROCA.
 - The Juvenile Justice Reform Council (JJRC) is also working on this issue and developing recommendations to set limits on the age jurisdiction and dependent on the crime committed.
- Poor availability of reliable transportation creates barriers to services.
- There is a communication issue between DPSCS and DJS when youth have cases in both systems.
- In several cases, the legal history reflected judiciary dismissals despite frequent court appearances and recommendations to the contrary.

Recommendations:

- Create teams with staff and service providers with skills and training to meet needs specific to emerging adults.
- Develop pathways for education/vocational assistance that go beyond credit recovery by creating incentive based programming, working with Governor's Workforce Development Board to promote job access and readiness, and develop pathways for GED waivers, when appropriate.
- Explore statutory changes that will help guide judicial decision-making that promotes the use of services and programming that have proven to yield positive results and require and/or encourage parental participation in services.

Sec. Abed – the findings and recommendations from the SAB have been helpful to the Department and is already serving its advisory purpose. The emerging adult's initiative is an example.

Lamar Davis – the continuity of services is so important, especially for the emerging adult's population. However, funding is problematic, particularly for services like workforce development and job training.

Lynn Davis - Offered to share information about model programming that is being implemented in Carroll County.

RKJ – We do not have a quorum. Accordingly we will take up the adoption of these recommendations at the December meeting.

These proposed recommendations are confidential. Please do not share with anyone outside the membership until they have been adopted by the Board.

IV. Juvenile Justice Monitoring Update

Nick Moroney

Nick Moroney - commented that there seems to be a disconnect from the youth placed with DJS and the facilities in Western MD. It is difficult to address the issues they are facing in their communities, in other communities that are not closely comparable. He would like to see a continued effort to close facilities in Western MD to treat youth closer to home, whenever possible, and/or place them in communities closer to home with similar community dynamics. He hopes the JJRC will promote that process since research shows it is the better option.

Sec. Abed - JJRC did approve a recommendation addressing the placement of youth closer to their home communities and requiring the creation of an implementation plan.

Nick Moroney – It is also very expensive to place youth away from their homes and communities. Changes could bring about a reallocation of funding.

V. DJS Emerging Adult Presentation

Betsy Tolentino

Betsy Tolentino provided an update regarding services for the DJS emerging adult population. The program addresses youths aged 16 – 23 years old and is based on a model used by ROCA. The program is new and we are looking forward to seeing the outcomes for youths.

VI. Good of the Order

Board Members

RKJ requested that there be a legislative update from DJS before the 2021 MD legislative session begins in January.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings / YouTube Livestream Links:

- 2020
 - 12/15/20 <https://youtu.be/NzIj3HF87ns>
- 2021
 - 1/19/21 <https://youtu.be/Bifr9RlYmpc>
 - 4/20/21 <https://youtu.be/XiaJW1sfVTw>
 - 5/18/21 <https://youtu.be/vPpJjQnN7wY>
 - 6/15/21 <https://youtu.be/ksMtDKM317s>
 - 9/21/21 <https://youtu.be/RDzNa0fSmRI>
 - 10/19/21 <https://youtu.be/BASgaffuFdc>
 - 11/16/21 <https://youtu.be/REkP6hyzDwM>

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