 **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 20, 2019**

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| **CALL TO ORDER** | **1.0** | A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by President Heidi Mueller, on Friday, September 20, 2019 at 9:42 a.m. at the Aftercare Conference Room, Chicago, IL. |
| **ROLL CALL** | **1.1** | Roll call by Recording Administrative Assistant, Susana Tirado resulted in the following: Board Members answered Present: President Heidi Mueller; Dr. Heather Dalmage; Mr. John Patrick Griffin; Dr. Shawn Jackson; and Ms. Jennifer Vidis.  Board Members Absent: Mr. David Green.  Others Present: Dr. Sophia Jones-Redmond, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Tresa Dunbar, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. NeAngela Dixon, Acting Chief Legal Counsel; Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh, Director of Special Education; and Mr. Ricardo D. Johnson, Career and Technical Education Director; Susana Tirado, Recorder; Karima Douglas; Erin Johnson; and Jamilah Mottley-Brown. |
| **CONSENT AGENDA** | **2.0** | As follows. |
| **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** | **2.1** | President Mueller motioned to move the approval of the September 20, 2019 agenda. Member Dr. Dalmage motioned to approve the agenda and Member Griffin seconded.  Voice Vote  Aye: Unanimous  Nay: None  Motion Carries |
| **APPROVAL OF JULY 19, 2019 MINUTES** | **2.2** | President Mueller motioned to move the approval of the minutes for July 19, 2019. Member Vidis motioned to approve the minutes for July 19, 2019 and Member Griffin seconded.  Voice Vote  Aye: Unanimous  Nay: None  Motion Carries |
| **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** | **3.0** | No public comments. |
| **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** | **4.0** | Director Mueller acknowledged all the hard work and the progress being made in the Education Department. She stated that our team is tremendously committed and working exceptionally hard and focused. The BOE wrapped up the summer monitor visits and she is thinking that the monitors’ reports will be available at the next meeting. As to the conditions of confinement, monitor Dr. Kelly Daville, who wrote the youth and custody model and is affiliated with the Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, has monitored 28 different jurisdictions from all over the United States. Director Mueller mentioned that when Dr. Daville talks about the progress being done in Illinois and it is her favorite place to come because she finds the team very inspiring. She also said she is shocked about the quick progress we have made. Mississippi has been monitored for 10 years and is not half as good as where we are at. She acknowledged how “the folks” here deserve so much credit to get that done. They have been meeting substantial compliance and are holding it. She stated that a lot of things that have been in compliance will be dropped off from the concept decree. So, because of this, instead of focusing on reaching compliance for the concept decree, the focus will then be on the goals and visions. Plus, instead of paying all these monitors, the money can be used to pay for the things we want to do for our kids.  Another update that Director mentioned is that the Trauma-Informed trainings are going to be done throughout the Department and so it is going to go into the executive-level and there will be training executives as well about how as leaders do, they reinforce a trauma-informed department. They will go through a process of 12 circles led by David Fischer as an executive team and will go over the experiences, leadership capacity, and interactions and how do we make sure that in our management style and our administration that is really infiltrating all we do with our staff and how we are reinforcing the department. She states she is very excited about this. She believes that the work that is happening with David Fischer is very transformational for the Department and has hope and positive expectations for this constant evolution, not just an event or place.  Director Mueller stated that there was a grant given from a New Yorker and through NYU and other contacts there. The lady from New York donated money to transform IYC-Chicago for the kids and create more green space for the kids and build living walls and make life affirming visual space within the facility. A designer from Pottery Barn will be help in designing a tactile wall that kids can touch, feel, and work on and garden. The goal is to make a life-affirming space. The lady likes to transform spaces by using green, gardening, and landscaping to help impact people’s experience and healing. This is relative to healing trauma, per a board member. Per Director Mueller, this is the goal to have a calming visual and space, so it is connected. This is hopefully happening around the Spring of 2020. This person is going to pay for the completion of the vision. There was a proposal as to how the outcome of the visual would be, but it is still being planned. This is a part of the evolution for DJJ according to Director Mueller. After working with the practice and improving it, the space is now not in line with our mission and our practice, so it makes sense to have the space support the work that is trying to be done. With this project, behavior will be measured, per Director Mueller, microphones will be added to the visual to measure sound in the area. Based on how the environment looks, we will be able to see how space influences behavior and wellness.  Director also mentioned DJJ got a $400,000 grant from the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform and Youth Advocacy Programs (YAP). YAP is a national organization that has a successful model that works with high-risk, high-needs kids. They want to test their model and feel this approach will work. They will measure intensive case-management and intensive mentoring with wrap-around services (working with the family of the youth and the youth as a system) with an educational/vocational component to it. We got chosen after putting in an RFP for it, out of all the national schools. They are excited about the impact it will make and are interested in our mission and vision. Starting in October there will be a meeting and it is planned to have two cohorts of six months with fifteen kids as a pilot project to evaluate. Utilize the YAP Model Program as a transition for kids out of our custody, onto aftercare more quickly and to use this model as a commitment to DJJ rather than being placed in the secure facilities. They will be placed at home with YAP services for the period of their commitment. The goal is to study that pilot and as we know what it will result in, we will use that evidence to expand. We already have authority to place youth on authorized absence. YAP wants to work with people who are high-needs and high-risk. Once this project is completed successfully, then we will spread the word out.  In addition to the report, Director stated that DJJ will be receiving a big grant from OJJDP to build MST, Multi-System Therapy on aftercare. This is a blue-chip evidence-based program which has shown to reduce recidivism and has been successful. It focuses on the family system, so a family that is willing to engage is needed. It is believed that this may be a good response for some of the younger kids.  Director acknowledged Chief of Staff Erin Johnson for all the work she has been doing with developing post-secondary college programing and being a fixer in all areas. She mentioned that Jamila Mottley-Brown is our new Public Information Officer and will speak about “Our Mission to Me”.  NeAngela Dixon, Chief Legal Counsel, mentioned some updates. She stated that they are in the closure of the Mental Health consent decree. Last year the order to stop monitors from coming was entered, so they only had plaintiff’s monitors come, with no issues raised with the Court. She is hoping that on October 12th, Mental Health will be done with monitoring. And it will be nice for the MH Department to concentrate on the RJ Consent Decree. The judge wants to see this litigation progress and smaller reports with more targeted information from the monitors with clear recommendations and steps for DJJ to come out to the litigation. The goal is to be in compliance. Next year we will take the recommended steps they have for other compliance.  On October 8th, per Director Mueller, Julio Ecuafor, a champion of the New Orleans Pelicans will be visiting IYC-Chicago doing a program with the kids as part of Project Swish. There may be some media on that.  Director Mueller then introduced Karima Douglas, Deputy Ombudsperson, whom stated that she has been visiting the school at St. Charles more often and sitting in classes in IYC-Chicago more because this showed that the kids were going to school more consistently and she could meet with them more easily there and talk to them and get to know how they felt about their education and time with DJJ. This worked out as a central location to touch base with kids. She stated that we are the advocates for all the young people who are committed to the Department both in custody and in Aftercare. Ms. Douglas mentioned that she is excited to see the Barber Program “get off ground and the YAP wrap-around program that can become a reality for the State. She would not like to see prison-like facilities for kids ever again.  Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that a Principal has given notice that he will retire in November, and she appreciates that he gave enough notice to be able to put up an announcement for individuals who want to temporarily be assigned, so that there be no discontinuance of services. The Principal position will be posted while he is still in the position at Harrisburg. She added a testament to our new Chief of Staff, Erin Johnson, because she gets things done and she is the lead of the HR Staffing bi-weekly meetings, where we talk about postings going up and all the process for HR going through. |
| **MISSION TO ME INITIATIVE** | **4.1** | Ms. Jamilah Mottley-Brown mentioned that the Mission to Me initiative is to bring more awareness about our mission and take it across the Department and out publicly. It was stated that there will be a series of different people communicating what the mission means to them in a video. Also, it was being planned to have a Mission in Action video, where pictures are being taken while the mission is happening. Director invited the board members if were interested, they may be a part of this.  In addition to the video that hopefully will be shared by the end of the month, Ms. Mottley-Brown mentioned that she has been focusing on publicizing what is being done within the Department intentionally by meeting with other universities and all her external communications. She is also working on a social media page and website to reflect the work that is being done and sharing the mission more broadly. |
| **SUPERINTENDANT’S REPORT** | **5.0** | Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jones-Redmond thanked the Board members for their attendance at the board meeting. Dr. Jones-Redmond then introduced her new Administrative Assistant Susana Tirado. Ms. Tirado briefly spoked about how she prayed to be a part of IDJJ after she researched the Board of Education and her interest in it. Afterwards, Dr. Jones-Redmond thanked her Central Office Administration team for stepping up and helping her in the absence of an administrative assistant. |
| **TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE(TIC) ENVIRONMENT UPDATES** | **5.1** | Dr. Jones-Redmond-Redmond mentioned updates for the School District, including that this year the School District is continuing the initiative to create Trauma-Informed environments particularly in schools. Dr. David Fischer is working on a “Toolkit” and working with the school staff, counselors, teachers, and principals so that each school is individually helped in accordance to its own needs in creating trauma-informed environments, not just as schools, but as environments. In addition, students’ feedback is being used to inform us for our work. |
| **ALL SCHOOL STAFF MEETING –**  **NOVEMBER 7-8, 2019** | **5.2** | The All-Staff Meeting on November 7th and 8th in Springfield, Illinois was also mentioned, in which a formal invitation will be sent to all the educational staff and school-related JJS to join us. Title I is paying for the rooms and per diems. She stated that she will be have an Administrators’ Retreat in October in preparation for the All-Staff Retreat in November. |
| **CURRICULUM COUNCIL UPDATES** | **5.3** | Dr. Dunbar stated that she is excited that the School District has a functioning Curriculum Council, on which teachers are taking responsibility and ownership of their work. The Curriculum Council has four sub-committees, which are Assessment, Instructional Focus and Process, Curriculum Materials and Alignment, and Professional Development. It is agreed that for the year 2019-2020 the focus will be Assessment and Alignment because those need to be focused on first to get things moving forward. Dr. Dunbar further stated that the Curriculum Council met twice via phone and are concentrating on assessment systems that they want to research and therapeutic behavior systems to try and interface. One of the plans is to interface with counselors and looking at how therapeutic behavior is being embedded and integrate that with PBIS and with David Fischer with the trauma-informed practices. This is exciting because this is being led by the sub-committees. They are now focusing on how kids are being assessed with a goal. The goal is to develop literacy practices around low-level functioning kids that are coming into the schools, especially with the increase of eight graders coming in. Assessment, Alignment, and Materials will be the last things that will be worked on in 2021. Dr. Dunbar states that they are really focused on getting to instruction through the materials. The number of teachers increased about 15% resulting in smaller group instruction and more one-on-one instruction. Each lead of the curriculum subcommittees is responsible for interfacing with the SIT team and observing to improve. The teachers are interested in co-teaching and she states that they need to make a schedule for co-teaching and interfacing with each other’s facilities. Soon we want it to turn into co-facilitators rather than co-teachers. To do so about 25% of teachers have visited each other’s facilities and are working together to share the common practices around the goals that are identified. She is very excited for getting a chance to do great work for the kids around instructional practice. She mentioned that the vision, leadership, and ownership is there, and people are owning this task even though it is tough.  Dr. Jones-Redmond continued to say that the Curriculum Council in embedded in improving our instruction to the kids with teaching and learning. She states that the teachers are outstanding, and this is the way to highlight the good that is happening rather than focusing on the bad things happening. |
| **DRIVERS’ EDUCATION** | **5.4** | Dr. Jones-Redmond was excited to introduce the Drivers’ Education Program which is “up and going” in IYC Harrisburg, where a student was able to get his driving permit prior to leaving the facility. Aftercare is working with the youth to get the other portion of the program done during their time in aftercare, which is to earn their driver’s license.  Dr. Jones-Redmond mentioned that there is a teacher endorsed in Drivers’ Education in IYC-Pere Marquette. There is a schedule for the Harrisburg teacher to go to Pere Marquette to get them going on this 30-hour program up and going. She stated she is looking at other creative ways to offer this program to the northern region as well. Perhaps they may use a WebEx for the northern region, so the teachers will not have to travel. This was a dream that is now becoming a reality. |
| **STAFFING REPORT (AUGUST)** | **5.5** | One of the things that is different from the past three and a half years with the Department, per Dr. Jones-Redmond, is that there were two resignations and one asked if they could stay. She stated that typically there is a mass exodus in summer, that is very common that school teachers transition to other positions during the summer. There is improvement on recruiting as well as on retaining staff by having relationships with them. This is partly the reason for the All-Staff Meeting, so that we can all be together and build relationships with each other.  A second piece about staffing that is not embedded in the report is that this is one of the first times where the School District has had all Principals, Central Office Administrators, and Administrative Assistants, with no vacancies.  Student enrollment was 210 in August and 190 in July. There is an average of about 215 for the year. There are 50 teachers employed and made a 3.5% retention improvement. This means expectations are shifting. The overall passing rate is 63%, which is above average. Within September and August, we have issued 92 high school diplomas, 66 GEDs, and 23 eighth grade diplomas. |
| **JUNE AND JULY 2019 SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORTS** | **5.6** | Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh mentioned that she has a new office location and thanked everyone that was part of the process to get this new office at Belleville with Aftercare. She thanked the Administrators for meeting every time they have a retreat.  She gave an update on a part of the Pearson program, “Text to Speech”, a simple process to read the language of the documents in front of youth on a screen. There is a huge issue with web security and Dr. Dunbar was asked to join Dr. Bethel on the calls with DoIt. She also stated that IEPs have been out of compliance when it comes to accommodations for youth with special needs.  Dr. Bambi Bethel-Leitschuh further said that there will be training and transitioning to a new program for the electronic IEP processes, through a computerized program called EMBRACE to have access to records of the youth quicker. We will be able to generate reports with a click of the button, work more efficiently with this new program, and transfer records to and from the School District from facilities. Furthermore, Dr. Bethel mentioned that in the All-Staff meeting taking place in October, the staff will be receiving a training for the program and then a follow-up training will happen later. The plan is that the whole process will be effective Jan 1, 2020 for the second semester, and it has a 5-year contract with a renewal option. It has taken 2 years, several declinations and 15 people to touch this document to approve and onboard this contract, per Dr. Jones-Redmond.  Per, Dr Bethel-Leitschuh, looking at the transition issues and the evaluations of the district, Special Education programs were below what the state wanted to see. But, because of our goals, now there are tools that have been developed and have cleared that transition issue. Also, Dr. Bethel mentioned that as she is part of the committee with the Illinois State Advisory Council, the council is working with ISBE to make improvements. The Special Education Resource Coordinators are having internal people train our other staff and Dr. Quock, a school psychologist and Vanderbilt, are working with proper protocol and trying to improve the hearing and vision screening that is being done on youth. Also, staff in medical are being trained because some staff was lost from the nursing department, so they are trying to improve that. The medical side is being worked on.  Per Dr. Bethel-Leitschuh’s, there are 2 psychologists that are going to an intense training program. Once finished with the program, they will be able to train others for a year in our school psychology system and under the internship. This is huge because there are only 9 schools in Illinois that offer this training of school psychologists for internships. This is in hopes of these two psychologists having a second shot and being ready to go in our school system. It is planned for them to be ready in October.  In regard to the school information technology system, Dr. Bethel-Leitschuh’s states that ISBE is being kept current and updated by putting in the updated data of completions, staff entrances, and staff exits. This week in ISBE, staff will look into the tech portion of the school report cards and the dual-credit options that the State sees and will be keeping our promotions current. |
| **AUGUST 2019 PRINCIPAL DATA AND EDUCATION REPORTS** | **5.7** | Dr. Tresa Dunbar mentioned that that the School District is in compliance with the Consent Decree for both General Education and Special Education and that the School District is doing a good job with staff retention. Dr. Dunbar also mentioned that IYC-Warrenville/Maya Angelou Alternative High School is in full compliance with Special Education. She further mentioned that the School District is focused on ensuring that eligible youth have the opportunity to obtain a GED or a high school diploma for completing the required coursework. |
| **CTE AND POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMMING ACROSS THE SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATE**  COSMETOLOGY PROGRAM (MAYA ANGELOU) AND BARBER PROGRAM (THURGOOD MARSHALL)  DISTRICT-WIDE COLLEGE AND CAREER FAIRS  LAKELAND COLLEGE UPDATES | **5.8** | Mr. Ricardo D. Johnson stated that he only has one update and one plan of action. The first is the Cosmetology program at IYC-Warrenville and the Barber Program in IYC-Chicago still have a pending IDFPR site inspection. He states he will be resubmitting the application package and looking forward to moving forward within a month or so.  The layout of Hope Barbershop, where the IYC-Chicago Barber Program will take place was attached to the meeting agenda materials. The barbershop has 10 barber chairs, 4 hair dryers, 4 shampoo bowls, and a waiting room with a white board for the instructional aspect of the program. Per Mr. Johnson, it is planned to hopefully start the Barber program with five youth and further develop the program before getting to full capacity. The Barbershop has the capacity of ten youth to be enrolled in the program.  The second item mentioned by Mr. Johnson is that a college fair, which was started by IYC-Harrisburg, is being planned at St. Charles, Pere Marquette, Warrenville, and Chicago. He will work closely with CTE teachers and School Counselors to host a college and career fair at each facility. He is excited about the progress being made and thanked the Board for their support. |
| **BOARD DISCUSSION ITEMS** | **6.0** | None |
| **ADJOURNMENT:** | **7.0** | President Mueller motioned to adjourn the Board of Education meeting. Member Dr. Dalmage motioned to adjourn and Member Vidis seconded. Members were all in favor.  Voice Vote  Aye: Unanimous  Nay: None  Motion Carries |
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|  |  | Meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.  Next Board of Education Meeting will be Friday, November 15, 2019  Aftercare Conference Room, Chicago |
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