

CSGP Final Meeting
6/9/05

Minutes

Present: Jessica Larsen, Tania Garcia Cadena, Pete Smith, Rick Larkey, Frank Kennedy, Leslie Smith, Ken Lake, Andre Sims, Panna Putnam, and Cami Farnham

Welcome: Panna Putnam welcomed everybody

End of year recap:

Pete Smith of SCOE reported that the toughest part was the focus group and getting kids to come back for it. We only had 3 kids out of approximately 50 invited to come back. We still have kids in school for 1 ½ weeks, so we do have access to the students, but it's very difficult to get them to come back. Short term suspensions started to work. Schools realized what an asset we were. Elk Grove is growing rapidly and cannot keep up with disciplinary problems. They made some great partners in dealing with 3 day suspensions. Data collection was very difficult. We have all the pre-data, but collecting post-data is extremely difficult. Trying to work with Frank Kennedy, and the Probation Department. They are getting about 2-3 new kids each week through the probation department. These are expelled and suspended students. Trying to find ways to sustain the program through the Probation Department, court and community schools, and SCOE.

Frank Kennedy reported about an alternative school (juveniles at risk – started by a guy who is a recovering narcotic user who has done prison time – he will be starting a charter school), they've made connections with him. These are all kids who are not on track to graduate. He's hopeful that the school will be successful.

Jessica Larsen of YCOE reported that they were able to be most successful when we did smaller numbers. Kids need more hands on support. Biggest challenge was to meet the numbers while keeping quality up. In the first year when we were serving lower numbers, we saw more success in the students. In the second year, we served more suspended students, so they were short term. They had a difficult time collecting a lot of post-data. Once students are gone from the program, it's hard to get them back to collect post-data.

Jessica had a hard time doing focus group. Only 1 student showed up. Even had a hard time getting feedback from them over the phone.

Tania Cadena-Garcia of Hands Together reported that Hands Together is closing at the end of June. They've filed for bankruptcy and are closing. Tania has no idea if students have tried calling to complete community service, as the phones have been shut off. Tania has contacted schools in the event they've tried reaching them.

Andre Sims of PCOE reported that they had a very good year. They merged with peer court in Placer County. The connections were very valuable. The woman that runs the peer court in Placer was a great mentor type person for the students. The Placer Nature Center was a very successful source of community service. The kids are now begging to work there, and don't view it as community service or something they have to do. Students were given big responsibilities at the nature center, not just manual labor. They were trained as docents of the center and gave guided tours to the public. They did the video project; so students actually learned skills that they can use later through their community service. Challenges were collecting data. Post data was very difficult to collect. Helping with our sustainability, FYS has been trying to coordinate with them and Placer County ROP. This will help with transition. A counselor at Sierra College is also trying to coordinate with them in helping students make transition. Trying to get kids to see that there's more beyond doing their community service requirement. All of their students are expelled. That was their main focus.

Ken Lake of PCOE reported that they will not be able to support the students now that grant is closing, but will be able to direct the kids in an appropriate direction. Ken takes time to acknowledge the hard work that Andre put into the program. He was the one that deserves the credit for heading up programs, getting kids to sites, and running programs.

They sent students to state CSGP leadership institutes hosted by YSCAL, and were trained in job interviewing skills. Those students have benefited a great deal. The videos of this training have been completed; so now teachers can use this to teach. The videos are done by students, so peers tend to listen more.

Last week they took students to the state capital for a private tour. Kids got a lot out of it.

Leslie Smith of NCOE reported that they had some successes with community day schools. She thinks that's going to be a sustainable program. They made great partnerships. Some collaboration with CREEC. They solidified relationships with the community. The kids seemed to get a lot more out of it when they were out meeting the public. Frustrations were more with high school students who tend to do one day community service and don't seem to have a choice in what they worked on. Character development part of it needs to be improved. Overall they developed some great relationships, helped tie the high school program and the court programs. Tracking down the kids for the focus group was very difficult.

Panna Putnam reported that the common thread amongst all partners is the difficulty in collecting data.

Jessica Larsen of YCOE added that working with alternative education within our own county office was extremely difficult. Confidentiality and restrictions made it difficult to get referrals. Alternative education wants to continue with community service but won't release any info on who their students are.

Ken Lake of PCOE added that they tried to make their community service more of a learning process instead of a punitive process. He thinks that's why they had so many people trying to get involved in their program.

Frank Kennedy of SCOE added that the Probation Department didn't like that the students were doing things other than picking up trash. But their goal was to have the kids doing more productive work that motivated them.

Panna Putnam added that the goal of the grant was that community service should not be punitive. There is a problem with all the different agencies... there's a captive audience out there... the schools don't want to deal with it. Cheaper for the schools to send them to an alternative school for a year, rather than expel them. Please write these problems up into your report. Hopefully somebody at the state will see it and changes will be made in future programs.

Lead Coordinator's Report – there is no more funding. There were some statewide partners trying to get more funding by raising awareness and approaching legislators at the Capitol. At the state meeting, some have done great jobs, think of what you've done with your program, and imbedded it into another grant (such as YCOE's mentoring grant). Panna suggested to statewide partners that they should not think of it as the CSGP program as program but think of it as a strategy.

Pete Smith asked, compared to other regions how would you compare us? Panna said Los Angeles County did very well. They already had an existing program when they got this grant. CSGP help build this program.

Another County program had a lot of challenges. They had a student commit suicide, and shootings. But they seemed to deal with it all very well.

Panna added that she thinks that region 3 was right in line with what we said we'd do.

Sustainability – the way to sustain the progress of the kids is through mentoring.

State Visit – Program Audit Update: May 25th audit was done at Placer County. Andre reported that Jacie Ragland from the state came by and they gave tours of Placer County Nature Center. They got to see kids giving tours. The director of the nature center said that these students did an outstanding job and did better than some of the adults they have working there. One kid was an avid skateboarder, and is now very interested in nature. The program really changed him in a positive way. Kids put on a job skill workshop. They had a meeting with students, and some of the students really opened up as to how much this changed their lives (impromptu focus group). The paperwork part of audit was very difficult.

Panna refers to the last sheet in the handouts. We (YCOE as the LEA of CSGP) are liable in an audit. So we'd like to have all your files in our office. Information compiled by student.

Very important:

Every student file will need some evidence as to when the student was expelled or suspended, referral forms, and letter from principal.

Placer noted that student's names are not in file due to confidentiality. Placer wrote letter confirming that students were in program. (See John Roina's handout).

Please keep all files for 5 years in the event of an audit.

Important:

Kids cannot be getting school credit while doing community service for CSGP.

Community service cannot be done during school hours. Refer to page 3 of letter to Panna. If students are not in class they cannot receive credit. All partners reported that no community service was done during school hours, so the point is mute. The only time students were doing community service during school hours, was for the sole purpose of the audit on May 25th.

Can students use their CSGP community service for credit towards their high school requirements? Yes that should be fine.

Pete Smith asked if we were doing community service at a community day school during the last period of school of the day, they can't receive credit?

Andre – see handouts that he brought. Copy of database can serve as evidence that student performed community service.

Rick Larkey of SCOE added that these requirements should've been given up front. But to require them after the grant is nearly over is unacceptable. He pointed out that he and his agency met the requirements of the contract they signed. In the event of an audit, your biggest defense is that they never required this of you up front. They really cannot come to you at the end and require this of you.

Frank Kennedy added that it seems that the only thing not covered by the database is proof that the kid was suspended or expelled.

Pete smith noted that we could add a spot in database where the referral came from, and where it can be found.

They also want a description of community service – back up information as to what they did (i.e. videos, letters from community service source, pre-survey, post-survey). Frank wants an email of check-off list.

Some students have to submit a transition contract to school in order to return to regular school.

John created transition form and reflections form.

Break for lunch

Panna checked with John, and all requirements listed by Jacie Ragland, the evidence is acceptable from the database (except for 4a - need to have something mentioned above).

Quarterly report form – nothing different. Your data is due today. If you don't have it here, please email to John Roina as soon as possible at roina@ycoe.org.

Final progress report – if you have any questions on this call or email John Roina.

Student files need to be handed over to YCOE by September 1st.

Meeting adjourned.