

Los Alamos Juvenile Justice Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 18, 2009
6:15 pm
751 Trinity
Los Alamos, NM

Present: Alan Kirk, Wayne Torpy, Michelangelo Lobato, Randy Smith, Darla Dover, Vincent Chiravalle, Pat Casados, Tommie Rodriguez, Georgina Williams, Heather Teeter, Thelma Hahn (alternate for Jody Benson), Claire Bounds, Morrie Pongratz, Barb Marcille, Vicki Nelms, Megan Townsley

Others: Natalya Staley, Debbie Gill, Cheryl Pongratz, Linda Daly, Sierra Argo, Max Argo, Rubina Kohen, Katie Bridgewater, Carol Clark, Josh Dolin, Annie Chroninger, Emi Weeks

1. Welcome and Introductions: Chair Alan Kirk called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm. He welcomed everyone and everyone introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the Minutes – February 18, 2009. Pat Casados made the motion to approve, Wayne Torpy seconded. Unanimous approval.

3 Youth Mobilizer Survey Report –

Exploring the Motivation and Concerns of LAHS Dropouts

Josh Dolin (LAHS Jr), Annie Chroninger (Sr), Emi Weeks (Jr) and Max Argo (Sr) gave a report on the most recent Youth Mobilizer survey. (Youth Mobilizers is a program involving youth ages 14 – 18 who partner with adults in a collaborative process of research and reflection on youth identified issues. The program creates opportunities for youth to engage in advocacy roles and effect change in Los Alamos County.)

Locally, the rates of students dropping out have increased. The Youth Mobilizers think that the information collected in this most recent survey is extremely important as the U.S. has one of the highest high school dropout rates of any industrialized nation.

In 2008, Youth Mobilizers, Annie Chroninger, Colin Alexander and Liz Dinkle developed a dropout survey. However, that survey did not collect much information of use to help the LA community.

With the 2009 survey, the Youth Mobilizers interviewed 23 dropouts. Findings: five students felt that they were bullied which caused one student to eventually drop out. Another underlying cause for students dis enrolling was students feeling they were not treated fairly by staff. One student was blamed for vandalism that he did not do and left school. Students feeling they were profiled was another reason to drop out. Some students were bored and found the school experience to be negative. Dropouts also felt that the school was not very flexible with schedules or graduation requirements after transferring. Out of 23 interviews, all of the dropouts said that they already have, are in the process of getting, or plan to get their GED in the near future. Almost half of the students that were interviewed are currently in college and succeeding in higher education.

Suggestions by Youth Mobilizers to keep kids in school: create upper class member and lower class member mentor program; organize an Activities Fair with all school activities represented; develop weekend activities with local business support; implement student movie night; apply for a Mountain Dew Grant of \$10,000. To access report, please contact Youth@laymca.org.

Vincent Chiravalle and Chair Kirk thanked the youth for the presentation. The Board applauded.

4. Annual Meeting Officer Nomination and Election

Chair Kirk called for nominations for JJAB Chair and Vice-Chair. Morrie Pongratz nominated Alan Kirk-- Chair and Wayne Torpy-- Vice-Chair. Pat Casados seconded. Torpy declined and nominated Morrie Pongratz. Torpy motioned Alan Kirk for Chair and Morrie Pongratz for Vice- Chair, Vincent Chiravella seconded. Unanimous approval of nominated officers. Alan Kirk is Chair; Morrie Pongratz is Vice- Chair.

5. TUPAC (Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Grant Update)

TUPAC Coordinator, Katie Bridgewater passed out **RUA SAP** t-shirts to youth attending the board meeting. **RUA S.A.P.** is a **Socially Alienated Person** –someone who is unconsciously stunting his or her social growth through smoking. **RUASAP.com.** gives info on this campaign to get kids to not smoke. Katie has coordinated with the LAPS Wellness Committee to evaluate the current school smoking policy. Kate Thomas, LAPS Asst. Supt. has been extremely supportive. Katie hopes to develop a youth coalition and is beginning to implement the Tobacco Education Group (TEG) Program. The Tobacco Awareness Program (TAG) is also beginning to be implemented. Info on scientific evidence of the health risks of hookah smoking is made available for kids through the Katie's work.

6. Subcommittee Reports

Rules- No issues to report.

Data and Evaluation – No report

Continuum – No report

Advocacy – Georgina Williams reported that the Search Institute's Survey will be administered to elementary students in the second week of May. The results will be available in the middle of the summer.

Youth – No report.

Finance- No issues to report.

7. Board Area of Interest- Chair Kirk informed the Board about a new request from LAHS principal, Grace Brown. \$3,999 is needed to support Nova Net, an on-line program that students can be required to do at the high school. Nova Net affords a pathway for students who have failed classes and need to make up credits serving as a rescue program that is designed to encourage students who have fallen behind. It is an alternative way for students to “catch up” so they can get their diplomas rather than dropping out or staying in high school until they are 22 years old or getting their GED. Vickie Nelms past out “Rationale for Nova Net Computer Credit Recovery Program” info sheets. Morrie motioned to approve with a second by Vincent Chiravalle; unanimous board approval even though this amount of \$ did not need board approval.

8. CYFD Programs Update - Chair Kirk encouraged all to review the CYFD Report developed by Sharon Stover. Morrie noticed radKIDS enrollment is down. Coordinator indicated the YMCA is trying to promote and that radKIDS might be offered in summer camps.

9. Chair Kirk announced that the **Next Regular Meeting Date** is Wednesday, April 15 , 2009, 6:15 PM, Los Alamos School Board Room, 751 Trinity.

8. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.