

Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development (ICYD) Council Meeting
Jessie Parker Building, Starkweather Room
September 8, 2010, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Members Present: Preston Daniels, Chair, Department of Human Rights (DHR)
Becky Swift, ODCP (for Gary Kendall)
Richard Moore, Director, Iowa Child Advocacy Board
Diane Oak Goode, IWD (for Elisabeth Buck)
Adam Gross (for Adam Lounsbury, Iowa Commission on Volunteer Services (ICVS))
Doug Wolfe (for Wendy Rickman, DHS (for Charles Krogmeier))
Kelli Tallman, (for Chuck Morris, ISU Extension, 4-H Youth Development)

Members Absent: Shanell Wagler, Director Office of Empowerment
Kathy Stone, Department of Health
Kevin Fangman, Department of Education

Steering Committee Members/State Agency Workgroup Members Present:
Steve Michael, DHR, CJJP
Carol Behrer, Youth Policy Institute of Iowa
Amy Daniels, DHR, Youth Development Project Coordinator
Dave Kuker, CJJP/DHR
Karen Ligas, Youth Leadership Initiative, Boys and Girls
Ruth Allison,
Laura Larkin, DHS

Minutes were taken by Dottie Schiltz, Recording Secretary.

I. Introductions, Objectives, Review of Agenda

Preston Daniels called meeting to order 2:06. Purpose of meeting to initiate development of a Gubernatorial Term Transition Plan, plan for prioritizing issues with participating communities, and learn about School to Court Committee activities.

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from meetings held August 11, 2010 were provided for review. Quorum not present.

III. Keep the Connections Update and Next Steps (Steve and Carol)

Steve Michaels provided update. August 18, the Forum for Youth Investment came in to help guide us through the planning process of creating a message for the next gubernatorial term to ensure our message is out there and the purpose of the council is heard. Yellow informational sheet, presented suggestions to consider. At that meeting, Lauren Sterling, the Forum facilitator, gave her perspective as how things are going and done in Maine Children's Cabinet. Along with what they retrieved from that meeting, and the information from the RISE report of the community/school visits, they are going to compile this, send it to us, and we will package it, contacting/identifying certain people to carry the message for us. George Bledsoe, who works for 1st Lady and Governor's office, has indicated his interest and willingness to take the message to the Governor's office. Jim Swain has indicated Ferguson from ACT would be a contact also. Not all messengers have been identified. Expect to receive information from Forum by September 14. Recommended approach was to get that information and get something put together prior to approaching the messengers. Discussion needed to determine when and who will move forward with the information. Consideration noted that messengers might have suggestions, given they offered to talk to specific people, they would have good sense when those persons would be most influential or interested. Depending on what the Forum suggests, message might be helpful to both campaigns, may be strategy there that both campaigns could use. Daniels recommended breaking the process into couple parts. One being nonpolitical to spread the word and the other knowing that we will always have a responsibility to anyone who requests information about what we are doing. Whoever wins the election, will receive updates from every direction. If political aspirants ask the questions, need to be ready to provide that information; remembering, if we do so, need to give it to all, and will need a broad array of people to do that.

Regarding the strategy the Forum comes up with to promote the message, recommendation made be crafting some of what we have recently done and get it out to potential partners and make a request to them to include

within their communications. Results would provide a broader communication assessment and raise the profile for ICYD. Phrases and words focused at goals and strategy of ICYD developed from materials received from the RISE report, the Forum suggestions, would highlight more the like concerns that are dealt with; i.e., coalition, education associations with the high school graduation rates. A one- or two- page summary of the work we are doing was recommended. A template is being developed by the Forum and should be available by next week. Daniels noted that it would also serve as good document to get to policy directors in the Governor's office as well. The yellow handout provided information regarding the State of Maine web site as well as other links that might be useful.

Volunteers were requested to take the information from the Forum results to the different agencies or organizations as planned. In discussion, suggestion made to establish one-two page document, stating what ICYD has done, what we are doing, and who we are working with. Recommendation made to have members reach out to top three groups to not only cover more ground but build that trust and relationships we have developed with those organizations. Also, an expressed concern of establishing a consistent communication plan to have in place and ongoing with the collaboration because ICYD has been around for years, but many do not know about its works. ICYD should be in contact on regular basis with colleagues and the governor's office on what we are doing. Clarification and confirmation on how the process was going to work was requested. Upon receipt of information from Forum, ICYD representatives will shape it into Iowa version. Volunteers to help with that are Steve Michael, Amy Daniels, and Doug Wolf. Their objective will be to get the message developed to be sent out to messengers.

IV. Preliminary Survey Results from Communities

Carol Behrer provided overview of the Follow-Up Survey Results of the Community Forums on High School Graduation. This on-line survey was sent to participant list based on emails who attended forums. Cyndy Erikson sent it out couple weeks ago. Although 84 responses have been received to date, 55.4% of those are from people who did not attend the forums, and it goes to reason that the largest response came from Des Moines. Education and Child Welfare/Juvenile Justice sectors were most heavily represented, followed by school-based and community-based services. The series of barriers that were presented were condensed into two categories. School related barriers and parent/family issues emerged as top three out of the list. Parent and family issues emerged as most important thing to address from community aspect. SIYAC also provided the survey of which 14 responded. Similar results prevailed. Differences between adult and SIYAC response to issues regarding education and extra curriculum is community blames school, kids blame teachers, but low expectations expected by everyone. The objective of the survey was to have those things emerge that we wanted to work on.

Whole series of barriers were condensed to two lists. School reiterated barriers. Ranked top three out of list. Parent and family issues emerged as most important thing to address from community aspect. Sent survey to SIYAC, of which 14 responded. Similar results were received. Next charts related to issues regarding education and extra curriculum. The difference between adult and SIYAC responses was that community blames school, kids blame teachers, low expectations expected by everyone. Responses were included in handout for group to review. Compelling life issues impact graduation. This additional graph was provided for counsel to decide what they wanted to do on the issues. Mental Health wasn't part of the survey, but it came in third to poverty and alcohol or other drug use as reason. This demonstrates that the response and strategies to address the graduation rates, goes beyond the school building. These are issues that affect them beyond the school. A lot needs to be done, not just the education, whether it is dealing with alcohol and drug abuse response, or dealing with economic conditions of families or what low income families need to have provided to help, when services are not available for mental health issues, and it is so hard to be successful in education if you can't get help otherwise.

- Next Steps

Do we get raw data out to decide what needs to be done, by putting money in? What do we do with the data? This is one more piece of information that we can use in addition to the information we already have it, to decide where we want to go with it. Are there recommendations that we want to make? What strategies do we take based on the information we have been given or developed? Could provide it back to all those involved as the follow-up and request their input to making our decision. Purpose of survey was to help narrow down the findings of the RISE report, however, while it muddies the water some, it is information to use. All the pieces we have worked with can be put together and we can see what we have.

Remember the goal of the counsel when decided to provide report to Governor to advocate improving the graduation rate by certain percentage of students. Survey is another form of information to help the agencies collaborate to see what they could do differently to move successfully toward that goal. Get more information to decide what we could do to those agencies to improve the graduation rate.

Discussion continued to focus on what to do to lead towards the higher graduation rates. This survey indicates that poverty and drug use it hurts graduation rates. The provider (school/community) has said past services were being done in schools that are no longer being done. Also, noted that some things they tried to do were not allowed. See if we can build on that. Maybe need to look at communities that we worked with and strategize it around those that didn't. Query regarding comments about Medicaid Counseling Services Therapy being done in school setting and how schools say it interferes with their education. It is a huge issue. Some providers provide it effectively. Some do not integrate effectively. Communication does not happen, so they don't know why remedial worker is showing up on a test day etc. DPH has been working on that issue. Do not want to limit mental health services, now to make sure they get what they need, but not done at the convenience of the provider. This is a state-wide issue with lots of variations to it. Providers feel too many people coming in. Some schools support school-based mental health services.

Small group idea was submitted to break down barriers, and come up with more succinct findings. Some hesitation noted that some community concerns might be missed. By looking at all the input that we have and develop recommendations to include success areas, see if there are some common responses, to aim our thoughts at. The group should come up with a report that summarizes the findings and make recommendations to the communities, since we told them we wanted to find out (learn) what we can do at state level to improve or help them. Whatever we do we are recommending to others what to do or figure out what we are going to do to help facilitate the communities to improve the graduation rate. Looking at responses by community asking agencies if these are the things we can help with, and then flag those that have state level implication. Parent involvement was one of the biggest issues to address, may be hard to name any initiative or funding that engages in targeting parents working with students for increased graduation rate. Unsure if education sources are using funding to assist the kids involved in foster home, out of home placement to keep parents involved to promote healthy productive lives, other than funding special education needs. How to address this parent engagement is a concern in reports from school. Discussion then focused on how to get schools involved in getting parental involvement. Instead of spending lots of money on something else, aim at beefing up assistance with current resources. Before talking of funding, maybe the focus needs to be at the low cost, no cost responses. We could provide practice guidance. Concern expressed if the right people were around the table, if the department heads are buying into this. Many of the directors were at first meeting, the Department of Education, Judy Jeffries, promoted and asked for collaboration for this. Their presence and support was very strong, visible and very beneficial. However, it has gone to sub-order of staff and decisions cannot be made that way. Feelings of entrapment into making decisions prevail.

Great discussion has gone on here. If we could put this into at least one to three concepts going forward, provides ability to give those recommendations of making more funding. We have to keep it manageable and concise. If it is parenting that needs the dollars, then that gives us something to work with across the board. Agency folks are here because the division administrators are sending those who can contribute the most. Departments were asked who could commit to this group. Reminder made to keep in mind all placements CJJP, out-of-state placements, compelling issues for court ordered placements. With all the agencies around room, read the concerns, think of what each is doing with these concerns in these communities and if there is opportunity to do something, do we see that as working elsewhere in any or all of other agencies. There are things underway already that we think would be ways we could use to improve this. Legislative agendas are being formed now. Need to get things in the works. We have talked about this for a couple months, need to bear down and take what we have, be specific and make recommendations. Not to belabor this forever, think if we get this into a small group, we could narrow it to three areas to send out to various agencies. In terms of data so far, Forum survey results, the longer RISE report, summary report, and visit with C Erikson to see if she as all the materials. Compliments for the compulsory report made.

Concern was voiced over opening remarks regarding suspicion that many kids who drop out do not have CJJP to work with. Note made that many are just disengaged, and do not have a case. Suggestion made to check the aspects of why that is. Further, most kids who go to juvenile justice system do it once and don't come back. It took someone to get them engaged to get them to stay. A concern from one focus is for those children who the State has taken on as their dependents, because they are a tougher group to get graduated. Lot of kids that you talk of may not be those kids; CJJP has these other issues such as parent involvement, alcohol substance abuse, etc. Des Moines school district is having second door-to-door canvas for those who want to come back. We have not looked at the disproportionality of kids of whose doors were knocked on. If you do not get invited, you do not come in. Perry's school was a perfect example of how that worked successfully. The school opened their doors wide to those minority groups.

Committee members are Carol Behrer, Kelli Tallman, Cyndi Erikson, Doug Wolf and Steve Michael.

IV. SIYAC Update

None here today. Their first meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday. They probably will be lots of questions after that.

- **DHR AmeriCorps Positions include SIYAC Coordinator**

Will be getting four new AmeriCorps positions into DHR. Job description is in the packet. Anyone knows of anyone with interested; please provide information to Steve Michael.

V. Other Business

None

X - Next Meeting –Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 13, 2010, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

XI – Adjourned at 3:57

Submitted by
Dottie Schiltz, Recording Secretary