



AGENDA
VALENCIA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY BOARD
August 2023 MEETING

To be held in person at:
The Valencia County Administration Building
444 Luna Ave.
Los Lunas, NM 87031

Tuesday, August 8, 2023
12:00PM-1:30PM

- A. Introduction & Roll Call – Quorum Confirmation – **Quorum met.**
Heather Benavidez (**Chair, CEO – ARC of New Mexico**), Patricia Gregor (**Health Manager – First Choice Belen**), Estevan Gallegos (**JPO Supervisor & Attendance for Success Subcommittee**), Victoria Flores (**YDI, Teen Court & TOP**), Deputy Chief Cassandra Kanyuck (**Los Lunas Police Department**), Judge Smith (**13th Judicial District Court**), Kaylee Jojola (**Truancy Coordinator – Isleta Pueblo Truancy Department**)

Youth Subcommittee Members:

Phillip Montano, Rayven Ward, Josiah Vallejos

General Members:

Christine Arrellin (**Continuum Coordinator**), Noelle Chavez (**H2 Academic Solutions**), Holly Chavez (**H2 Academic Solutions**), Jenna Rael (**H2 Academic Solutions**), Rose LeDoux (**Grants Coordinator**), Jeremias Silva (**Grants Director**), Linda Montano (**Community Member**)

- a. Community Member Introduction – If Applicable

Alma Castillo (**Men-THOR Program**), Lizeth Bustillos (**Men-THOR Program**)

- B. Acceptance of Agenda

Heather: Motion to Accept.

Patricia...motions to accept.

Deputy Chief Kanyuck seconds the motion. All I's...zero no's.

- C. Approval of Meeting Minutes – July 20th, 2023 Special Board Meeting

Heather: Motion to Accept meeting minutes.
Patricia...motions to accept.
Estevan seconds the motion. All I's...zero no's

D. Youth Sub-Committee (Update)

a. Upcoming events

Christine: We had a few events happen this last month, Rayven can you please fill us in on what happened at the National Night Out in Belen?

Rayven: There was a lot going on, there was a bouncy house, a dunk tank, and the animal shelter. My sister and I passed out the program flyers. It was really fun.

Christine: That is great Rayven, I am glad that you had a lot of fun. We attended the one here in Valencia County at Ann Parish and Josiah will fill us in on that one.

Josiah: The event was fun, we passed out fliers and we had things on the table for the kids to get. We had some school supplies and got to walk around to advertise the programs.

Christine: Thank you Josiah, we did do a lot of program outreach at these events. On July 22 we participated in the Valencia Shelter Services After-party; it was cool to meet new vendors.

Heather: Sounds like they are doing really good work and I wanted to acknowledge that Phillip placed in the chat, "We are still recruiting youth members. We did have Josiah join us last month. Ann parish was great for NNO. Good vendors and public attendance." Did you guys talk about upcoming events?

Jeremias: Can I please make a comment on the Youth Subcommittee?

Heather: Yes, of course.

Jeremias: I wanted to highlight the efforts of their participation as it is exciting to see at each of the events there was interest in getting the word out. Speaking with Christine, it is important for the youth members to understand and realize the communication with the public. Seeing a lack of in general life but we want the youth to benefit and engage. Thank you for the opportunity, Heather, and thank you to all the youth here in person and via zoom. You guys are awesome, and we appreciate you.

Heather: Great comments, and you are right, it is difficult to get the young people engaged. Kudos to you all for getting our youth engaged and thank you.

E. Continuum Coordinator Update

a. Community Outreach – Update & Discussion

Christie: Yes, we do have some events coming up. On September 16th, Attendance for Success is hosting a conference for families which Estevan will go into detail. Another event on October 7th, Valencia County Public Safety Day. It benefits the Special Olympics. It is their second annual event, so I think it'll be beneficial for our youth to participate in that.

b. One Circle Foundation Trainings – Update

o In-Person Training – The Council for Boys and Young Men Facilitations

Christine: A brief update, there are 5 seats available. We want to reach out to the school staff as they are the referring parties.

Jeremias: Thank you for that Christine. If I may, on the trainings update I want to remind the board that it is a 2-day training. The more people know, the more it'll benefit the community. If you or

you know anyone that is interested in participating, please reach out to Christine so that she can get you registered. We look forward to having that training on September 26th and September 27th.

- c. **Belen Consolidated Schools Accepted Valencia County MOU contract**
Jeremias: I will speak a little further on that. On July 22, I did a presentation to the Belen School Board for the MOU that allows our continuum coordinator the necessary credentials to be on school grounds whenever the programs are being conducted. With that said, Belen had no issues. In the same meeting H2 Academic Solutions, Noelle, all your stuff passed with flying colors. We will present it to the Board of County Commissioners on August 16th for full execution. Upon execution, a major hurdle is overcome as it has been something that we have wanted implemented for years. Thank you, Christine, for getting the contacts, Ms. Deborah Baca from Belen Schools. A huge shoutout to get everything situated. We will send a courtesy email to the board once executed.
- d. **Los Lunas Schools requesting meeting for clarification of purpose of MOU contract**
Jeremias: Same situation needing an MOU with Los Lunas Schools. The recently appointed Superintendent Dr. Kettler wanted to table for adequate conversation of the process of H2 Academic Solutions business and how the county is wrapped in process. Michelle Romero, Purchasing Director for Los Lunas, has been the point of contact. Tentative meeting late August. We will send an email to the board with updates.

F. H2 Academic Solutions (Update)

Noelle: I will cover the smaller programs and let Jenna cover RAC. Restorative Justice program is doing great, 2-3 circles per month. Really good trend and really good outcomes. Girl Circle has 2-3 kids due to the new school year, will pick up in a month or so. Boys Council is very busy and has 5-6 kids. Lots of self-referrals wanting to build connections, communication. Juniors and seniors showing up which has been great. Botvin Lifeskills MOU was approved by Belen Schools, I have reached out to every school. September we will have some groups started. Los Lunas MOU pending but will be in Tome Elementary School. Botvin group Monday nights and moving along. Any questions before passing it over?

Jenna: RAC is going well, 87 kids open. A lot of kids were retained. Steady referrals through the summer from schools and community. A huge down-trend in severe behaviors. Only a quarter of youth are considered high needs – coded as red. 50% is moderate needs and the other 25% are low needs; basic needs – school, tutoring, food, hygiene products. Case managers are doing well and hoping to be back in the schools within the next week; all meetings are set up. Any questions?

Jeremias: As far as RAC goes, the other programs in total, are you seeing/experience youth with transportation issues?

Jenna: Transportation is the biggest thing and is a state-wide thing. Transportation is hard to troubleshoot with our youth population. Local buses are hesitant to transport the youth. We have some partnerships and have written grants; at the time we provide gas cards.

Noelle: Running into Rio Metro issues. Juniors and seniors that have jobs are forced to walk far from campus to bus stops.

Jeremias: Thank you. I think it would be okay to discuss it now. CYFD reached out to the continuum coordinators for an exclusive meeting with the CYFD Cabinet Secretary to go over issues and challenges. Everyone brought up their issues but one

thing to highlight is that the Cabinet Secretary is willing to have a roundtable discussion to further discuss transportation issues. One thing that I brought up was if CYFD had something similar to aging-services. Which, is basically emergency funding that allows for capital expenditures. Outside the box, get a van but then a gas line item would need to be added. Another item is potentially establishing a database (statewide price agreement) for vendors that are proven to conduct evidence-based programs. Gives continuums the opportunity to provide services without a hiccup. I just wanted to have sufficient conversation on this matter for documentation in the meeting minutes. Thank you, Jenna, and Noelle. As we hear of tentative dates for this roundtable, I would like to have a couple members from this board to participate as well as staff from H2 Academic solutions.

G. Juvenile Probation Office (Update)

Estevan: Thank you, specifically the Attendance for Success meetings as Christine mentioned earlier, we have an event coming on September 16th at Belen High School. The last few meetings have been toward planning the agenda and identifying providers we are inviting. Next meeting is scheduled for tomorrow at noon and we will meet a few more times to iron out everything. School of Dreams Academy has shown an interest in having an information fair as well before the end of the semester. Looks like we will have a good turn out from Superintendent Sanchez and Teri Wimborne from United Way.

H. Teen Court (Update)

Victoria: Lucas and I attended New Mexico Teen Court Conference in Taos for two days and it was good. Ten youth attorneys took oath and a celebration of a dinner. The youth have been trained in Botvin Lifeskills. This Thursday teen court starts up again. National Night Out and Get Up, Get Moving were great events. That's all my updates. Thank you.

Heather: Thank you Victoria, are there any questions for her?

Jeremias: I have a couple comments/questions. Victoria, I understand you were at a conference in Taos. Was there a mention of future funding with the JAF?

Victoria: The JAF is coming to an end. There is a special application for DWI for teen court. RRP will come out at the end of August, beginning of September given by Julie at DFA.

Jeremias: Essentially, we have one more year of funding?

Victoria: It is gone, it will disappear.

Jeremias: As Victoria mentioned, this is not new news. DFA funding is being cut due to a tax being eliminated when someone receives a ticket. CYFD informed me that the upcoming four-year grant cycle will be available in September/October. We will work with Noelle on the grant application. In the back of my mind with Victoria's problem of lack of funding, I think it would be appropriate to discuss further options of including YDI teen court within the four-year application moving forward. I think it would be appropriate if Jack and Victoria gave a presentation for necessary discussions of inclusions on the application.

Victoria: The cycle ends June 30th, but we continue because we still get referrals. We do it for the youth out of the kindness of our hearts. It is all volunteer work. We believe in the program and continue to submit quarterly reports without funding. Teen court is important for Valencia County. The program works and we do not want to lose it. Something needs to be done. Kids do not get home until after 7:30 so we feed them too. Jeremias, thank you for your continued support.

Jeremias: Thank you, I will be in touch with you and Jack for potential discussion of including this board on a discussion to include YDI in the four-year grant application from CYFD.

Noelle: A presentation is nice, but I think it would be really valuable seeing in person a hearing and trial. When Victoria hosted the Teen Court Association meeting here in May, the youth did a mock trial, and the online attendees were blown away. It is now standard for every teen court association meeting to show what they are doing, and we are the best, most robust program. Get with Victoria for the next court date and be ready to hang out for 2 hours.

Victoria: In December, we will do a mock trial for DWI and the kids should not be in school. The meeting in Portales in November will have a mock trial and it is a new standard. Thank you to our young people, the judge, Noelle, and the partners.

Jeremias: I think it is important for the board to recognize the efforts being made.

Judge Smith, being that you are a Judge, you can appreciate and understand the complexities of the mock scenarios. Heather, you have previous experience as well. The county is hopeful that this program will receive continued funding.

Judge Smith: I wanted to indicate that I have not participated in the teen court in Valencia County, but I have served as a judge in another county and have participated in the process. It is a great experience for the kids, and I think we need to pursue all options for funding whether through YDI or include it in the grant cycle. The program needs to continue, and we need to explore all options.

Jeremias: Thank you Judge Smith, when the time comes, I will reach out to you for a potential letter of support to move forward. Thank you for your words.

I. McKinney Vento (Update)

Jeremias: As mentioned at the beginning of the meeting Camille Griego is not present, I cannot speak entirely on what McKinney Vento is up to, but I can speak to the efforts of what the county is doing in part of McKinney Vento. We distributed 200 vouchers to McKinney Vento to youth that are experiencing food insecurities so she will work with Los Lunas Schools and local families to get those distributed accordingly. That is all I can say about this update.

J. Other business

a. Presentation from Men-THOR, Lizeth Bustillos

Christine: Thank you Heather, yes, I wanted to give a brief introduction.

Jeremias and I met Lizeth at the Attendance for Success Conference in March, and we were really interested in hearing more about the program and what it is she does for the youth in Valencia County.

Lizeth proceeds with an introduction of herself and how Men-THOR got started. Lizeth also explains with a presentation and video the purpose of her program and how it helps the youth in Valencia County and stands for any questions.

Jeremias: I have one question, thank you for that presentation. Can you expand further on your partnership with H2 Academic Solutions? From my understanding, you are just using their space to conduct your programs, correct?

Lizeth: I was using their space when I was an employee. When it was time to move forward with the program, I started to look for an office. In the search, they allowed me to do the workshops at their office.

Jeremias: I think that is awesome that various resources are playing nice. It is wonderful that you were able to grow. Do you have an age group that you work with?

Lizeth: The age group that we work with are age 12-17 but this last summer we worked with youth as young as 10. I think that middle school and beginning of high school kids are at a critical stage to build a foundation with.

Jeremias: As it relates, you mentioned career exploration. Do you have resources for youth not interested in going to college but to trade schools?

Lizeth: Yes, that is a topic that is covered. College is not something we push on them. We definitely show them resources to become entrepreneurs.

Jeremias: I think it is important because I have youth in my family that are not college-bound. Other trades that can make some money. I think it is important to highlight success is possible.

Christine: I have one question, what is the process for a youth entering your program.

Lizeth: No referrals, anyone can sign up. It is a non-profit, so no charge. In June we received a grant from the MacCune foundation which helped with the operations. Youth are fed snacks while they are there.

Jeremias: Would it be the same to assume that transportation is an issue?

Lizeth: Absolutely. It is a huge issue as I changed my hours to 2:45 pm to 6 pm. We hope that the youth can walk to my office (Courthouse Rd) and get picked up by their parents after work.

Noelle: I wanted to share about this program, my kids are in teen court and Men-THOR program. They participated in the Spring and will be back in the Fall. My daughter, Caterina, worked with Lizeth on Video Editing in the Spring and has set up a YouTube channel. My brother Sebastian is helping with the directing and editing. This all started with an editing session.

Program to program issues, in the spring we youth that had no place to go, so, Jenna and I stepped up as day moms and Lizeth stepped up at evening mom. We swapped youth and made the schedule work to keep the kids safe.

Jeremias: That is wonderful. Getting the information out there is half the battle. At the last commission meeting we received a grant to contract with the sexual assault nurse. We are also partnering with Valencia Shelter Services, and, to my surprise, the commission did not know who they were or what they were about. I think it is important to identify resources and make them known. Thank you, Lizeth, and Alma. Anyone have any questions?

Judge Smith: I am not familiar with your program, but it sounds to me that you are reaching the kids that are lost. The ones that do not know where they are going need some guidance and need someone who will take the time to show them other options for college. Please keep it up, great work. Thank you.

Jeremias: Any other comments? Hearing none. Lizeth, I think it would be appropriate to provide Christine with an electronic flyer to make available to share the resources.

Lizeth: Absolutely, thank you for your time.

Christine: Thank you Lizeth, Heather, before we move forward to adjournment, I wanted to make note that I sent an email out to the board requesting a selfie of yourself for the Facebook page. There is a good chunk of members that have not sent me one so please send one ASAP.

Jeremias: A good picture of your mugshot. As Christine mentioned, the Facebook page has been down for several years. We have the necessary credentials, thank you Noelle and we want to represent the members of our board with a nice picture. Any questions, please reach out to Christine and myself.

K. Adjournment

Heather motions to adjourn.

Patricia accepts the motions.

Judge Smiths seconds the motion. All I's...zero no's.