

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL STUDY COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AND REHABILITATIVE
INSTITUTIONS

Held in Room 313-S at the Statehouse, at 12:30 p.m., on February 14, 1980.

Members present were:

Senator Robert Talkington, Chairman
Representative Joe Hoagland, Vice Chairman
Senator Mike Johnston
Representative David Heinemann
Representative Phil Martin

Staff present were:

Fred Carman, Revisor's Office
Emalene Correll, Legislative Research Department
Ray Hauke, Legislative Research Department
Marlin Rein, Legislative Research Department
Robert A. Coldsnow, Legislative Counsel

Conferees appearing before the committee were:

Glenice D. Schooler, Youth Service Worker, Youth Center at Atchison
Gary E. Schooler, Head Cottage Parent, Youth Center at Atchison
Sheila N. Roberts, Youth Service Worker, Youth Center at Atchison

The Chairman called the meeting to order.

Mrs. Schooler appeared to relate her objections to the implementation of the career ladder as it applies to employees at the Youth Center at Atchison. Her statement is attached (Attachment A).

In additional discussion, Mrs. Schooler, a Youth Service Worker II, stated she was a high school graduate and had worked at YCAA six years. With respect to the career ladder, she had been led to believe that her record of attending seminars and workshops, receiving other types of training, her evaluations, and her experience would qualify her for an advanced position when an opening occurred, but when the career ladder was implemented, the only requirement for the advanced position of YSW III was that those promoted worked the 4:00 to 12:00 p.m. shift, and even college graduates had not been offered those positions. Some who were promoted had been employed at YCAA from six to eight months, and others who had the same formal training as she did but who had not been there as long as she had received promotions. Mrs. Schooler stated other employees who had not been promoted had said their evaluations had not been considered. She had not seen these evaluations, but she thought they could be reviewed by the committee. She said no record was kept of her participation in seminars, etc., but they were funded by the state. No certificates were given.

With respect to strip searching of residents, Mrs. Schooler, as a cottage parent, was asked if there was a policy or instructions of any kind at YCAA. She replied that residents are strip searched for contraband only if they have been AWOL, but she did not know if this was a written policy or was left to the discretion of the cottage parents. She stated she had the authority to strip search. She knew of no cases at YCAA where there had been strip searches for reasons other than for being AWOL. In her cottage, Redwood, charts are kept on individual residents, and if one is

searched, whatever is found would be listed on the chart. She could not speak for the other cottages.

Mrs. Schooler was asked if she ever had policy meetings with the administrative staff. She said the head YSW (cottage parent) has meetings with his immediate superior, the Director of Youth Services. She noted she was responsible to the head YSW IV in her cottage, and they had meetings. Mrs. Schooler said she had a policy manual which was updated by the administration. She did not think there was anything in the manual that would cover the subject of strip searching. The Chairman noted a copy of the manual would be obtained for the committee.

Mr. Schooler stated he was concerned with inconsistent policies of the youth center, some being enforced and some being disregarded. As a YSW IV, he is responsible to the Child Care Service Director. Weekly meetings are held by the Director with the YSWs IV and V, and separate meetings, with entirely different subject matter and instructions, are held with the YSWs III which creates problems for Mr. Schooler since he does not know what has been told the IIIs, and they seem to get a different set of orders and interpretation of policy.

With respect to strip searching, Mr. Schooler stated he had given the staff of Redwood Cottage a general policy that if a resident is suspected of having contraband when he comes back to the cottage, he goes from the cottage to the office, is given clean clothes, goes to the shower, removes his clothes, and this is searched and not his person. Each cottage sets its own policy, and he did not know what other cottages did. He did not think there should be a central policy on strip searching. He said competent people should be hired who could be trusted to take care of these situations, and the contraband policy should be left to each cottage. There was some central policy regarding contraband in the level system which dictates the response to any student having or using contraband.

Mr. Schooler also objected to the career ladder implementation and stated qualified people were not considered for promotion. As a result, he lost two qualified people with college degrees from his cottage who resigned. Mr. Schooler said that, in discussing the problems relating to YSW III promotions with management, he was told this was done because of the high contact time involved. He thought the correlation between job descriptions for this group and actual needs for workers assigned at the time IIIs were assigned were not adequate and did not reflect the duties performed. Mr. Schooler said he was told the IIIs had to be assigned to 4:00 to 12:00 p.m. shifts to justify their pay scale to the legislature since this was supposedly the high contact time with the residents.

Lack of personnel which creates overwork and pressures for employees remaining on the job was another concern of Mr. Schooler's. A letter to Barbara Wiley in the SRS personnel office listing the vacancies in his cottage and requesting assistance was read (Attachment B). Mr. Schooler stated most of these vacancies are the result of the career ladder. Most of his co-workers agree that promotions and positions should have gone to the most qualified. Grandfathering in employees, giving them one year to qualify, has added to the problems. He was told all cottages except his agreed to the grandfather concept. There is dissention and resignations resulting in the remaining employees being overworked and under pressure. Mr. Schooler said he does have use of other staff which

helps, but Redwood Cottage is understaffed. He did not know what the personnel situation was in other cottages.

Mr. Schooler said he was made cottage coordinator because there was no psychologist to fill this position. He was told he could get the superintendent's staff to help if there was a real problem. At this point, Mr. Schooler expressed concern that reporters were present, and he hesitated to give an example of an incident he felt was important but agreed to continue without giving names. He stated that one student had had chronic school problems over a period of time, and, in January, the PSA teacher called him for assistance. After discussing the matter with Dr. Kearns, it was agreed to send the student to the security cottage, Ivy, where there also was a teacher. Prior to this, the student was on restriction from watching television, and Mr. Schooler, with the program director's consent, had ordered this restriction to continue at Ivy in hopes of motivating the student. Mr. Schooler was told by an Ivy Cottage YSW he did not have the authority to do this. Without contacting Mr. Schooler or anyone else that he knew of, the student was allowed to watch TV, thus the program was changed. Mr. Schooler went to the program director who told him his instructions would have been followed if he had called the head youth service worker. Mr. Schooler said he had asked the program director before if he wanted him to write out this instruction. He said situations such as this example have caused him great frustration.

The organizational chart and change of command at YCAA were discussed with Mr. Schooler. It was noted the program director was the acting assistant superintendent now and the program director supposedly did have the authority regarding treatment plans, but the chief psychologist and social workers were responsible to the program director. Psychologists serve as coordinators in treatment plans with social workers giving them input as to the needs of the student. Mr. Schooler explained that treatment plans and methods of implementing them are recommended by the coordinator to the head of the YSWs who goes over them with all cottages. Mr. Schooler was asked as a coordinator if there were times of disagreement between the social workers and the cottage parent and did he have the responsibility to work out things. He replied that was the understood function of a coordinator. Mr. Schooler noted that being coordinator placed him in the position of having to coordinate himself and members of his staff he was supervising as cottage parent.

Mr. Schooler continued by stating the superintendent came to Atchison once a week which Mr. Schooler felt was inadequate. He noted the superintendent was removed from Atchison three years ago, an acting superintendent came in, and after the merger with Topeka, the Director of Child Care Services at Topeka moved to Atchison as assistant superintendent. Mr. Schooler felt the superintendent's position at Atchison should be full time. He thought this would eliminate problems and childish "siccum" incidents between department heads.

Mr. Schooler said he did not know what the philosophy of its mission at YCAA was. He had never seen a stated purpose or goal. Each cottage is on its own, and programs among the cottages are not similar. He gave an example of his cottage enforcing a hair code, which was supposed to cover all residents, while some do not, which creates two peer groups on the campus. There was some coordination by the administration between the

cottages with respect to "levels", there being dictates as to what levels students should be on.

In answer to further questions, Mr. Schooler agreed there was a negative attitude with students. In his opinion, cottage parents are not all to blame as he said he had heard the Director of Child Care Services, who trains cottage parents, describe clever ways of shutting up a resident. He stated he had absolutely never told a student he was a convict and was never going to make it, and he had not heard other cottage parents say this.

Mr. Schooler said there was a great deal of tension at the Youth Center at Atchison, and the career ladder destroyed the family unit within the cottage. Tensions and anxieties are reinforced because of inconsistent and punitive policies such as "if he gets out of hand, lock him up", and the negative attitude of supervisors. He noted in all the years he has worked there, he has never been complimented or encouraged by his immediate supervisor on anything. Employees are kept on regardless of whether they are doing their duty, and the salary adjustment authorized by the legislature several years ago failed to result in qualified people being employed. Mr. Schooler said there was a grievance policy on employee evaluations and appeals have been filed regularly since last September.

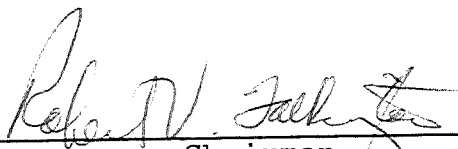
Mr. Schooler's recommendations were to hire competent people, hold them responsible, and allow them to do the job. He approved of a recommendation given previously that the youth centers be placed under the Department of Corrections.

Mrs. Roberts appeared and gave a statement (Attachment C) listing her objections to the career ladder and lack of or inept administration. She gave examples of the confusion over ordering and receiving supplies and being forced to wash laundry and clean without the necessary soap and cleaning agents. The administration would say the order was lost or was never received. She did not know if orders were logged as to the date received. Rather than report to anyone there were no supplies, she usually did without.

Mrs. Roberts felt the administration had its priorities mixed up, spending too much time with petty regulations while major decisions were not made.

In further discussion, Mrs. Roberts said her husband, a military retiree and also a minister, was a former employee at YCAA. Because of his frustration with the administration, social workers, and psychologists, he resigned last December. He felt the people he had to deal with were ridiculous. She said Dr. Kearns had been surprised at what her husband said about the administration when he resigned, and she knew of no positive reactions to his reasons for leaving. The committee requested that a copy of Mr. Roberts' letter of resignation be sent to it. Mrs. Roberts recommended that new people be put in administrative positions who would handle problems. She noted the social workers and psychologists keep agitating situations which she felt could be worked out making YCAA a better place to work.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.


Chairman

ATTENDANCE SHEET

Feb. 14, 1980

NAME

REPRESENTING

TOWN

Pulliam

Sharon Gordon

Sackman

Budget

Epps

Cameron

Klotz

Implimentation of Career Ladder

For two months prior to the instalation of the career ladder everyone was ask to gather and list all qualifications, seminars, in-service training and experience.

I had been led to believe that attending seminars and workshops all over the state that were applicable to the youth service profession over five years, being capable of assuming responsibilities of all shifts, performance evaluations over a period of years and experience would be considered any time there was an advance position opening. When the career ladder was implimented none of these qualifications were considered.

Staff that had already been performing the job descriptions

of Youth Service Worker III were not offered those positions. Staff that did not meet the qualifications for the Youth Service Worker III positions were promoted to those positions and given one year to qualify themselves.

These positions being filled by staff with lesser amounts of education, in-service training and experience than other available staff, the only criteria being that they happened to be working, at that time, in a 4 pm - 12 position.

The 4 - 12 position was the chosen working hours for the Youth Service Worker III.

A good share of their working hours needing to be available during the professional staffs hours of 8 AM - 5 pm. (school, inter-

views, contact with parents, law enforcement personnel, program clinical directors, Superintendent and other agency personnel.)

Many of the specific problems needing individual counseling and immediate attention occur during the day when there is high contact time with the entire campus.

Anytime a student is not in school during the day, with the exception of teacher absences, they have been sent back to the cottage for uncontrollable behavior at school.

12-31-79

To Mrs. Barbara Wiley

From Mr. Gary Schooler

RE Cottage Vacancies, Redwood

Mrs. Wiley

In Aug of 79, Mr. Jackson's resignation created a "full time position" vacancy, which to date has not been filled. Mr. Busenbarrick has accumulated approximately 36 days sick leave, holidays and vacation, all of which have been used up as "sick time off".

Mrs. Roberts was in Europe for about a mo. in Oct. and was hospitalized from late Nov. to Dec 24.

Mr. Simanowitz resigned Dec 6, creating another "full time position" vacancy.

Redwood Cottage's psychologist resigned last Feb. creating another "full time position" vacancy.

Miss Kennedy, Redwood social worker resigned Dec 19, 79 which leaves Redwood Cottage with 4 full time positions vacant, and something over 3 mo. of off time by 2 YSA's since Sept. "Mr. Busenbarrick has been off since Dec 22", Mr. Busenbarrick called me Dec 29, to say he would not return to work until after he had surgery and he had an appointment to see the Dr. about the surgery on Jan 11, 1980.

Redwood Cottage has had a full count of youth since Nov 2, 1979.

All of the above described sequence of events have left Redwood Cottage with an insufficient no. of staff to operate up to the standard we have maintained up

to this point. Redwood Cottage has had the least no. of A.W.O.K.s, school office referrals or sandbacks of any of the 4 open Cottages operating on this Campus as we are of the 20 students we've sent out in the past 2 yrs only one "Steve King" returned or got in further trouble that we know of and Steve had no court contact.

efforts to maintain this standard of service to this agency and to the state of Kansas, leave the few staff left in Redwood (myself excluded) working under a tremendous pressure.

I am writing this memo to assure myself that you are aware of our situation here and to point out that extra duties such as "spur of the moment" request to provide transportation to Topeka Bus depot and T.S.H. could be delegated to another Cottage with more staff available than Redwood has at this time.

Gary Schoeler

YSW IV Redwood Cottage

CC Mr. Vigoda
Dr. Kearns

~~_____~~

Roberts, Sheila

ATTACHMENT C

The inflexibility of the Career Ladder
I am a 1. in position of the
Career Ladder. I applied for
the 2 position. I was turned
down because I only had 16 months
in time. I was told I needed
18 months in time to fill the
position. Yet I am working the
position and qualify in all
areas except 2 month time wise.

There are no means by
which a person with extensive
experience and training other than
within this institution can
receive credit for. (Example)

my Montessori classes at several
different colleges. my experience
working with kids. None of this was
considered what so ever when I
applied for the 2nd slot. nor were
my records even looked at before
the interview. I was just told no.
my personal director

Also what function does a Security Guard have to qualify for a Youth Service Worker?

For Example a Security Guard 2nd if he so desires can apply for a Youth Service Worker job and automatically become a Youth Service Worker 2nd with no qualifications at all.

Then I am to work with him, guide him, train him, because his knowledge is to unlock a door and lock it back up again yet in this new system of the Career Ladder this is to up grade our employees here which is just dumb. I'll give the credit to whom ever put this together because the way Enron was kept in their positions was ones dumb. Just take the 3rd position

in our cottage we had three people who would have qualified education and experience wise for this position. Yet the one who got it was the least qualified of all. One man with a degree in Humanities quit shortly after. Another man with 2 years of College and good experience also left.

* The administration came around took information on each staff educational experience. Yet none of this was ever considered when we were put into 1, 2, 3, categories. I really think it bailed down to this: No one had the guts to tell some one they could not fill a position ^{and this} ~~so some~~ one else would! They just left everyone where they were to make it easier on the administration and left a lot of care for the Cottage.

One something to say about the administration also.

1. The Rules vary from Cottage to Cottage. Some speaking of Y.C.A.A. rules and are enforced to different degrees. This is poor structure from the management of our administration.

2. Examp. A Secure Cottage is a lock up cottage for kids that cannot handle them selves in an open cottage.

Yet student we have sent there receive more priviledges than we allow them in an open cottage. So what is the message we are giving this child?

Simply Confusion! And also reinforcing negative behavior action.

3. You put in your paper work for supplies and some time go weeks or months with out receiving anything. This is your administration.

Who says keep things in top shape,

No soap for clothing