

# Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development

**Minutes of Quarterly Meeting  
Wednesday, June 23rd, 2021**

## **Present:**

Steve Michael, Chair, Iowa Department of Human Rights  
Wendy Greenman, Iowa Workforce Development  
Will Keck, Chair, State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council  
Gary Niles, Juvenile Court Services  
Jay Pennington, Iowa Department of Education  
Mary Sheka, Iowa Economic Development  
Steffani Simbric, Child Advocacy Board  
Tyler Weig, 4-H Youth Development  
Doug Wolfe, Iowa Department of Human Services  
Dale Woolery, Office of Drug Control Policy

## **Others Present:**

Volta Adovor, Iowa Youth Congress  
Brianna Deason, CJJP/AmeriCorps, Youth Development Specialist  
Elle Fitzgerald, CJJP/AmeriCorps, Youth Development Specialist  
Abby King, Iowa Youth Congress  
Tiara Mosely, CJJP/AmeriCorps, Coordinator, State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council  
Meghan Oster, Iowa College Aid  
Jill Padgett, CJJP, Juvenile Justice Expert  
Kayla Powell, CJJP, NYTD/Youth Development Coordinator  
Julie Rinker, CJJP, Administrative Secretary  
Megan Sibbel, Iowa College Aid  
Jordan Pineda, Forum for Youth Investment

## ● **Welcome and Announcements**

Steve Michael welcomed all in attendance at 2:03 p.m. A quorum was present.

Tyler Wieg, 4-H Youth Development, was welcomed as a new attendee.

Will Keck, Chair, State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC), was recognized for his four years of service with SIYAC. During the past year, Keck served as SIYAC Chair and helped facilitate the two Youth Action Squads along with Volta Adovor and Abby King. Michael noted how SIYAC and the Youth Action Squads provided opportunities for youth engagement.

Keck thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve Iowa's youth.



**Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning**

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- **Youth Participatory Action Research Opportunity**

Michael noted that funding and technical assistance was provided by the Forum for Youth Investment (FYI) for the Youth Action Squads. A new opportunity has arisen through FYI regarding Youth Participatory Action Research training and a grant in the amount of \$15,000. A cohort of stakeholders will help move Iowa forward.

Jordan Pineda, FYI, noted that Iowa will take part in the Youth Participatory Action Research training. Training sessions have been offered to children's cabinet participants during the summer, fall, and winter sessions. Strategies and practices will be shared with decision makers in Iowa communities and other partner communities on the East Coast. The effort launches next Tuesday and is designed to identify internal stakeholders. He encouraged members to participate.

Michael added that a team from Iowa will participate in the cohort to implement strategies learned from the group. Participants will include youth, ICYD members, and other state agency representatives. A calendar invitation will be sent for next Tuesday's session. All ICYD members are encouraged to attend and/or invite other agency representatives.

### **Kids Count**

Michael reported that Iowa is ranked 9th out of the 50 states. He reviewed several indicators:

- Teens not in school or working—7%: Iowa has improved by one percentage point since 2019
- High school students not graduating on time: This area has seen improvement
- Children and teens who are overweight or obese—34% (or 1/3 of youth): No improvement
- Teen births per thousand—14 per thousand: This area has reduced in half since 2019 (was 19 per thousand)

Michael noted that the information is available online. He encouraged members to review the data and consider the indicators in future efforts.

- **Approval of 3/24/21 Minutes**

Doug Wolfe moved to approve the minutes from the March meeting, seconded by Keck. The motion was unanimously approved.



- **Iowa College Aid Presentation and Discussion**

Megan Sibbel and Meghan Oster with Iowa College Aid provided information on a grant awarded to the Local College Access Network that seeks to collect secondary and post-secondary education data for system-involved youth. The project involves several partners—OptIn Local College Access Network, Iowa College Aid, and the Iowa Departments of Education, Human Rights, and Human Services.

The project will analyze aggregated K-12 and post-secondary education data to compile results, outcomes, and recommendations for system-involved youth. The report will be used to inform work with and training for counselors, educators, and others. They noted the amount of cross-agency interest in this information.

Some data elements are:

- Grade level at time of system involvement
- Types of system involvement
- Enrollment status (enrolled/drop out)
- High school graduation
- Length of time to earn high school degree
- FAFSA or ACT/SAT completions
- Enrollment in post-secondary education: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> year following high school graduation
- Retention and persistence
- Post-secondary graduation time and type

Jay Pennington noted that this effort will provide more in-depth information and will be used by a variety of agencies. Comparisons will be made to a 2016 report on 'Fostering Connections' and will include other high-need groups such as migrant and homeless youth and their overall success in high school. Other uses of the report may include revisiting school district requirements, policymaking, advocacy, and other ways to support youth in foster care. Pennington encouraged members to consider how this information could be used in their respective agencies and to identify other groups that would find the information useful.

Sibbel encouraged members to contact her if they wished to be more involved.



- **ICYD 3-Year Action Plan**

Michael noted that during the last meeting, a motion passed to seat a work group to begin development of the three-year plan. Separately, a meeting with representatives from FYI provided some direction. He noted the importance of collaboration and buy-in from all involved agencies. Therefore, to strengthen collaborative efforts, changes were made to Goal 1.

Kayla Powell reported that the work group identified the following shared values (SHAPE).

- Shared accountability
- Healing-centered approach
- Authentic youth engagement
- Progress
- Equity

Powell also noted the importance of effective collaboration. To accomplish this, Goal 1: ICYD State Agencies will Effectively Collaborate and several action steps were developed that include identifying youth engagement strategies, buy-in/signed commitment from agency directors, consistent meeting attendance, shared leadership through the election of a rotating ICYD chair, and adoption of Results Count strategies. Goal 1 would be completed during the first year.

A brief discussion was held regarding the rotating chair. Michael noted he envisioned a chair/vice chair or two co-chairs that would take the lead. Staff support would still be provided by DHR.

Years 1-3 incorporate Goal 2: ICYD will Advance Positive Youth Development and Authentic Youth Engagement within all ICYD State Agencies. Action steps include adopting a positive youth development approach, youth engagement/participation, financial compensation to youth participants, technical assistance and development of materials, staff training, increasing the number of youth who serve on boards and commissions, and outcome evaluations.

Years 2-3 focus on Goal 3: ICYD will Improve Coordination of Supports that Positively Impact Conditions for Youth, Especially Opportunities for Youth/Young Adults. Action steps include improving mental health access for youth; identifying/studying issues affecting youth through youth participatory action research; examining school culture/climate; and promoting vocational, educational, and personal development opportunities for successful transition to adulthood.



Powell suggested that next steps would be to contact department/agency directors and convene a work group meeting to develop framework.

- **Agency Updates**

- **SIYAC**—Keck reported that the SIYAC application process has ended. Approximately 60 applications were received from all over Iowa (rural/urban) to fill only 13-14 slots. The 4th quarter meeting is next Wednesday and includes derecho clean up in Marshalltown as a service project. Orientation for new members will be held in August.
- **Iowa Youth Congress**—Abby King reported that the 2021 term has ended. Regions have met to present service projects and action plans for committees. The application process closed at the beginning of June.
- **Department of Education**—Pennington reported that the department is partnering with the University of Iowa to expand statewide mental health support for pre-K through grade 12. This includes training, resources and outreach to educators and schools across the state. Approximately \$20 million has been set aside from COVID and other related funding.
- **Department of Human Services**—Wolfe reported that the Iowa Aftercare website [<https://iowaaftercare.org/>] outlines services available for youth who have aged out of foster care. New kinship caregiver payments begin July 1 (\$300 per month—and the same as licensed foster parents). DHS representatives and youth in foster care attended a national summit on youth engagement. Iowa DHS has decided to develop a youth engagement policy. The first project is to increase the clothing allowance for youth in foster care.
- **Iowa Workforce Development**—Greenman reported that the focus has been on getting individuals back to work and that unemployment claims have reduced. Iowa Works offices have opened for limited in person assistance.
- **Volunteer Iowa**—Mary Sheka reported on a pilot initiative with VISTA. Will be hiring to expand youth service learning.
- **Office on Drug Control Policy**—Dale Woolery reported that grant funds will target opioid/stimulant misuse because overdoses have spiked in the last two years. Other work will focus on policy issues for the next legislative session.
- **Juvenile Court Services**—Gary Niles reported that a lot of focus has been on the Family First Prevention Services Act. He noted concerns with shelter placement. Several placement facilities have experienced workforce shortages due to low wages.



- **Department of Human Rights**—Michael reported that a new youth justice subcommittee is being added to the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. The subcommittee will comprise youth, aged 16-26, who have lived experience in the juvenile justice system. The upcoming Youth Justice Summit will involve both juvenile justice and child welfare youth. Two AmeriCorps positions have been added to serve as youth development specialists.
- **Adjourn**

Michael noted that in-person meetings will resume as much as possible depending upon meeting space and WiFi availability.

The meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rinker  
Administrative Secretary  
Div. of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning

