

Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

321 E. 12th Street, Rooms 319-320
Des Moines, IA 50319

Wednesday, December 8th, 2021
Hybrid—Google Meet

Present:

Steve Michael, Chair, Iowa Department of Human Rights
Julie Hibben, Iowa Department of Public Health
Gary Niles, Juvenile Court Services, 3rd Judicial District
Jay Pennington, Iowa Department of Education
Mary Sheka, Iowa Economic Development/Volunteer Iowa
Steffani Simbric, Child Advocacy Board
Shanell Wagler, Early Childhood, Iowa
Dale Woolery, Office of Drug Control Policy

Others Present:

Brianna Deason, CJP/AmeriCorps, Youth Development Specialist
Lexi Duffy, Iowa Youth Congress
Kayla Jabra, Iowa Youth Congress
Evan Johnson, Legislative Services Agency
Abby King, CJP/AmeriCorps, Youth Action Squads/YPAR
Brienne Messer, CJP/AmeriCorps, Iowa Youth Congress
Jill Padgett, CJP, Juvenile Justice Expert

I. Welcome and Announcements

Steve Michael called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. Introductions were made. A quorum was present.

Michael reported that the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council is a sponsor of the Iowa Summit on Justice & Disparities. ICYD members were invited to attend via the sponsorship and asked to advise Michael by December 10.

II. Approval of 09/22/21 Minutes

Shanell Wagler moved to approve the minutes from the September meeting, seconded by Gary Niles. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Meetings with Directors

- A. Michael reported that he and Kayla Powell have been meeting with department directors. Thus far, they have met with the Commission on Volunteer Service, the Departments of Human Services and Public Health, Iowa Workforce Development and 4-H Youth Development. Meetings will be scheduled with the remaining ICYD member agencies.



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The purpose of the meetings is to obtain agency commitment toward youth development, support for disconnected youth, and inclusion of youth with lived experience.

Two ICYD subcommittees will be seated to work on these efforts and represent their agencies—Interagency Technical Assistance Team and Positive Youth Development Framework Team. The Technical Assistance team will work to take on tasks established and the three-year plan.

IV. Youth Payment Policy

Michael reviewed the Department of Human Rights' recently developed youth payment policy. The policy was developed to provide payment to youth for participation in various activities and speaking events. He encouraged other agencies to develop similar policies to encourage youth participation and engagement.

Michael asked ICYD members if they would like to adopt this policy for youth who participate in ICYD activities. Funding is provided by the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation and the Forum for Youth Investment.

Gary Niles asked about liability. Michael reported that SIYAC members are required to sign a release.

Dale Woolery asked about dual payments. Michael responded that CJJP staff will ensure that won't happen.

Wagler moved to adopt the youth payment policy, seconded by Jay Pennington. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. SIYAC Youth Issues Research

In the absence of James Piazza, SYIAC Chair, Bri Deason provided an overview of comments received through feedback walls that were posted in four locations—2 universities, 1 high school and 1 virtual. A total of 445 responses were received and covered 24 categories.

Questions were: 1) What issues do youth face in your community? 2) What issues do youth face in your school? 3) What issues do youth face in your state?

In total, the following themes were identified: mental health, sexual violence, climate change, racism, inequalities, and political bias/polarization.

Other research was conducted via focus groups and surveys. From that information several committees were seated—racial equity, environment, health, education, and service. Position statements will be developed.



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Michael reported that legislators have questioned whether 21 SIYAC members factually represent youth concerns across the state. Efforts towards focus groups and feedback walls were a direct result and involved over 1,000 youth. A report will be developed on the state of youth in Iowa. A variety of youth groups will be involved (e.g. AMP, Iowa Youth Congress, Youth Justice Council). Information will be presented to legislators in March.

Members suggested the presentation include how the information was obtained and that future questions include “what’s going right” and include youth from rural areas.

VI. 2021-22 Youth Action Squads

Abby King reported that a diverse group of 31 youth have been selected to participate in the 2022-23 Youth Action Squads. Youth will select a topic. Suggestions have included racial equity, gender equity, LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive rights, climate change, access to education, gun violence, mental illness, disabilities and rights of immigrants.

VII. Career Pathway Institute—There was no presentation.

VIII. Agency Updates

Human Rights—Michael reported that CJJP is hiring two researchers and that three openings exist for juvenile re-entry navigators. The navigator positions were made possible through funding by Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The navigators will work in the 5th and 6th Judicial Districts and the Boys’ State Training school. Their work will focus on employment skills and career readiness for disabled youth returning home.

A \$1.5 million federal grant was awarded to CJJP by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The grant will provide expansion of pre-charge diversion in communities. More information will be shared as details are finalized.

Office of Drug Control Policy—Dale Woolery reported that the 2022 Iowa Drug Control Strategy was released. He is interested in partnering with youth groups to gain information on substance use. Powell responded that through the “Talking Wall”, youth are indicating needs for substance abuse treatment when they return from out-of-home placement and for their parents. Woolery was interested in a summary.

Department of Education—Jay Pennington reported that the annual report on education was released last week and contains student performance information and enrollment. The Iowa School Performance website provides information on school accountability. Other work pertains to the use of ESSA funds to the department.



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Niles asked about the impact of COVID. Pennington responded that pre-school and kindergarten enrollment declined, while 9th grade increased. The number of ACT tests also declined. He added that the department will be conducting more in-depth reviews of the effects of COVID on student achievement, particularly in the areas of mathematics and linguistics by race, gender, and poverty. From this information, strategies will be developed to address issues.

Michael asked youth to comment. It was noted that many colleges do not require ACT test scores and as a result, more youth have declined to take the test.

Iowa Youth Congress—Lexi Duffy reported that approximately 90 youth attended Mock Congress on November 1 at the Capitol. Each IYC district provided position statements for a cumulative total of 11 positions that were debated. Four committees were seated—equity, student voice, environment, and education.

Kayla Jabre reported that research is being conducted to develop position statements. At the November 18 meeting, several panelists presented information and answered questions. ICYD members were encouraged to provide names of legislators who might be willing to champion legislation.

Brianne Messer, IYC Coordinator, reported that a youth shadow week will be held in February. ICYD members were asked to participate.

Public Health—Julie Hibben noted the Iowa Youth Survey and that participation is down. She attributed it to other surveys and continued effects of the pandemic. She noted the alignment of DHS and Public Health and provided a link for further information and feedback: <https://hhsalignment.iowa.gov/>. She also provided a link to a report on methamphetamine use:

<https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/55/Methamphetamine%20Use%20in%20Iowa%20Report.pdf>

Juvenile Court Services—Gary Niles reported that a crisis in congregate care continues due to a lack of group care and emergency shelter beds. He attributed this to facility closures, workforce issues, and reimbursement rates.

The Chief Justice will be seating a task force to review juvenile justice in Iowa. This includes funding, policies, alignment within state government, dual-involved youth, congregate care, and more. The first meeting will be held in January.

Niles also reported that 18 secure delinquency beds for boys will focus on criminogenic issues. The beds will be located at Family Resources and Four Oaks. He noted the broad range of treatment required to treat a variety of youth in placement. He also noted concerns for females and lack of beds and was hopeful that 16 beds for females may open up. Work continues with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).



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Volunteer Services—Mary Sheka reported that over 10,000 Iowa youth serve in AmeriCorps, service learning, mentoring, and national service programs. Work includes substance abuse prevention and work with opioid affected youth in child welfare and juvenile justice. She noted that these efforts are provided through funding from the Department of Public Health and the Office of Drug Control Policy. Mentors are trained in trauma-informed mentoring. She offered to connect with others to support and provide mentoring services.

Early Childhood Iowa—Shanell Wagler reported that an early childhood development training will be held on January 5th. Several workshops will be held. Members were invited to attend. Other efforts relate to obtaining feedback from parents.

IX. Next Steps

A. Technical Assistance Team

Powell reported that this team will be viewed as a subcommittee and will work to create materials and support for youth development and authentic youth engagement amongst state agencies. Some agency representatives have been identified.

B. Positive Youth Development Framework Team

This team has been seated and will hold its first meeting in January.

X. Adjourn

Ahmadu Baba-Singhri noted that a meeting will be held to address crimes against African youth.

There was no further discussion. The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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



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