



**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

J.B Pritzker
Governor

Heidi Mueller
Director

Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice School District #428

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Minutes -September 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

- 1.0 The regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Heidi Mueller on Friday, September 15th at 9:36 a.m. at the IDJJ Chicago Office.

ROLL CALL

- 1.1 The following Board Members were present in person: President Heidi Mueller, Member Heather Dalmage, Member Briana Morales (arrived at 10:10am), and Member David Green.

Present Via Webex: Board Member Lamont Holifield

Not Present: Board Member Shawn Jackson and Superintendent of Schools, Tresa D. Dunbar

Others present: Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh, Assistant Superintendent of Schools/Director of Special Education, Mr. Noah Boudreau, Director of CTE and Vocational Programs, Dominique Newman, Public Information Officer and Jullian Brevard, Chief Legal Counsel and Melissa Cory, Director of Special Education.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 2.0 It is recognized Superintendent of Schools is not present, therefore, President Mueller will cover her section.

**APPROVAL OF
AGENDA**

- 2.1 Quorum was confirmed. Member Heather Dalmage motioned for approval. Member David Green second the motion. No objections.

Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES OF
JULY 2023
MEETING**

- 2.2 It is recognized that only Member Briana Morales and Member Heather Dalmage were present at the previous meeting, therefore, approval of the meetings was motioned by Board Member Heather Dalmage and second by Board Member Briana Morales.

No objections.

Motion passed.

**PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION**

- 3.0 No public participation. Mr. White was introduced as the new Principal of Maya Angelou Alternative High School at IYC-Warrenville. Mr. White is coming from Chicago Public Schools and has experience working for the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center. Board Members were given the opportunity to introduce themselves.

**PRESIDENT'S
REPORT**

- 4.0 Negotiations with the Union for the reorganization of IYC-St.Charles into an emerging adult Career and Technical education center have been completed. An MOU has been established. Individuals aged 17-21 who are in IDJJ custody and have graduated will be housed. A pilot program will be initiated to develop the model as program. The intent is to begin with volunteers and to focus into what is developmentally appropriate for these youth. The plan is to have a robust set of choices for the youth to select and create their own schedule. Through partnerships with the facility, other departments, families, and youth interns will reconfigure the institutional directives. The youth intern program focuses on developing a behavioral model and on policies and procedures on what should be incorporated.

The current educators at Sam Sublett will transfer to Maya Angelou and Thurgood Marshall at IYC-Chicago. Maya Angelou at IYC- Warrenville will turn its focus onto housing girls, younger and more vulnerable boys. Graduates will no longer be housed at IYC-Warrenville. The focus is now on the number of educators at the other schools for support, as well as help with accessing more resources for the graduate program. It is recognized that there is a young, vulnerable population who may have a lot of mental health issues, therefore the focus is geared toward how it is being addressed.

In early 2023, IDJJ launched a youth internship, it is an eight to twelve weeks program at the Director's office. Only two youth participate, during the duration of the program they are housed at IYC Chicago. It is an unescorted off grounds, therefore, the executive team provides the transportation. The third cohort is soon to begin. The second cohort developed the proposal for St. Charles, they also reviewed and revised the youth orientation handbook. A youth-to-youth letter was written and is now incorporated in the handbook. It has been overall impactful and successful. It is a real mechanism to have sustainable, meaningful youth participation. There is a selection team that handle interviews. Youth also receive a stipend. This upcoming, third cohort will focus on developing a law library at all the facilities. They are to identify the materials needed and work with Northwestern and University of Chicago to acquire the materials.

Board Member David Green asked if there are still current programs running at the other facilities that youth can get involved. Mr. Boudreau confirmed the intention of expanding the programs.

Board Member Dalmage mentioned that Roosevelt University is starting a Paralegal program that IDJJ may be interested in making a connection. Board Member also inquired on the Special Education youth and their opportunity to receive the same services. She mentions the Department of Rehabilitation Services provides individual services to help the youth with employment opportunities and career planning.

Dr. Bethel confirms IDJJ is pursuing the involvement with DRS. The new Special Education Director will share more detail in her report.

President Mueller clarified the number of individuals that will partake in the pilot program at St. Charles. The Union and IDJJ agreed that they will begin with fifteen, motivated volunteers. This will begin the testing of policies and procedures and make revisions as needed prior to adding more youth. The goal is to have no more than thirty. Board Member Dalmage also asked if the pilot program will continue to be part of the School District #428. President Mueller confirmed that it will be a blend of Secondary and Post Secondary education as youth will still be eligible to received IEPs. The CTE Counselor and CTE Educator will remain at the facility for support.

There will be youth that are not part of the School District and therefore both the Programs Department and Mr. Boudreau, Director of CTE is in collaboration.

President Mueller commended the IDJJ team she has now as they are a full, committed team.

Lastly, IDJJ is working closely with the Department of Corrections to develop and finalize a plan provide education services to young adults who are in custody of the Department of Corrections. School District #428 is responsible for providing special education services and education to individuals who are under the age of twenty-two and require services, even if they were never part of IDJJ.

President Mueller concluded her report and turned it over to Chief Legal Counsel, Jullian Brevard, to provide consent decree updates.

Chief Legal Counsel stated weekly meetings are held with ACLU to discuss compensatory education. Compensatory education is education that is after school hours in the form of tutoring. There are two groups that are providing the services, LVI and Varsity tutors. Varsity focuses on online tutoring as opposed to LVI, which is at the facility. The youth are encouraged to engage in compensatory education. Chief Legal is confident that IDJJ will be out of the consent decree soon. President Mueller stated that IDJJ currently has a new court monitor assigned which will delay process as time is needed to assess and become familiar with the agency. Board Member Dalmage inquired if the

consent decree specifies that compensatory education is tutoring and yes, it is specified.

Board Member Green asked if education is the only area IDJJ is being monitored. Both staffing and compensatory education are the areas that are being monitored. Compensatory Education is tied to the time during the pandemic where school was not running normal hours. It was argued that compensatory education should follow the individual and be based on the needs.

President Mueller gave an update on the *R.J v. Mueller*.

A new lead attorney joined IDJJ from ACLU. The dynamic changes as the lead attorney comes from a private sector with a whole different approach.

Chief Legal Brevard confirmed the compensatory education is specified on the consent decree as tutoring.

IDJJ is only being monitored on compensatory education as well as staffing.

Board Member Briana Morales requested more information on the progress being made towards the staffing portion of the consent decree. The required ratio is 10:1 for general education and 6:1 for the special education. The issue is not the ratio but the specific teachers for specific subject areas. Staffing has been difficult due to lack of applicants and individuals resigning within weeks of the start date. The St. Charles transition will allow us to cover the specific subjects. Not only is hiring process is long but also candidate pool is low as there are teacher shortages in the country.

In the past IDJJ relied on shared services for the Human Resources functions which caused delays. IDJJ is also building its own infrastructure and now able to take over those functions under the department and have control.

Teacher retention has increased. Dr. Dunbar was acknowledged for the work on professional development and teacher retention. However, it was stated the area least successful in retention is with the IDJJ security.

The Board Members are encouraged to attend the Illinois Association of School Board 2023 conference. The school district is in the process of scheduling board training for the Board Members.

Board Members were reminded to complete the Open Meetings Act trainings.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT	5.0	As follows.
SCHOOL DISTRICT #428	5.1	Covered in the President's Report
<i>TA Principal/HR Update</i>		
DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR		
SCHOOL DISTRICT #428	5.2	Covered in the President's Report
<i>STC Emerging Adult Career and Technical Education and Facility Realignment</i>		
DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR		
SCHOOL DISTRICT #428	5.3	Covered in the President's Report
<i>Illinois Association of School Boards</i>		
DR. TRESA D. DUNBAR		
ASST. SUPT/DIR OF SPECIAL ED. UPDATE	6.0	As follows.
DR. BAMBI BETHEL-LEITSCHUH		
<i>Assistant Superintendent Summary August 2023; PLC's Professional Development, Intern Training</i>	6.1	The Director of Special Education was introduced, Mrs. Melissa Cory and Ms. Sydney Beckham, Executive Secretary II.
DR. BAMBI BETHEL-LEITSCHUH		The role of the Assistant Superintendent is in transition. Roles and responsibilities will be solidified and shared. The current focus is now curriculum and professional development to help support blended program and engagement of the youth.
		Monies from the fiscal year twenty-three was utilized to purchase ten promethium smart boards. The goal is for each teacher to have a smart board. The first training was held. Youth had the chance to engage with the boards. Pictures were shared showing the youth utilizing the boards.
		The supplemental Math curriculum has taken over two years to obtain, it is called Savvis. Supplemental support was needed. The Math PLC team will

receive an overview of the middle school curriculum as well as the high school curriculum. In October, there will be a six-hour training following the pilot program.

Language Live coaching was held. They had the chance to meet with the teachers and observe the classrooms. In school districts youth that are in need can be combined into the tier interventions. In Juvenile Justice, having to consider safety and security, scheduling is unique. This will allow youth that are eligible to be a part of the classroom setting. It is important to be mindful of placing the youth in the same room together as it can create tension and issues amongst the youth, due to trauma they may have encountered in the past.

Due to distance from immediate family member, youth are placed at certain facilities to be close to home. It is important that communication is maintained.

Board member Briana Morales inquired on available data from Language Live accessible to the Board to show its efficacy. She also wanted to know the reason Language Live was chosen as opposed to other programs.

Language Live was mandated by the consent decree, therefore, the option of looking into other program is not available until IDJJ is out of the decree. School District #428 is within the procurement operations; therefore, the district is unable to reach out to vendors. Hence the length of time it took to procure the opportunity to look at different kinds of curriculums through Bid Buy.

As far as advocacy of the program, to show growth, time is needed. In the case of the IDJJ youth, their stay can range from forty to sixty days. Therefore, a risk assessment is given called Yasi, which is the Pearson method of rating and mass score. Depending on tests results, the youth are available for the programs and eligible to earn credits. Though, it is difficult to maintain a sterile environment for the Language Live youth participating in the program, the district is still able to give the youth their level ability in the program.

The curriculum Council meeting is held annually and this year it will be on October 23-24 in Springfield. An action plan will be discussed for the school year, and it will evolve around blended learning.

*Special Education Update 6.2
Special Education Monthly Data
Summary/Narrative for
July/August 2023*

**DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL
EDUCATION
MRS. MELISSA CORY**

The new Special Education Director began in August. She has already visited all the facilities. There are currently sixty-seven youth with IEPs enrolled. There are special education teachers in all the facilities. There are monthly Professional Learning Community meetings with the Special Education

Resources Coordinators and Psychologist to discuss any outstanding issues or questions presented.

A meeting with the Division of Rehabilitation Services was held to discuss their role with IDJJ. A plan will be drafted to expand partnership. The intent is to start with Special Education staff and branch out to CTE and the Aftercare Department.

*CTE/ Vocational
Education Update*

7.0

MR. NOAH BOUDREAU

The Technical Manufacturing Association program started at St. Charles and Harrisburg with currently 13 students enrolled. Two students have been virtually completed. The only issue is getting the students to leave as the new group comes in.

Greater West Town is a seven-week program, it is now the youth's third week. Contracts with SimLog and VictoryXR have been signed and waiting on deliverable dates. SimLog will at both Harrisburg and St. Charles.

As career exploration course curriculum and lesson plan will expand to the other schools.

As soon as there is TMA graduates, there will be job placements. Money earned will be placed into a bank account. There is a high interest in the students as they know the program taken will become employment.

Solar Corporations is willing to build housing for youth interested in program as employees are in demand. A building was purchased in downtown Harrisburg specifically for IDJJ youth for the programming to be held.

Board Member Morales acknowledged the CTE programming available to the youth in IDJJ. She inquired on the celebratory piece upon completion of any program.

Certificates are given as well as celebrations. There is a graduation planned on October 27th, during this celebration, they are awarded the certificate of the program the specific students complete.

Any program or school completion triggers a release review. Considering the length of time, the youth are in custody of IDJJ, programs that do not exceed ten months are chosen to be able to have the youth complete and have opportunity.

In addition to the training and certification, having the opportunity to work prior to release date greatly increases the chance of success and reduces the risk of recidivism.

There are two upcoming job fairs.

The St. Charles emerging adult career training center programming plan, will continue running programs through the facility. However, there will be an

overlap with the school district CTE programming and St. Charles programming to support youth.

Start dates for the Nova Driving school programs are still pending. The students have been chosen from each facility.

The goal is to provide many options for the students to be able to build their own schedule, easily and quickly. However, it is important to be mindful of the number of options we are providing to make sure we are providing programs where most student are excelling in. Both a high school and community college model are being taken into consideration in trying to blend the two into one emerging adult center at St. Charles, the first in the nation. Schoolinks will allow to determine student interest in programming. There is involvement from the emerging Adult Justice Lab at Columbia University and the Institute of Justice Restoring Promise Group in developing the model for the St. Charles Emerging center.

Board Member Lamont Holifield commended Mr. Boudreau for the work is doing. As the president of Illinois Career and Technical Administrator's Organization, it would have been great to have Mr. Boudreau at the retreat as some people struggle with programs.

**BOARD DISCUSSION
ITEMS**

8.0 The list for Board Member liaison with an institution will be shared.

IDJJ has statewide jurisdiction, therefore, if the President and Secretary are present, the meeting can be held virtually. There will be one in-person training meeting for Board Members.

There is a total of six board member. A board member resigned and will be replaced.

ADJOURNMENT

9.0 A motion to adjourn was made by David Green. Board Member David Green then followed with a second motion. The motion passed. No Objections. President Mueller concluded the meeting at 12:16pm.