

**JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL**

**January 24, 2024: Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Kevin McIver, Laylon Williams, Tamala McDowell, Abigail Holloway, Angela Nunn, John Morris, Ahmed Ali, Monica Burnette, Jonathan Wilson, Dr. Melissa Watson

**Members On-Line:** Renee Hill, LiBria Stephens, Sharon Trapp, Seth Kandl, Alex Hurdle

**Programs Present:** Yasmin Boone (PROUD), Arkeem Brooks (Project BUILD), Raquel Dominguez (Elna B. Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center)

**Programs On-Line:**  Regina Basnight (Juvenile Literacy Center), Gwendolyn Johnson (Durham Teen Court), Quillie Coath (PROUD), Cynia Black (POA), Tiffany Swoope (GRACED, Inc.), Leskisha Sanders (SUSO)

**Guests Present:** Dr. Gredesa Lockhart (DPS), Dwane Brinson (Assistant County Manager)

**Guests On-Line:** Adam Boudreault (Sergeant), Jessica Fludd (Attorney), Krystal Harris (CISS), DeWarren Langley (DJJ)

**Staff Present:** Roshanna Parker, Kelley Waggy

**Staff On-Line:** Eddie Crews

**Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Kevin McIver called the meeting to order at 4:05pm, welcomed attendees, and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves.

**Minutes Review**

Mr. McIver stated that the Board did not meet in December 2023 and invited attendees to review the November 15th, 2024 minutes, which were sent to attendees via email. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Monitoring Reports**

**Project Build Monitoring Team:** Kevin McIver, Monica Daye, Jonathan Wilson

Mr. McIver reported that the team and Project BUILD were able to meet on two (2) occasions and the results of these meetings revealed the programs in place are very positive. The only drawback the project is experiencing is in getting more participation by hiring more staff to provide transportation for parents and children on nights group settings are taking place. They are currently serving 107 children and are looking to add another 50 in the upcoming fiscal year. Arkeem Brooks is working towards moving his program forward by bringing in a new staff member who has already started displaying excellent work in the community.

Mr. McIver commended Mr. Brooks highly for his work in the community with gang-involved youths. It was strongly recommended that funding continue for Project BUILD.

**Proud Program Monitoring Team:** John Morris, LiBria Stephens, Ricky Hargraves

It was reported that Quillie Coath gave a presentation via Zoom in mid-November. In the beginning of December there was a monitoring meeting held with LiBria Stephens and Ricky Hargrave. It was reported that the overall impression was favorable as to the way the program is set up, the way it is run, the outreach to the community, and the outcomes achieved. The Monitoring report was updated and sent out however, no feedback has been received by Ms. Stephens and Ricky Hargraves.

Ms. Stephens reported that she agreed with the positive assessment in the Monitoring Report and does not have anything else to add to what was stated in the report.

**EPIC Monitoring Team:** Angela Nunn, Rodney Jenkins, Nimasheena Burns

It was reported that the monitoring of EPIC took place in January. A review of the paperwork indicated that they were contracted to have 20 youths and to-date of the review, there were16 indicating they are on target with their goal. There were no staff vacancies apart from one (1) internship vacancy. The program is one of the high-end mental health service programs.

It was recommended that funding continue for Epic.

**Parenting of Adolescents Monitoring Team:** Abigail Holloway, Shannon Trapp

It was reported that the monitoring visit in late November revealed that the program is on track with the numbers they are serving. POA has made improvements by offering after-hours, on-line sessions and in-house meetings to accommodate more families as well as to provide training. The level of training is being increased for all staff members to address higher level/intensive adult concerns and services provided.

There was staff and one (1) Executive Director vacancy which was filled expeditiously. There is a desire to increase the number of children being serviced, however they are restricted as to the number of children each counselor can service.

It was recommended that funding continue for POA.

**Elna B. Spaulding – Conflict Resolution Center Monitoring Team:** Alex Hurdle, Adam Boudreault

Alex Hurdle reported that he and Sargeant Boudreault met with this program which consists of three (3) components:

1. Truancy Mediation
2. Youth Mediation and
3. Peace-Making Circles

The only concern that was noted was that the numbers of youth served are very low because of a lack of referrals from Durham Public Schools. Mr. Hurdle recommended follow-up with Eddie Crews to put a concrete plan in place to increase numbers considering the truancy issues. Mr. Hurdle also reported that the finances are in order and accounted for.

A question was asked regarding the follow-up recommendation to which Mr. Hurdle replied that the follow up was recommended because Truancy was supposed to serve 130 children this year and they have only served 6. There is an MOU in place with DPS to refer 100 students however DPS has only referred 5.

**Teen Court/Restitution Program Monitoring Team:** Ahmed Ali, Renee Hill

It was reported that the monitoring of Teen Court took place in early September. It was noted that the program is fully staffed, and Ms. Gwendolyn Johonson provided helpful program materials as well as pre and post assessments for students. It was also noted that the assessments presented an opportunity for growth in this area by using dialogue that specifically speaks to the impact of the program in the community. The numbers were a little lower than anticipated and there was discussion about partnering with DPS to increase these numbers. Ms. Renee Hill agreed with the report presented.

**TLC/Bull City Youth Build:** Monitored by Eddie Crews, Area Consultant

Mr. Eddie Crews noted that he visited Triangle Literacy twice in the month of January as a follow-up to the monitoring done in December. Mr. Crews reported that their client files were disorganized due to previous management. Technical support was given to the program in the form of new templates for participation and progress reports to correct their client files since the program had been in a suspended status.

Now, the program is fully staffed and have good people running the program. They have admitted two (2) new children in addition to the ones already being served. All the transportation and waiver issues have been addressed and parental consent is now being obtained.

**GRACED, Inc. Monitored Team:** Seth Kandl, Laylon Williams, Tamala McDowell

Mr. Seth Kandl reported that his team had the opportunity to meet in person with Ms. Tiffany Swoope and was overall very impressed. GRACED, Inc. is continuing to meet their numbers – they were contracted for 15 students and are now servicing 14. Mr. Kandl reported the challenges of hiring mentors for one-on-one mentoring sessions. Mr. Kandl pointed out that studies have concluded that mentoring relationships would have to be no less than 18 months to be effective and suggested that anyone who is referred to be a mentor is aware of this aspect. Mr. Kandl also reported that a contractor was terminated which resulted in the reallocation of funds.

Mr. Kandl’s overall assessment was that the program is well operated under Ms. Swoope’s sole management, to which Mr. Laylon Williams concurred.

Mr. DeWarren Langley requested that the voting members of the Council keep GRACED in mind (in particular, Ms. Swoope who is solely running this program) when considering the allocation of funding.

It was recommended that GRACED, Inc. receive funding.

**Program Updates**

**Project BUILD**

* Current Number of Youth Enrolled: 67
* Number of New Referrals: 1
* Programmatic Changes: Two interviews were conducted and both candidates were hired for a total of seven (7) Outreach Workers including Mr. Arkeem Brooks.
* Programmatic Achievements: Program just started the 2nd round of Monday Night Group Sessions with Stand Up Speak Out since the success experienced in September.

Mr. McIver asked how close Project BUILD is to being fully staffed to which Mr. Brooks replied that once the two (2) new hires come on board fully and are completely trained, they will be fully staffed.

**PROUD**

* Current Number of Youth Enrolled: 14
* Number of New Referrals: 22 ( due in part by collaborating with Lakeview and Project BUILD)
* Number of Successful Completions: 12
* Programmatic Achievements: PROUD participated in a training session with the Department of Public Safety where the goal was to understand how to be financially understanding and how generational poverty is affecting our community so that this information can be passed onto the children served.

Mr. Quillie Coath noted there should be 55 children in the program by the end of February because of the collaboration with the School Resource Officers and the direct referrals from police officers.

**EPIC:**

No update available

**Parenting of Adolescents:**

Ms. Cynia Black reported that the Program is:

* Currently working with 12 JCPC funded families
* Wait List: 10 JCPC funded families
* Referrals: 3 in December; 4 in January
* Closures: 6 families in December; 2 in January
* Programmatic Changes: There are two (2) staff vacancies – one being a termination.

**Elna B. Spaulding Conflict Resolution Center**

Ms. Raquel Dominguez reported that there is a new part-time coordinator that started in December.

* New Referrals: 21 for Truancy Mediation

Ms. Qedesa Lockhart noted that there are growing concerns facing Northern High School in trying to figure out ways to create an opportunity for parents to have conflict resolution services available and how the grant can support this endeavor.

**Teen Court**

* Teen Court served 30 children
* Restitution served 35 children
* Number of Terminations:
	+ 13 -Teen Court
	+ 12 - Restitution
* Programmatic Changes: Alvin Black has filled the coordinator position. There will be a mini training for volunteers in February.

A question was asked about the terminations i.e., were they due to the completion of the program or to lack of completing the program. Ms. Gwendolyn Johnson replied that with Teen Court there were two (2) cases that were unsuccessful and with Restitution there were three (3) or four (4) cases that were unsuccessful. The majority were successful terminations.

**Graced**

* Current Number of Youth Enrolled: 14
* Wait List: 2
* Number of New Referrals: 0
* Number of Successful Completions: 0
* Programmatic Changes: None
* Issues the Program is Facing: Program is currently at capacity, and is having difficulty maintaining quality level, one-on-one mentoring ratio as mentioned in the Monitoring Report. Ms. Swoope is currently screening new mentors.
* Programmatic Achievements: Two (2) youths have been selected to be part of a Global Fellowship with the Dr. Martin Luther King foundation in Cuba. Also, one (1) youth has been competitively selected to represent Cornwallis on the newly developed Durham Youth Mentoring Alliance.

Mr. Ahmed Ali offered to coordinate tours for students from all JCPC programs as an employee of NC State working with the Entrepreneurship Program to which Ms. Swoope expressed an enthusiasm and interest in receiving more information regarding this endeavor.

**TLC/Youth Build**

* Current Number of Youth Enrolled: 7
* Terminations: 1 (due to student relocating out of the county)
* Five(5) students completed their OSHA training
* Programmatic Changes: The Program is now hiring Ms. Lecretia Alston for the Program Manager position. Ms. Alston has worked with JCPC programs previously. The Program is also currently hiring a half-time instructor. The Program is working on potential partnerships with Hearts (regarding referrals), Habitat (regarding hands-on construction training) and Wolf Speed (regarding paid internships).

**Request for Proposal:**

Mr. Eddie Crews presented the RFP template that was provided to all members of the Council. He reported that the remaining funds will be allocated to the two (2) new programs that received 1-year funding and, any new programs. It was decided to put the additional $20,000 from TLC back into the RFP. Mr. Crews, Ms. Parker and Ms. Waggy are working on incorporating the county funds into the RFP. Once this is completed, a final draft will be issued to the public. This funding will be for Fiscal Year 24-25.

Mr. McIver stated that it is the Executive Committee’s goal to get the entire amount approved so that the programs are given enough time to spend the monies responsibly.

Mr. McIver made a motion to approve the RFP with the caveat of adding in the additional funding of $71,000. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Chief Court Counselor Updates**

Tamala McDowell, Chief Court Counslor shared the February report.

* 158 youths were on supervision for the month of December
* Complaints: 88
	+ 23 juveniles (of the 88 received)
	+ Approved: 66 complaints (of the 88 received)
* Diversions: 1
* Detention Admissions: 45
* New Admissions: 17 in December

Offense Types:

* Violent offenses (A-E): 37
* Serious offenses; 44
* Minor offenses: 7
* Status offenses: 0

Demographic Data:

* 19 Black; 4 Hispanic; 0 white; 0 Asian; 0 other
* 20 males; 3 females
* 15 youth aged 11-15
* 8 youth aged 16+

Ms. McDowell reported that most of the A-E offenses were youths caught with a dangerous weapon in December.

Mr. McIver noted that the A-E offenses have increased and pointed out that these are weapons that are in the hands of children under 18 years of age. Mr. McIver suggested that the members think of ways to eliminate youths from obtaining guns and other weapons and incorporate these mechanisms in their programs .

Ms. McDowell offered to disburse documentation on gun-lock safety to anyone who needs this information.

**DPS Update**

Dr. Melissa Watson, Director of Student Alternatives and Support, reported that DPS is fully engaged in meeting the goals outlined in the Strategic plan for 2023-2028. One change that will impact the partnerships and their programs, is the reduction of suspension in the general population by 4% or less. The plan specifically reads as “By 2028, DPS will reduce the percentage of Black and Hispanic students suspended in the district to 5% or lower.” School leaders are being educated regarding the value of the programs being offered. Dr. Watson encouraged everyone to reach out to her if there are any communication barriers and/or if referrals are not being received by emailing her at: melissa\_watson@dpsnc.net or calling her directly at 919.560.2505.

Mr. McIver asked who has the authority to allow agencies into the schools. Mr. McIver shared that as a member of the Participatory Budgeting Committee for the City of Durham, it was voted on that a city organization would work within the schools to educate students on how to vote. This organization was denied access to enter schools (except for Riverside). Ms. Watson replied that principals have the autonomy to make those decisions, however, there are also directors that can facilitate those decisions within each school. Ms. Watson emphasized that she and Qedesa Lockhart are working diligently in removing communication barriers such as these by offering themselves as a direct contact.

**Chair Update**

Mr. McIver commended and thanked all the groups that are collaborating to help the youth.

**Announcements and Adjournment**

There is a campaign awareness event being organized that collaborates with Wake County which consists of a student-focused solution to gun violence. The date should be solidified in February.

Mr. McIver adjourned the meeting at 5:37 pm.