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1988

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

STATE TRAINING SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE



JANUARY 1988

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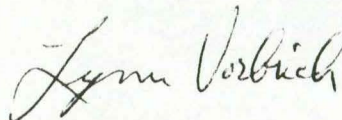
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INTRODUCTION

This report constitutes the recommendations of the State Training School's Advisory Committee relative to State Training School's total program. In developing these recommendations, the Advisory Committee reviewed as completely as possible the total operation of the institution. It is the feeling of the Committee that this report may be timely for your purposes and may be of use as you project for the future needs of the facility.

While the Committee realizes that initially the length of times established for the Advisory Committee to operate was three years, they feel it is important that this group continue to function. The reason for this is due to the outside perspective that the members on the Committee can add to the operation of the institution as well as the support they can generate with outside professionals regarding the needs and mission associated with the population they serve. The Committee supports and looks forward to enhancing positive developments which have occurred at the Training School: 1.) Growth of the Substance Abuse Programs 2.) Involvement of the local community with the institution and 3.) the support by the leadership of the Department of Human Services for improvements. They look forward to continued discussion on these recommendations and future issues and goals. The members are willing to continue their efforts if the Commissioner so desires.



Lynn Vorbrich
Chairperson

242.16 CODE OF IOWA

242.16 Standards - Advisory Committee.

1. The Department of Human Services shall adopt rules pursuant to Chapter 17A establishing standards for services provided by the State Training School, which shall address:

a. The number, qualifications, and character of staff necessary to assure the health, safety, and welfare of children committed to the State Training School.

b. Programs for education and in-service training of staff.

c. Policies for intake, assessment, admission, and discharge of children committed to the State Training School.

d. Policies for involvement of the parents of children committed to the State Training School.

e. The adequacy of programs available to children committed to the State Training School, including activity programs, social services, behavior management procedures, and educational programs.

f. Health, safety, and medical care policies.

2. The department shall establish an advisory committee for the State Training School consisting of fifteen persons representing the local community, the juvenile court, providers of juvenile services, state agencies concerned with juvenile services, and persons with expertise in the treatment of youth. No more than five members of the advisory committee shall be state employees. The Advisory Committee shall meet at least three times annually, and shall review and make recommendations to the Department regarding programming and policies of the State Training School.

85 Acts, ch 173 &24

Repealed July, 1988; advisory committee to reports its recommendations relating to repeal by January 1, 1988; 85 Acts, ch 173, &33

STATE TRAINING SCHOOL OVERVIEW

The Iowa State Training School was founded in 1868 and since that time over 23,000 boys have passed through it's gates. It operates under the Department of Human Services; Bureau of Adult, Children and Family Services. The State Training School is one of a few juvenile correctional institutions in the United States to be accredited by the American Correctional Association. Each year over 450 delinquent boys, ages 12 to 18, are committed here by the Juvenile Court system for an average stay of six months. The average age of students on admission is 16.3 years, with 35% over age 17. They were committed for the following offenses:

1. 12% for crimes against persons.
2. 83% for crimes against property.
3. 5% for miscellaneous crimes (controlled substance, concealed weapon, criminal trespassing, etc.)

With an average daily population of 225 students in F/Y 87, the State Training School has six regular living units, a reception unit, and two specialized living units on a campus of 566 acres. The primary goal is to teach social responsibility through a treatment program based on behavior modification. This means that positive behavior results in rewards, and negative behavior results in consequences. The average cost per student is about \$80.00 per day. The annual budget is \$6,000,000 and they employ 186 staff members.

A student's life at STS centers in a living unit where the treatment team works together to identify his problems, develop a program with specific goals for his accomplishment, and evaluate his progress. The students are involved in full time academic and/or vocational education. Effective in September of 1987, the Training School began offering special education services to all students in need. These programs are coordinated through Area Education Agency 6 and involves approximately 50% of the students. In addition, the following auxiliary services are available to students:

GED Classes
Driver's Education
Arts and Crafts
Library Services
Physical Education

Remedial Reading and Math Program
Career Exploration
Family Life and Social Skills
Independent Study
Law-Related Education

STS Overview (cont.)

Through these various educational programs they endeavor to prepare students academically, vocationally, socially, and emotionally for re-entry into society.

The STS Infirmary provides medical, dental, and psychological services for students. Special needs programs are offered on a referral basis, including: Adolescent Sexual Abuse Program; Alcoholics Anonymous; Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment, and Education; and Family Therapy. Religious services, classes, and counseling is provided by two chaplains. Specialized residential treatment is provided for aggressive, chronic run-away and emotionally disturbed students.

Following placement (parole), a student is provided services in the community by a Field Social Worker. The recidivism rate is 24%. It is estimated that approximately 68% of the students succeed in staying out of adult corrections after they leave STS. Many go on to successful careers in various fields and become valuable members of society. We hope that STS has had a positive role to play in helping them to succeed in life.

ISSUE: STAFF TO STUDENT RATIO

DISCUSSION:

The staffing level at the State Training School is not safe for either students or staff. The present ratio at best is 1:15 and frequently 1:30, and successful programming cannot occur under circumstances such as this. This has been pointed out by every group that has visited or evaluated the Training School programs. Written reports from the ACA Commission on Accreditation, Boys Town of Nebraska, the Youth Law Center of San Francisco, as well as this Advisory Committee all speak to the understaffed conditions at Eldora.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The correction of this problem would mean that Eldora would have to adopt a standard for staff/student ratio. The 1:5 ratio is required by the Iowa Administrative Code for private providers of residential treatment to follow. This is the ratio that must be in effect during prime program times. These are the periods of time when the students are in the living units (mornings, late afternoon, evenings, and weekends). These standards were adopted in the Administrative Code after consultation with both public and private providers of residential treatment services and are considered the minimum to be able to deal with these problematic populations in the living unit. The number of additional Youth Services Workers needed to establish this ratio would be 60.

ISSUE: PHYSICAL PLANT

DISCUSSION:

The Committee has serious concerns about the adequacy of the physical plant. The failure of the State to plan for the repair/remodeling and replacement of obsolete facilities constitutes a potential hazard to staff and residents, jeopardizes the accreditation status of the institution, and will ultimately increase the burden on taxpayers. The present living situation forces 30 - 35 boys to be housed in an open dormitory setting. This creates a difficult setting for staff to properly manage behavioral problems. This appears to be in conflict with the commendable efforts of the staff to promote positive self-image and self-worth values in the residents.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee urges the strongest efforts be made to secure the needed funds to implement a remodeling and new construction program. The recommendation is a five year - four phase plan:

Phase I	3 new living units 1 remodel	\$2,889,000
Phase II	2 new living units 1 remodel	2,955,370
Phase III	Educational/vocational Building	5,016,800
Phase IV	Recreational Complex	4,698,680
	TOTAL	\$15,559,850

The State Training School went through a re-accreditation by the American Correctional Association in November, 1987, and all three auditors emphatically stated that unless changes were made in the physical plant within the next three years, the institution would not be accredited next time.

DISCUSSION:

The Committee concurs with the Governor's Foster Care Report which states that the goal of out-of-home care for delinquent youth is to provide an environment that is safe, fair, humane and cost-effective. To achieve this goal, Iowa must develop and maintain a comprehensive planning process focused on forecasting future population, improving offender classification in terms of security and treatment needs, and expanding community-based programs for non-dangerous youth.

The first step in establishing the basis for future programs and effective treatment is to profile the youth that are confined. Classification is the key to planning for the care of juvenile delinquents. The primary goal of the classification and evaluation process is to give special attention to violent and repetitive juvenile offenders and to deal with them in the most consistent, effective and judicious manner possible.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Implement a classification system for adjudicated delinquents to assist the treatment staff in planning an effective rehabilitation program and the most appropriate residential placement. The data collected would be used to:
 - a. Assess the need for secure care.
 - b. Plan the appropriate combination of services, and
 - c. Evaluate the relevance of programs.
2. Develop a short term program of 30 to 45 days for 20 adjudicated delinquents that would provide a high concentration of services to meet the following objectives.
 - a. Reduction of average length of out-of-home placement;
 - b. Better matching of placement length and the needs of the individual child.
 - c. Reduction of out-of-state placements; and
 - d. More appropriate referrals to community based agencies.

The size of the program would be controlled by allocating a certain number of placements per judicial district.

3. The above programs could be implemented at no additional cost if staff to student ratios were 1 to 5. There is no possibility of differential programming and specialized treatment with the present staffing pattern.

ISSUE: SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

DISCUSSION:

The problems of substance abuse have been identified by the committee as serious, involving a large percentage of the residents. The success of staff efforts to deal with the problems is notable, but there needs to be more staff and programs available so that those students identified as having a problem can have the needed treatment.

During the past two years the State Training School has made significant strides towards providing better assessment, individual counseling and educational programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Review grant possibilities and allocate additional state funds to maximize the use of federal funds.
2. Examine various assessment instruments to assure most effective and efficient is being used.
3. Expand the substance abuse education for staff.
4. Increase the substance abuse after care program so that students have assistance in re-entry into community programs.
5. Examine the possibility of developing a substance abuse treatment unit at STS.

MEETING DATES

June 12, 1985	Eldora
August 27, 1985	Eldora
September 24, 1985	Eldora
December 18, 1985	Des Moines
May 20, 1986	Eldora
September 17, 1986	Eldora
December 5, 1986	Des Moines
April 8, 1987	Eldora
July 31, 1987	Eldora
October 16, 1987	Eldora
January 15, 1988	Des Moines

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