

# Illinois School for the Deaf Advisory Council

## Meeting Summary

May 5, 2017 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

ISD Main Building First Floor Conference Room

### Members Present:

Deborah Beranek, Deb Gossrow, John Miller, Sheri Cook, Jerry Covell, Susan Dramin-Weiss, Paula Chance, Michelle Brown, Gwenn Eyer, Julee Nist, Quinetta Wade, Corey Axelrod (via phone)

**Members Absent:** Matt Fraas

### Others Present:

Kathryn Surbeck, Karen Garrett, Angie Kuhn, Sheila Stephens, Charlene Hicks, Kitty Aubry, Elaine Cady, Christine Good-Deal, Carolyn Eilering, Tom Chance, Jonathan Bordean.

### Welcome, Roll Call and Introduction of Visitors:

Julee instructed everyone to order coffee from the student coffee cart and invited those present to partake in snacks she and the CTE foods class provided.

Gwenn called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

Roll call and an introduction of visitors were completed.

### Approval of March 10, 2017 Meeting Minutes:

Paula moved that the March 3, 2017 meeting minutes be approved with minor changes. The motion was seconded by Jerry and Susan. The motion passed.

### Student Presentations:

**ITDHH Fingerspelling Bee** - Gwenn reported that the ISD students excelled at the spelling bee and took the top 3 spots in the competition. The students wore matching t-shirts provided by Kathy Mansell and represented ISD well.

**ASL Bowl** - Julee provided a copy of the Jacksonville Journal Courier article about the ASL Bowl and then showed a video of the students narrating the history of ISD. Susan asked if the video could be posted on the ISD and Alumni websites. Julee said that would be possible. Sheri mentioned how impressed she was with what Jason Frye and Craig Kuhn were able to teach the students about editing and developing while working on this video.

Paula announced that she recently discovered that Roberta “Bobbi” Cordano’s grandparents graduated from ISD. Bobbi Cordano is the President of Gallaudet University. Paula is hoping that Bobbi will be visiting ISD in the fall and she’s hoping to share this video with her.

Julee thanked the ISD Alumni Association for inviting Dr. MJ Bienvenu and Mr. Colin Analco to ISD for the 200 year celebration of ASL. She also shared the Jacksonville Journal Courier article covering this event.

Sheila announced that the Scavenger Hunt sponsored by the ISD Alumni Association was a huge success. She explained that the students who participated in the hunt were given questions and asked to find the answers in the museum. Sheila reported that many of students were so interested in what was in the museum that they forgot to look for the answers and just spent time looking at everything in the museum. However, she said that many students did fill out their papers and got the answers correct.

Elaine thanked Julee for having a couple of filing cabinets moved to the museum for their use.

Paula expressed thanks to Julee for hosting a breakfast in her office for Dr. Bienvenu and Mr. Analco while there were visiting ISD. She said it was a very warm welcome and much appreciated.

Sheri stated that she has seen a lot of positive changes since Julee’s arrival at ISD. She also said that she was glad Julee was able to attend CEASD this year and that she felt her presence there was important.

#### **Reports:**

***ISD Advisory Council Chair*** – Gwenn reported that this will be her last meeting as chairperson. Gwenn thanked ISD for all they have done to support her daughter. She said she has talked to legislators about ISD because she wants to see this school survive. She reported that she has heard talk of the school not surviving given the current budget crisis and the governor’s thoughts on the school. She does not want ISD to close and feels it’s important that we all continue to respect and honor the past as well as build the future. She stated that she appreciates the opportunity she has had to serve the school and the Advisory Council and that she will continue to provide support for ISD.

***ISD Superintendent’s Report*** – Julee reported that there is still not a state budget. There are still some vacancies and Julee provided a personnel report to the council. Julee shared various news articles and photos highlighting recent events at ISD. These events included articles about the school’s computer club’s recent purchase of a robot, the ASL Bowl, ISD presenting its first award for the annual Regional Office of Education Art Show in honor of former student Jonathan Aguilar, a winning drawing by ISD student, Samantha Wells in the Jacksonville Journal Courier’s Design An Ad contest, and a picture of ISD students with their tiger umbrellas.

Julee showed Sheri an article about ISRC. Sheri reported on a youth empowerment training that is offered to high school students and mature middle school students. After completing the training, Sheri began providing training at various schools. The training teaches empowerment and team building skills.

Angie reported on the Educator Instructional Grant. Angie was invited to accept the reward on behalf of the students and their behavior in the classroom.

Paula said she saw an article featuring ISD student Dajour Wallace and his achievements in track.

Julee announced that ISD was recently awarded \$5000 from the Nestle Corporation. ISD is looking into using that money to get a water hydration system and equipment for the gyms.

Julee asked Christine to share information from a trip to the State Capitol. Christine showed several pictures that were taken from the Illinois State Advisory Council (ISAC) Breakfast. She reported that this trip is made every year with a group of students from ISD and ISVI. ISAC are in support of students with disabilities and the agencies that work with the students. Christine reported that this is an opportunity to talk to ISAC about our students and our programs. Each student was able to meet the representative and senator from their home area. The students were introduced by CD Davidsmeyer on the house floor. The students were also able to take a brief tour of the rotunda.

Julee reported on the annual ISRC (Illinois State Resource Center) bus trip. There were 11 students involved. The visiting students toured the campus and attended lunch and a class with the current students. Carolyn reported that ISRC has sponsored this trip since 2007. She stressed that ISD would not be able to fund this, so we are very thankful to ISRC for their support of this annual visit. Sheri said she could talk with someone about doing something similar for the southern part of the state.

Gwenn reported that many people would need to leave the meeting by noon, so she suggested rearranging the agenda. Gwenn stated that she would not call a formal break this morning, so everyone should feel free to step out if necessary.

**DHS/DRS Director's Report** – Quinetta reported that there was no good news on the budget. She reported that the Work Force Innovation and Opportunity Act (WFIOA) are working on reaching out to students about coming to DRS after graduation before entering the work force. Sheri pointed out that WFIOA funds could be used for a couple of camps, Discover Your Future and Explore Your Future. Christine said that ISD does have some students attending these camps.

Quinetta reported that she is still working with the State Rehabilitation Council and that there is some legislation that does impact ISD and ISVI. This legislation would amend the personnel code so that ISD and ISVI could directly hire licensed staff rather than going through the CMS process. Deb asked about hearings coming up regarding these bills. Jerry stated that there is a hearing scheduled for May 9<sup>th</sup>. Deb would like families to get notices about these hearing so that they are brought to their attention. Christine said that because it is a political issue, the school cannot send anything out. However, the PTSO could send something out or post the links. Jerry said that you can register online to receive the notices regarding the bills. Paula said that IAD always post this information to inform its members. Gwenn asked Quinetta to follow up regarding whether legislative announcements could be sent out via Skyward.

**Student Body Government (SBG) Representative** – No representative was present at the meeting.

**Membership Report** – Deb reported that there are currently no open positions on the council. After discussion, it was determined that there is one vacancy to fill Ben's position. Gwenn asked everyone to check their contact information on the sheet she passed around and to write in any changes to their information. Also, she asked members to include their start date and when their term is up if they know this information. The council will work on filling Ben's position. There is some confusion over how long of a term each position holds and how much longer each position has remaining. Gwenn said that we are working to reconstruct that information, explaining that when we established the new term limits, we drew for terms and some were shorter than others. She stated that officer terms are

one year. Susan asked for clarification on how we will know when everyone's terms are finished. Gwenn stated that as of right now, no one currently on the council will leave before 2018.

### **Presentations:**

**Parent/Infant Institute** – Angie reported that the institute is scheduled for the week of June 11 and will run from Sunday through Friday of that week. She said there are approximately 20 children coming that range in age from 0-6 years. Currently the youngest to sign up is 8 months old and the majority will be between the ages of 2 and 3 years. Angie also reported that the request to purchase food for the institute has been approved.

**Student Recruitment Council** – No report

### **Discussions:**

**Written Departmental Reports** – No questions regarding this issue.

**School Issues** – Paula asked for an update on the School Climate Committee. Angie reported that an email recently went out from this committee to ISD staff members. The email listed what the committee has been working on and the goals of the committee. The committee decided to become “human commit boxes” and encouraged staff members to contact a committee member if they have concerns they would like to express. The committee will collect the concerns and work on addressing them over the summer. Paula asked if it was a staff only survey or if students were included. Angie said the focus for now is on the concerns of staff, so the email was sent out to staff members only.

**Clearer Communication Policy** – Paula talked about language conflicts and mentioned her concerns that the ISD communication policy does not mention ASL, only bilingual communication. Julee stated that the school communication policy is already set and agreed to provide the policy at the first meeting next school year. Michelle questioned why Paula wanted to set up a committee about this, and mentioned that the policy is available on the school website. Michelle asked Paula if she is wanting the policy to say ASL instead of bilingual, and Paula said yes she would like that, but she thinks it would be best for the committee to look over the policy before further discussion is held. No committee was appointed.

### **New Business:**

**Election of Officers** – Gwenn reported that she had asked Ed to send an email to council members asking them to nominate people to fill officer positions. Nominations were then forwarded to Susan. Sheri was nominated for Chairperson and she replied that she was interested in that position. Michelle was nominated as vice chairperson and she declined the nomination. After asking for other nominations for vice chairperson, Gwenn said she'd be willing to serve in this position. Deb was nominated as secretary and she expressed interest in this position. Gwenn asked if there were any other nominations. Jerry proposed the following positions: Sheri as chairperson, Gwenn as vice chairperson and Deb as secretary. Gwenn asked the council if they accepted this slate and the response was a unanimous “Yes”.

**IHSA Renewal** – Julee presented a form that needed to be signed for ISD to renew their IHSA membership. Julee asked for Quinetta's signature on the form, since Kris Smith had signed it in the past. There were some questions as to who can or needs to sign the form and Quinetta said she would check into rather or not Julee can sign the form in the future. Paula made a motion to renew the IHSA membership. Susan seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**ISD Promotional Video Development** – Jerry requested this topic be tabled for a future meeting because Corey was not present. Gwenn stated that council members have often asked for videos regarding ISD to be posted on the website. It was noted that some have been posted. Corey happened to call into the meeting at this time and was placed on speaker phone. This topic remained tabled.

**OMA and Ethics Training** – Gwenn asked everyone to make sure that they have completed the required trainings. If anyone had not completed them, they can let Ed know and he will provide them with the packet. Ethics is done annually and OMA is a one-time training. Paula asked if Ed could check and see who has taken it to make sure everyone is in compliance.

**Educational Advocates** – Gwenn stated that there had been discussions in previous meetings about setting up a way to have educational advocates for the parents. She asked the council if there was any interest in forming a break-out committee to form educational advocates. Gwenn, Jerry, Paula and Deborah all stated they would be interested. Jerry said he thought it would be a good idea to have someone from ISD on the committee. Julee said that she could possibly appoint someone to the committee. Jerry asked if there was a need to involve DHS. Gwenn also pointed out the importance of including someone from the State Board of Education. It was pointed out that the council needs a replacement for Amy Richards, ISBE advisor.

**Set 2017-18 Meeting Calendar** – Gwenn reported that if the council were to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of the month as usual, the meeting dates for next school year would be September 8, December 8, March 9, and May 4. The exception would be May 4, which is the first Friday of the month, to avoid the Mother's Day weekend when school would not be in session. Everyone stated that those dates would be fine. Sheri made a suggestion that the council consider meeting after school hours so that more parents and community members can attend the meetings. She noted that most school councils meet in the evenings and that it is sometimes difficult for people to get off of work to attend the meetings. There was a lengthy discussion with points being made for and against going to evening meetings. Gwenn mentioned possibly having some of the meetings in Springfield as they have done in the past. Deborah wondered if moving the meetings to Springfield would make it difficult to have student involvement in the meetings. Corey wondered about having at least one of the meetings in the Chicago area since the majority of the students are from that area. Gwenn suggested possibly hosting a video conference in the Chicago area. Jerry proposed that the meetings could alternate between mornings and evenings, and also working with Quinetta on video conferencing. Gwenn proposed to set the time for the first meeting of the year time only, and in the meantime, Quinetta could look into remote sites and then they could go from there. Jerry agreed with that proposal. Gwenn proposed to go with the usual meeting place for either a morning or afternoon meeting for the first meeting next fall. She also suggested that over the summer Ed could send out a survey for what times work best for each person and then set the times based on the survey results, noting that time of day must first reflect when council members are available. Jerry questioned if the months to meet are set in the by-laws. Paula said the by-laws only state that the meetings must be held four times during the school year. Since it was still undecided if the first meeting would be on September 8 or possibly be moved to August, Gwenn decided to end the discussion and send out a date of availability survey and a decision could be made at a later time.

**Public Comment:** No Public Comments

### **Unfinished Business:**

**Recruiting deaf/HH teachers and administrators** – This topic was tabled

**Building ISD's reputation nationwide** – This topic was tabled

Stakeholder Reports – There were no stakeholder reports

Suggest Agenda Items for Next Meeting –

Review School Communication Policy

Bilingual pay

Educational Advocates

Membership Update

ISD School Video

Report from Climate Committee

Continue Recruiting Deaf & HH & building ISDs reputation nationwide

Listening Tour Report

Susan moved to adjourn the meeting. Deb seconded the motion. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at noon.