

## Youth Budget Commission October Meeting

**Tuesday, October 18th, 2022; 3:30pm-5PM**

Commissioners in Attendance: Jobi Cates, Charles Montorio-Archer, Evan Krauss, Gary Huelsmann, Lisa Thompson, Karina Villa

Commissioners in Attendance via proxy: Mike Shaver, Alicia Vega, Gary Zumdhal, Sherrie Crabb

Others in Attendance: Curt Clemons-Mosby, Madeline Cohen, Kristina Dion, Shontay Ford, John Gordon, Londyn Harris, Itzel Martinez, Eric Mayo, Kelly Sparks, Nikki Wegner, Gabriel Morales, Nate Cox.

Commissioner Charles Montorio-Archer welcomed everyone in attendance to the October Youth Budget Commission meeting and opened the proceedings. Both co-chairs were unable to attend, so co-chair Shaver submitted a written letter designating Commissioner Montorio-Archer as the acting chair for the meeting.

The attendance was taken and a through a combination of present commissioners and those that designated the chair as their proxy, a quorum was achieved. Commissioners Cates made a motion to approve the minutes from the August meeting, commissioners Huelsmann seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved via voice vote.

Allison Nickrent, the legislative liaison for the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) attended the meeting to present to the commission the department's efforts in supporting youth across the state.

Kelly Sparks began the presentation by showing two slides that showed IDPH's FY 21 investments, showing that the department ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in terms of overall spending on youth by agency, with \$63.4 million or 8% of the departments overall budget. Of that money, all was spent in the Healthy developmental goal. 53% came from General State Funds, 27% from Federal Funds, 23% from state specific funds. 40% of the funding went towards the Prevention funding model, 60% towards the Treatment/Intervention funding model.

Allison began her portion of the presentation by giving a brief history and mission statement of the department. The department has over 200 programs focused on health and well-being. It also employs over 1,100 people and has dozens of offices across the state.

Nickrent went over the three main IDPH programs geared towards youth in Illinois. The first is the Asthma Program. This program focuses on reducing childhood asthma emergencies, home visiting as a means of prevention by identifying possible triggers, working with nonprofits such as the American Lung Association to improve air quality, a new coordinated care program, and asthma self-management.

The second program geared towards youth is the School Health Center Program. This allows the department to coordinate with schools on routine medical care, sports physicals, and immunizations. This program also provides training to school health center workers on both physical and mental health care.

The third youth-oriented program by the department concerns youth suicide and youth violence prevention. This program also assists school health centers, along with community-based non-profits whose goal is to reduce youth violence in both schools and communities, along with treating youth for suicidal ideation.

Commissioner Montorio-Archer opened the question-and-answer session by asking about the department's focus on equity in its youth operations. Nickrent stated the department places equity at the top of its mind when running these programs. They require grant recipients to fill out an equity checklist to ensure that their programs are serving the underserved populations in their areas. Eric Mayo asked if there was opportunity for youth to participate with the department, which Nickrent responded that there are, and the department continues to look for more avenues in which the community can directly participate.

Montorio-Archer asked about mobile crisis units. Nickrent stated that some of the programs do not need mobile units, but there is a program called wellness on wheels that does provide that kind of mobile support.

With no other questions, the commissioners thanked Allison for her time and her presentation and for all of the efforts the department is doing to ensure the health of young people in Illinois. Allison promised to keep the commission up to date on the department's efforts in 2023 and how the commission can assist in those efforts.

Acting Chair Montorio-Archer proceeded to turn the floor over to John Gordon, who is the Children's Home & Aid staffer who is in charge of running the YBC Youth Working Group. John gave a brief overview of the group, who is in it, and what the group has learned since its start in the summer. The youth had been working on a project to identify programs within their home county that fit in with the six developmental goals laid out in the fiscal scan and how state funding, or lack thereof, has figured into those organization's efforts. The youth were to also explain their reasoning for wanting to participate in the working group.

The first youth to speak was Nate Cox, a junior at Sacred Heart-Griffin in Springfield, IL. Nate lives in a rural county outside of Springfield and focused his project on the Menard-Sangamon County Department, reviewing programs set-up for youth in his area and met with Fiscal Director to review State funding model and secure future and escape poverty.

The next youth to speak was Londyn Harris, who is 15 years old and attends Rock Island High School. She stated that the reason she wanted to participate in the group because she believes getting involved in the advocacy process to better her community. She also believes it can help improve her social skills and self-confidence and give her a sense of accomplishment. She focused her project on Love Girls Magazine, an after-school program she currently participates in. The program focuses on empowering young girls and giving them the space needed to support each other.

The next youth speaker was Gabriel Morales, a 12-year-old student at St. Mary's Catholic School in Chicago. Gabriel looked into the Chicago Cadet Program, whose goal is to unite neighborhoods by recruiting teenagers to become police officers. The program receives about \$100,000 in state funding and may receive other state funds through Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Police Department. Gabriel's conversation with the manager of the program inspired him to start to volunteer there.

The next speaker was Itzel Martinez, a freshman at the University of Illinois-Chicago. For her project, Itzel examined AVID, a high school program designed to close the opportunity gap by providing students with working skills and support for their future. Itzel was a participant in the program, and she said it helped her navigate high school. There are approximately 28,500 students in AVID across the state, and 99% end up graduating from High School.

There was one member of the youth working group who was not present for the meeting. Her name is Paishynce Prude, who is a sophomore at East St. Louis High School. John read a short essay Paishynce wrote regarding her reasons for participating in the group. The essay also included her experiences with the after-school group Leaving Our Voices Everywhere (LOVE). She stated the LOVE does not receive any state funding, limiting its positive effects in comparison to groups that do receive state funding.

Next were questions from the Commissioners. Senator Villa asked what stops other people from feeling safe in their communities. Gabriel spoke about how gang violence makes people feel unsafe and how that derails positive developmental outcomes and negatively affects the future of young people. Itzel spoke about how the root of safety issues come from a lack of education. Londyn spoke about how members of a community can make people feel more or less safe.

Jobi followed up by asking since some youth may not feel safe around police, how we can build trust between police and their communities. Gabriel responded that the idea of the cadet program is that because they are from the neighborhood, community members are more likely to feel safe, but he didn't have an answer for the short term. Jobi explained that was ok because a lot of adults struggle with the same question.

Charles then commented that he was inspired by both their research and their passion and was curious how the members of the group stayed motivated. Nate responded that he focuses on what he is doing now will have long term positive effects for his future. Itzel spoke about how far she's come and how she wants to keep making others proud. Representation is incredibly important and statistics about unequal opportunities get her mad and keep her motivated. Gabriel spoke on how he takes inspiration from history and how he wants to make a difference in the future. Londyn spoke on how participating in a group like this is a privilege.

### **New Business**

Charles proposed moving the next meeting of the Commission to January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 3:30 to avoid conflicts with the holiday season. Commissioner Villa seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously.

The meeting then adjourned.