



Bruce Rauner
Governor

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Acting Director

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Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Date: August 5, 2016

Time: 9:52 a.m.

Place: Aftercare Conference Room, 100 N. Western Avenue, Chicago, IL

APPROVED: September 16, 2016

- IO 1.0 CALL TO ORDER by President Jesse Montgomery at 9:52 a.m.
- 1.1 Roll Call
- 1.2 Board Members Present: Jesse Montgomery, Dr. Tresa Dunbar Garrett, Patrick Griffin, and Candice Smith
- 1.3 Board Members Absent: Jennifer Vidis, David Green and Dr. Heather Dalmage
- 1.4 Others present: Michael Taylor, Chief of Staff; Samantha Gaddy, Senior Policy Advisor; Gloria Davis, Superintendent of School District; Dr. Sophia Jones-Redmond, Assistant Superintendent of School District; Aaron Harris, Chief Intergovernmental Relations; and Rachel Brady of Equip for Equality
- AI 2.0 CONSENT AGENDA
- 2.1 Approval of Agenda
President Montgomery motioned to move the approval of the agenda. Member Dunbar Garrett motioned to approve the agenda and Member Griffin seconded.
- Voice Vote:
Aye; Unanimous
Nay: None
Motion Carries
- 2.2 Approval of Minutes for May 20, 2016
President Montgomery motioned to approve the May 20, 2016 minutes with a correction to change the Department's Letterhead to reflect Director Candice Jones as she was the Director during the May 20, 2016 meeting. Member Dunbar Garrett moved to approve the May 20, 2016 minutes with the noted correction and Member Griffin seconded to approve the May 20, 2016 minutes with the noted correction.

Voice Vote:

Aye: Unanimous

Nay: None

Motion Carries.

3.0 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

3.1 Budget

President Montgomery recapped on Director Jones' last points with the Board prior to leaving IDJJ. President Montgomery mentioned that the State government has a budget and we at IDJJ have a budget in which we are operating under the Consent Decree. This gives IDJJ the opportunity to continue business until June 2017. There are hiring issues but as it relates to our budget, IDJJ is still funded to hire new employees. To that extension, Kewanee is officially offline with IDJJ. The last youth left Kewanee July 29, 2016. We are working with another State agency, the Department of Corrections to repurpose that facility for their needs.

Staff updates

President Montgomery mentioned that IDJJ has new staffs in place that are filling specific roles: Mr. Aaron Harris, Chief of Intergovernmental Relations; Mr. Michael Taylor, Chief of Staff; Ms. Marron Mahoney, Chief Legal Counsel; and Ms. Samantha Gaddy, Senior Policy Advisor that has recently joined the Department. As you know, the Department is small but is still growing.

Legislative

Aaron Harris mentioned that Acting Director Jesse Montgomery commends Governor Bruce Rauner on championing local and state juvenile justice reform bills as part of the administration's plan to support comprehensive criminal justice reform. Some of these reforms are as follows:

Senate Bill (SB) 2777 (Public Act 99-0628) Amends Illinois law in three ways: Class 4 (non-violent) Felony Offenses – Redirects juveniles adjudicated delinquent of certain Class 4 felonies from IDJJ from commitment to less restrictive, more effective rehabilitation settings. Second, Grants IDJJ release authority – This gives IDJJ the decision-making authority over youth release decisions, conditions of release and early discharge. Lastly, IDJJ Commitments for 17 year olds – This clarifies that any offender under 18 years of age when sentenced will first be committed to IDJJ.

SB 2524 provides youth that are in DCFS custody the ability to receive their first Illinois Identification Care free of charge.

SB 2282 (Public Act 99-0698), allows individuals who are on parole, aftercare release or mandatory supervised release to associate with other individuals who are similar situate in limited circumstances. These include activities relaxed to community programs, worship service, volunteering, and family engagements.

4.0 SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Davis mentioned that she will continue with staffing updates for the School District. All schools with the exception of St. Charles are up-to-date with regular and special education teachers. We have had some resignations, transfers, and retirements in St. Charles which has reduced their staffing totals. We are in the process of filling those vacant positions. We have interviewed and submitted a recommendation to hire a new Principal at St. Charles and he will be able to address the board by the next meeting. His paperwork is currently in background and as that paperwork is approved he should be starting prior to our next meeting. In addition, we have a new Special Education Director that will be starting, August 17, 2016, Ms. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh.

4.1 Technology Enhancements

Superintendent Davis mentioned that the School District is moving forward into the twenty-first century with technology as it relates to education like many other schools across the country. We are putting in the basic framework in our schools to allow all the educators and students to utilize the website for online education and opportunity through blended learning. In addition, the youth would be able to access the remedial learning program and special education students as well while in the classroom. There were many hours to get things set up and installed. A lot of team effort has been put in place to get things going and the hotspots in place with firewalls and security.

4.2 Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative Contract

Superintendent Davis mentioned that Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative Contract has been approved. We are now working in partnership with the cooperative in providing the needed resources for our special education program and certainly with St. Charles school. This would include tech and services support, IEP completion, professional development and instructional support. The services would include those employees that the Department does not provide like Speech and language Pathologist, Occupational and Physical Therapist, Psychologist, and Social Worker. When Director Jones and Superintendent Davis reached out to Dr. Tony Smith the State Superintendent for assistance with our special education program, this was the result of that meeting. There is no financial obligation to IDJJ. ISBE will be responsible for all financial support for this contract.

4.3 I-Star Special Education IEP System

Dr. Jones-Redmond touched on this area previous briefly. She noted that I-Star is a web-based special education database system for special education tracking and reporting. The database system is a special education data management tool for districts in Illinois and ISBE has tied all the special education components into one convenient system. There is no financial obligation to IDJJ, the system is provided free of charge to all Illinois School Districts through ISBE.

- 4.4 **Grad Point 2.0 Upgrade**
Superintendent Davis mentioned that Grad Point on-line learning system has improved and enhanced the visual format. This allows student centered learning and gives our youth more opportunities to easily personalize learning. Prior to the transition, Pearson experts trained all educators and principals on the new system. The roll-out went out in July 2016. The teachers are able to monitor the student's activity on the system. The next phase of the training would be a separate training for the Administrators to see what specialized enhancements should be made. All of this is for a quality enhancement of a good education. President Montgomery mentioned that the GradPoint update is also being utilized in all our Aftercare facilities and this enhancement is a wonderful opportunity for the youth who are seeking to graduate while in our programs.
- 4.5 **May and June Principal Data Reports**
Superintendent Davis mentioned that the monthly reports are provided by Brittany Groot. As you see our enrollment has went down, which is good. We average around 300 youth in school in May and the teacher student ratios are good in both areas; at least 5 to 1 ratio. Our teaching staff has improved since last fiscal year. The issuance of diplomas has improved overall as well. School cancellation continues to decline in St. Charles but with the new principal starting in August, we anticipate this area should see improvement. President Montgomery wants to add the average length of stay at the schools. This would greatly help in seeing where the increases or decreases in IEPs are coming from. Most of the school cancellations are largely due to calls off for sick, lack of security staff, and/or leaves of absences.
- 4.6 **May and June Special Education Monitoring Reports**
Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that she is pleased with the outcomes and the major push to first of all ensure we are not waiting for records from other districts before we provide services to the SPED students. Total numbers of youth entering out of compliance for May was 29 to 15 and June was 15 to 0, the IEPs have continued to go down for May and June. We are working hard to ensure our numbers of IEPs are in compliance. The School District is helping the teachers meet the federal requirement by training and reminders.
- DI 5.0 **INTERESTING JUVENILE JUSTICE ARTICLES**
Superintendent Davis provided several articles as it relates to our programs at IDJJ. These are articles that were shared with the Principals and surrounds discussion with them and we have asked them to discuss the articles with their teachers. It is articles like these that gives room for open discussion with the Principal and Educators.
- DI 6.0 **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS**
Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that all the Special Education Training was given to each Special Education Teacher in the School District and the training was well received by all because it informed all educators at once with expectations. One of the goals is to have the SPED Director to train the SPED staff on a quarterly base and with extension the Regular Education staff as well.

Member Dr. Dunbar Garrett commended the School District and the staff in their efforts of improvement and has noted that, every time we meet as a board, we are seeing fantastic improvements. The School District have come from nothing and seeing this progress is fantastic, extend this commendation to your Principals and Educators on their efforts in making progressive changes in the schools and students. It is evident that you are making a difference, thank you for the positive work you do with the teachers.

AI 7.0 Meeting adjourned at 11:06 am