

School Attendance Task Force Meeting Notes

Children's Court

July 24, 2014

Attendees

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| Judge Michael Nash, Juvenile Court | Ruth Cusick, Public Counsel |
| Zoe Rawson, Comm. Rights Campaign | Lauren Gase, Public Health Department |
| Tom Steele, LACOE | Hellen Carter, Probation Department |
| Dianne Nunn, Judicial Council | Sonjia White, Public Defender |
| Laurel Bear, Alhambra Unified School | Sean Dwyer, Dispute Resolution Cntr |
| Muriel Cormier, DMH | Jewel Forbes, LACOE |
| Elizabeth Fitzgerald, DMH | Danielle Tenner, Kids Alliance |
| Katie Butler, Public Health Department | Lauren Gase, Public Health Department |
| Kristen Byrdsong, City Attorney Office | Brittanica Poon, Children's Defense Fund |
| Marcos Sanchez, Assemblyman Bocanegra Office | Chelsea Bell, Youth Justice Coalition |
| Krut Parekh, Youth Justice Coalition | Maritza Galvez, Youth Justice Coalition |
| Gail McFarland-Sosa, Probation Department | Shawn Cantagene, Public Counsel |
| Justin Shegrin, Children's Law Center | Cesar Casarrubias, Pomona Unified |
| Tamara Maraouk, Violence Prevention Network | Vincent Holmes, CEO |
| Julie Matsumoto, Operations Safe Street | |

Welcome and Introductions

Judge Michael Nash welcomed Task Force members and allowed participants to introduce themselves.

Judge Nash reminded participants that the annual Partnership Conference for Children and Families was scheduled for Thursday, September 11, 2014 at the California State University Los Angeles. SATF members were encouraged to attend as there will be numerous workshops on topics that relate to the work of the Task Force.

Judge Nash also introduced Marcos Sanchez from Assemblyman Raul Bocanegra's office who informed Task Force members of an upcoming select committee hearing chaired by the Assemblyman that will look at Out of School/Disconnected Youth. The hearing will occur on

July 30th at the Pacoima City Hall. Participants were encouraged to communicate the information to their respective groups.

Zoe Rawson also mentioned an upcoming hearing on Girls and the School to Prison Pipeline. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, July 29, 2014 at the Loyola Marymount University Law School.

Angelica Salazar also provided information on AB3832, which would eliminate the attendance penalty the Department of Public Social Services, may impose on CALWORKS benefits for failure to attend school.

County Juvenile Citation Project (Update)

Hellen Carter and Ruth Cusick updated the Task Force on efforts to improve the juvenile citation process. A meeting was held to strategize about how youth could better remedy their citations challenges and review documents being sent to youth by the Court. The following efforts are now under way or in place:

- The Juvenile Electronic Traffic Records System (JETRS) is about to be turned over to the Probation Department from the Court. This will allow Probation to more readily access juvenile citation information and more quickly resolve citations.
- Probation has access to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) System and can remove DMV holds placed on licenses. Probation can also place holds on licenses when youth are not in compliance.
- Probation Department has assigned staff to review request from youth regarding their citations. The first staff person will be assigned to the Antelope Valley.
- Probation created an email address where youth may send request regarding their citations. The email address is citation.diversion@probation.lacounty.gov.
- Ruth Cusick drafted a document to be used by youth to schedule a hearing or request a review by Probation on cases that in a failure to pay (FTA) status. The template will be reviewed by Probation to ensure there is consensus on its contents.

The Task Force was also informed that youth who receive a citation for a moving violation have their cases heard in adult traffic court. Judge Nash noted that the handling of these citations should mirror the policies practiced by the former Information Juvenile Traffic Court.

Judge Nash also noted a steady decline in the number of citations issued overall for juveniles. Dr. Carter noted that the overall number of youth on Probation has decreased as well from approximately 20,000 to 12,000.

Public Health School Attendance Advisory Group

Lauren Gase updated the Task Force on the work of the School Attendance Advisory Group (Group). Over the course of several months, representatives from various public entities met and discussed efforts aimed at addressing school attendance. The Group:

- Charted out truancy reduction efforts in the County.
- Identified the highest priority efforts where there was consensus on moving forward.

Lauren stated the final report will be presented to the Task Force. Zoe Rawson noted the need to include community members in the development of priorities going forward.

Judge Nash noted that the Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPS) will provide an unprecedented opportunity for all to review the goals and work of school districts to address educational issues for foster care youth and their goals around improving attendance.

There is still concern regarding how directly the LCAPS will address attendance/truancy reduction which will only be determined as they are reviewed.

Laurel Bear noted the efforts of the Alhambra School District to identify and provide services to foster care youth. Dr. Bear also noted the ongoing efforts of the Alhambra School District to increase student attendance by quickly identifying absentee patterns and providing interventions.

Cesar Casarrubias noted the efforts by the Pomona School District to restructure the thinking of staff prior to the additional funding associated with the LCAPS. Mr. Casarrubias stated that staff is now working to address the underlying issues that impact youth attendance. This culture shift has also impacted the handling of disciplinary issues/school climate and has resulted in a 43% reduction in suspensions. Staff throughout the Pomona School District are aware that suspensions/removal from class are not easily approved options.

Exclusionary School Discipline Work Group Report

Zoe Rawson stated that there no report from the Work Group this month as scheduling did not permit a meeting

Free Student Transit Passes Work Group Report

Kruti Parekh, of the Youth Justice Coalition, informed the Task Force of several meetings with staff from Mayor Garcetti's office regarding supporting free student transit passes. They were informed that there are insufficient folks on the MTA Board to approve free student passes. There is, however, interest in clarifying MTA's diversion efforts related to juveniles and there may be support for ensuring that all MTA juvenile citations are handled by the Probation Department.

Announcements/Updates

Camilo Cruz, from the Superior Courts Community Relations Unit, introduced himself to the Task Force and invited members to call upon his unit when community related collaborations were being planned. Mr. Cruz stated his desire to participate in the work of the Task Force.

Next Meeting

The date for the next meeting is:

Thursday, October 2, 2014
12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.
Location: Children's Court – Judge's Lounge

Conclusion and Adjournment

Judge Nash adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.