

February, 2015

**TO: Commission on the Improvement of the Status of Children in Indiana**

**FROM: Dr. Susan Lockwood, Chair, Education Outcomes Taskforce**

**RE: Summary of Activities**

The Education Outcomes Task Force held its first meeting on July 8, 2014, and has met bi-monthly to gather information relevant to objectives aligned to the guidance provided in a joint statement issued June 9, 2014 by the US Department of Education and the US Department of Justice (see attachment A).

**Although the guidelines were provided for “court-involved” youth, they are applicable to “system-involved” youth, and provided direction to the Education Outcomes Task Force.**

Although the Education Outcomes Task Force has not had time to address all of the objectives, below are the Committee activities (to date) as they are aligned to the US Department of Education/US Department of Justice outcomes:

***Objective #1: A safe, healthy, facility-wide climate that prioritizes education, provides the conditions for learning, and encourages the necessary behavioral and social support services that address the individual needs of all youth, including youth with disabilities and English Language Learners.***

***Objective #2: Necessary funding to support educational opportunities for all youth within long-term secure care facilities, including youth with disabilities and English learners, comparable to opportunities for peers who are not system-involved.***

Task Force Representatives met with Dr. Tim Brown, Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, to discuss the need to apply the school funding formula to every child with an STN (Indiana Department of Education ID Number), whether or not the student was “inside the fence” or “outside the fence”. There is a need to assure adequate funding for youth in secure settings.

Dr. Brown supported this and advised the Task Force Representatives to meet with Rep. Robert Behning, Chair of the House Education Committee, and Rep. Todd Huston, House Education Committee member. In the subsequent meeting, these two individuals agreed that the school funding formula needed to be applied to every child with an STN.

Currently, this issue is being studied by the State Budget Agency.

***Specifically, the Education Outcomes Task Force sub-committee on Funding proposed the following:***

IDOC, which includes the following schools: Camp Summit, Madison Juvenile, Logansport Juvenile, and Pendleton Juvenile, would continue to submit the DOE-ME report (student count information) twice per year (the same as public schools) and the school funding formula and

APC (Additional Pupil Count) funding would be attributed to those students. The funding would be allocated to IDOC's budget through the State Budget Agency, and IDOC would be required to expend that amount on education for juvenile offenders. Additionally, the extended school year would be considered in the allocation since IDOC pays teachers 260 days per year and students attend school 248 days.

*Notes:*

- a. We might need to change the law/policy to include "non-reversion" language for IDOC funding that has to be used for juvenile education.*
- b. We might need to change the law/policy to include language that requires IDOC to expend this funding for juvenile education.*
- c. The State of Oregon applies its school funding formula x 2 to incarcerated youth to account for the extended school year and the increased educational supports needed to for remediation and special education services.*

**For students in Juvenile Detention Centers:** A per diem amount based on the school funding formula will be established each year. This per diem amount will be charged to the public school corporation which has been funded for any student who subsequently is assigned to a juvenile detention center located within the boundaries of the public school corporation. The funding generated from this per diem will be used to fund education programming in the juvenile detention centers.

*Notes:*

- a. We need to determine how juvenile detention centers will track student attendance in order to receive the funding due to them. (Perhaps a report submitted to \_\_\_\_\_? with students by STN number and number of days....and then \_\_\_\_\_? bills the school corporation \_\_\_\_\_? times per year and then allocates the funding to the detention center.*
- b. We might need legislation to put this in place.*

**Objective #3: Recruitment, employment, and retention of qualified educational staff with skills relevant to juvenile justice settings who can positively impact long-term student outcomes through demonstrated abilities to create and sustain effective teaching and learning environments.**

**Objective #4: Rigorous and relevant curricula aligned with State academic and career/technical standards that utilize instructional methods, tools, materials, and practices that promote college and career readiness.**

Dr. Susan Lockwood advised the group of collaboration among IDOC, Oakland City University, and the **American Prison Data Systems (APDS)** to establish a pilot project using secure wireless tablets at the Madison Juvenile Correctional Facility in Madison, Indiana.

- The project was implemented September 24, 2014
- Each youth was issued a tablet for the purposes of expanding access to education content and programming in the facility.
- The tablet also included a comprehensive recreational reading library, which allow students access to over 6,000 approved titles

- Through work with the pilot, the objective is to leverage the tablets to increase access to educational content that is otherwise not available to youth
- Indiana is currently one of four sites in the country utilizing this type of technology inside secure settings
- The use of wireless tablets could be expanded to youth other secure settings, or residential settings, to literally connect youth with relevant educational programming that helps them advance towards completion of high school.

Education Task Force members Kellie Whitcomb, Laurie Elliott, and Lenee Reedus, and Susan Lockwood met with a representative from Pearson Education to explore the use of **GradPoint** across settings in Vigo County.

- GradPoint is most commonly used as a credit recovery tool, providing computer-based curricula to youth.
- **GradPoint is used by the public schools in Vigo County AND the detention center in Vigo County.** This scenario (connecting public school to youth in other settings) could be developed into a model for youth to access relevant educational programming so they do not fall behind in school.

*Note: GradPoint is one of many “credit recovery” solutions. APEX is another provider of computer-based curricula. There are other open-source curricula that can be accessed through web-based applications.*

***Objective #5: Formal processes and procedures-through statute, memoranda of understanding, and practice-that ensure successful, navigable transitions across multiple child-serving systems, and smooth reentry into communities.***

Education Outcomes Task Force members are exploring successful programs that have addressed the needs of disconnected youth, in an attempt to learn more about these programs and determine the need for recommendations to the Commission.

To date, the following groups/individuals have made presentations to the Education Outcomes Task Force:

Dr. William Wooten, founder of **Youth First**, and his co-presenters, Davi Stein-Kiley, Parri Black, and Steve Fritz, provided an informative presentation on Youth First.

- Youth First’s Mission: To strengthen youth and families through evidence-based programs that prevent substance abuse, promote healthy behaviors, and maximize student success.
- Youth First works closely with schools, churches, businesses, colleges, communities, and other agencies to provide a menu of proven programs and strategies. It works with the entire family unit, from first time parents with babies to families with teenagers. It gives families the tools to become better and stronger.

Judge Steven Nation, from Hamilton County, presented information about the **Youth Assistance Program**, developed from a need to address the loss of potential in children who become systems-

involved. It serves as a way to intervene with children and families and offers necessary supports to prevent youth from becoming drop-outs and delinquents.

- The Youth Assistance Program is aligned to IC 31-32-3-11. The juvenile court judge initiates the program in the community.
- The Youth Assistance Program functions as a “concierge of services”. It serves three basic purposes: tutoring, mentoring, and coordinating services.
- Tutoring services are arranged through the school districts. Mentoring is provided to youth who have no adults in their lives to help them sustain a vision for the future. Instead of creating additional programs, the Youth Assistance Program connects youth and families to existing programs in their communities.

Kevin Good, from **The Crossings**, an accredited alternative school which partners with public schools to provide education services to students who have struggled in a traditional school environment. The Crossings serves students in grades 9-12, and has an average teacher-to-student ratio of 1:6.

- Students spend approximately three hours per day in core classes, and the remainder of the day is spent in a Job Training program, service learning, extended learning, or working on APEX (computer-based curriculum) from home.
- Students who graduate receive a high school diploma along with work force “soft skills” and (depending on their postsecondary track) job certifications.
- All students at The Crossings participate in leadership training, engage in a career path, and character building activities

Leslie Crist, from the Department of Workforce Development presented the **JAG (Jobs for America’s Graduates)** program

- JAG’s mission is to promote high school graduation and provide work-placed learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities, or enroll in a postsecondary institution that leads to a rewarding career.
- JAG includes 12 months of post-graduation follow-up services that will result in the graduate pursuing a postsecondary education and/or entering the workforce in a quality job leading to a career.
- Indiana has “in-school” and “out-of-school” JAG programs for at-risk youth, and has impressive outcome data.
- Former Governor Mitch Daniel and current Governor Mike Pence have served on the National JAG Board.

Kylee Hope, from the **Bureau of Rehabilitative Services**, offered information about Employment for system-involved youth

- Vocational Rehab Services (VRS) is a program that works with individuals with all disabilities to assist them in achieving their employment goals.
- VRS can help clients prepare for a job through training and job skills development.
- VRS can help clients obtain employment through job search assistance and rehabilitation
- VRS can help clients retain employment through assistive technology.

- Many systems-involved youth and/or their family members would qualify for support through VRS
- VRS is looking for ways to provide outreach and education to students, families and teachers.

Dr. Jeff Pittman, Vice President of the Corporate College at **Ivy Tech**, provided information about a pilot mentoring program being offered to court-involved youth who are transitioning to enrollment at the Ivy Tech Campus in Terre Haute.

- Youth leaving IDOC and returning to counties served by the Ivy Tech Campus in Terre Haute will be provided with a single-point-of contact to assist the youth with navigating the various elements of college life (financial aid, scheduling, purchasing books, communicating with faculty, etc).
- Many youth are the first in their families to attend college, and need support from someone who can guide them. Having one person who is specifically assigned to provide guidance to these youth will assist with a smooth transition to college.