

California Rehabilitation Oversight Board Minutes
March 11, 2011 Meeting

The California Rehabilitation Oversight Board (C-ROB) met in open session at 9:30 a.m. on March 11, 2011, at the California State University, Sacramento, Alumni Center, 6024 State University Drive South, Sacramento, California.

Board members: Present at the meeting were Bruce Monfross, Inspector General (A)(Chairman); Debra Jones, Administrator, Adult Education Programs (Designee for Tom Torlakson, Superintendent of Public Instruction); José Millan, California Community Colleges (Designee for Jack Scott, Chancellor, California Community Colleges); Susan Turner, Professor, University of California, Irvine (President of the University of California appointee); Bruce Bikle, Professor, California State University, Sacramento (Chancellor of California State University appointee); Gary Stanton, Sheriff, Solano County (Governor appointee); Michael Cunningham, Director (A), Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs; and Wendy Still, Chief Adult Probation Officer for the City and County of San Francisco (Senate Committee on Rules appointee). Not represented at this meeting were the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Office of the Inspector General staff: Barbara Sheldon, Chief Counsel; Laura Hill, C-ROB Executive Officer; Ann Bordenkircher, C-ROB Secretary and Celeste Olson, Executive Assistant.

Panel Presenters:

CDCR: Elizabeth Siggins, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs

SEIU 1000 Bargaining Unit: John Kern, Institutional Teacher

Public Comment: Patrick Wilson, Suzette Washington, Dr. Eva Marie Casperite, John Kern, Hellan Roth Dowden, Marion House, Tommy Lee Wickerd, II, and Dr. Susan Lawrence.

Item 1. Call to Order.

Chairman Monfross called the meeting to order at 9:55 a.m.

Item 2. Introductions and Establish Quorum.

Chairman Monfross introduced himself as the Acting Inspector General and Chairman of the California Rehabilitation Oversight Board. The Chairman then introduced OIG staff and asked the Board members to introduce themselves.

Item 3. Review Agenda.

Chairman Monfross reviewed the agenda stating that the purpose of the meeting was to have a discussion and Board decision on the March 15, 2011 draft report.

Item 4. Review and Approval of the January 12, 2011 minutes.

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the January 12, 2011 C-ROB meeting were approved.

Item 5. Executive Officer updates.

Executive Officer Hill indicated that there were no updates and she thanked the CDCR staff for their assistance in providing additional last minute data.

Item 6. Board Discussion of March 15, 2011 draft report.

Elizabeth Siggins, Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs, CDCR, discussed various issues contained in the draft C-ROB report with the board members. Board members also suggested various changes and additions.

Public Comments, Item 6:

Patrick Wilson, asked for confirmation that a sentence mentioning “it’s important to note that national research...” was not removed from the report summary, which was confirmed by Chariman Monfross. Mr. Wilson listed budget and actual expenditures for CDCR during the 09-10 and 10-11 FY’s and stated that it appears to him that CDCR goes beyond whenever it wants. He is also concerned that a statement in the CDCR budget contradicts a statement in the Executive Summary regarding savings.

Suzette Washington, Institutional Teacher, CTF Soledad Prison, stated that although teachers received two new shipments of textbooks and are appreciative of some “lifesaving rafts” provided to them from Sacramento, everyday the department has different budgetary issues arising and the idea of a 33 percent cut will be devastating to rehabilitative programs. The inmates are drawn to school because of the milestones and they take them seriously. Due to budget issues, there were a few months where GED testing did not take place and this caused the inmates to question attending. Also, the teachers are currently gearing up for their accreditation review and organizing the teachers in a way that incorporates some of the considerations and goals. She passed the report to all three facilities at CTF so the teachers can study and discuss it. She has been making TV commercials that are sent directly to the inmates’ cells to invite them to school, which appears to be working. She is a voluntary enrolled teacher and believes it would solidify the enrolled program if they could get A1A status for some enrolled students. This may amount to half to two thirds of the inmates that they are programming.

Dr. Eva Marie Casperite, Ph.D., Correctional Education and Adult Education, stated that she has read the C-ROB report summary, heard the testimony, and has concerns about the academic leadership council. She does not believe that Level IV inmates are represented, that the models brought in are not evidence-based and, she questions whether staff making decisions concerning the

models are qualified to do so. There are many institutions across the country that are being effective and the department should be talking to them. Oregon has a good program and is using a Junior College to run it – getting men out into jobs. New Mexico, Massachusetts, Michigan, Oregon, Indiana, and Ohio also are providing qualitative if not quantitative research. Finally, tracking the milestones is the same as our ABE, TABE and CSAS scores. All teachers have a report they have to do every month and turn them into the department. She does not know why the department cannot give the board the information and she finds that very disappointing and concerning.

John Kern, SEIU 1000/Institutional Teacher, stated that there is some confusion on pages 15 and 16 of the C-ROB report regarding the number of actual teacher positions currently in place and suggests the board ask the department for clarification, as it is difficult to reconcile the reported vacancies with the large decrease in authorized teacher positions. He disagrees that the department is doing all it can with respect to providing rehabilitative services to inmates and offers SEIU resources, as was done with the academic model survey, to point out ways to improve with the existing resources.

Hellan Roth Dowden, SEIU Local 1000, pointed out the decrease in CDCR funding and the lack of resources for rehabilitative programs. She suggests looking at Indiana's system and how that system staves off budget reductions. Indiana shows rehabilitative progress and gets it right in the category of milestones. She also stated that information on Appendix B and the capacity information on page 16 of the C-ROB report appendices does not translate. She wonders what the differences are in the two charts.

Item 7. Board decision regarding the March 15, 2011 draft report.

After much discussion during the meeting, Ms. Hill, Executive Director, read proposed minor edits and additions to the draft report. Upon motion made and seconded, the board approved the March 15, 2011 Biannual Report as amended.

Item 8. SEIU 1000 Bargaining Unit 3.

John Kern, stated that he is currently the Chair of the Bargaining Unit that represents state educators, librarians, and five departments, including CDCR. He acknowledged the role of C-ROB, in particular the Executive Director, in bringing positive attention to the failings and impediments of the department's academic models - made clear by the surveys completed almost simultaneously by both the educators and the department. He has heard that there is a possible change coming regarding providing a more reasonable instructional time ratio for all inmates and believes this is a good thing. He also believes that adding a few new models and allowing for some local autonomy for teachers and other staff to resolve individual problems is needed to adapt the models to the population and situation.

Mr. Kern has learned that there is nothing definitive with respect to inmates being able to program effectively, and that the problems are localized and dependent upon individual relationships between education and coordinating staff. He addressed reports from various institutions giving both positive and negative feedback on the models at those institutions. Placing a student in the wrong class and the time it takes to correct the issue is a large problem. Also, due to the previous layoffs, teachers are taking on other functions in order to keep the system moving, which detracts from their teaching mission.

Public Comments, Item 8:

Patrick Wilson, stated that C-ROB's experience with prisons is limited and recommended that Sheriff Stanton handcuff the board and take them through the process of jail, court, reception, housing with various inmates, release, etc. and then come back and revisit the issue. He stated that all of the things that will reduce prison costs have already been rejected. He further recommended that members of the legislature attend the C-ROB meetings so they will have a better understanding of the problems faced by inmates. He also recommends giving the money currently spent on rehabilitation programs directly to inmates, which he believes would lower the recidivism rate.

Marion House, is concerned that Convicts Reaching Out to People (CROP), as well as other juvenile diversion programs, has been suspended. She believes that the Campbell Collaboration Research (CCR) focused on the negative (28% re-offend) rather than positive results of 72% rehabilitation when determining whether CROP and other juvenile rehabilitation programs complied with federal guidelines. She urges C-ROB to request that CDCR quickly reinstate CROP, as each day the program is suspended, a child is lost.

Dr. Eva Marie Casperite, Ph.D., Correctional Education and Adult Education, stated that she teaches Model 1 at CSP Sac, a Level IV prison. She highly recommends Model 1. She noted that there are problems with inmates' assignments. While in Texas she learned that the education department at the prisons are in control of who is assigned to the classes and that it works very effectively since the teachers are in the best position to determine which inmates need to be in education and which inmates do not. She also feels that half-day classes are best, as it allows the inmate to spend the other half of their day working in vocation, life skills, reentry, or substance abuse.

Suzette Washington, Institutional Teacher, CTF Soledad Prison, stated that she is the Prison Industry Authority (PIA) teacher with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that she will serve as the PIA at two of the three institutions. She had an MOU with the Prison Warden where they would issue red duckets to the inmate students. This is the same type of ducket that medical uses. The red ducket allows for the inmate to be written up if they do not attend. She would like duckets to be issued to all students, requiring them to attend.

Also, due to budget issues the institution has up and down days where the inmates do not go anywhere on down days. She requests that more facility captains send inmates to class on down days. She is also concerned that they are no longer able to give pre-release classes or life skills and this is something that the inmates are wanting. Parole only gives one meeting for life skills once they go home.

Item 9. Future board meeting schedule.

Laura Hill, Executive Officer, said the next C-ROB report will be published on September 15, 2011. There will be an all day informational meeting on July 13th and a half day meeting on September 7th to approve the report.

Item 10. Future agenda items.

Ms. Hill asked board members for comments on future agenda items. Some topics mentioned:

- CDCR budget and programming updates
- PIA presentation on their duties
- Role of C-ROB and the affect it has on the Logic Model population
- Budget as it relates to the rehabilitative program
- Milestone credits
- Implementation changes to the education models

Item 11. Public comment.

Tommy Lee Wickerd, II, stated that he attends a public baccalaureate school where he must excel or return to his home school. Inmates who do not care about the program are being sent to the Honor Program. If they do not care, they do not belong. He feels his school is like the Honor Program as it was supposed to be. This is a money saving program that is falling apart. He requested that the board aggressively support and advance the Honor Program.

He also stated that his father is Vice-Chairman of Convicts Reaching Out to People (CROP), a program that encourages kids to change for the better. Another cost saving program, CROP is currently suspended while being reviewed. He encourages the board to help support the CROP program.

Marion House, stated that the Honor Program at LAC is regressing and that inmates who do not meet the criteria do not belong on the general population yard yet are being placed there. Ms. House had 50 letters from inmates wishing to be transferred to the general population yard. She requests support for the current Honor Program and to open a Level III Honor Program.

Susan Lawrence, Founder & CEO, Catalyst Foundation, stated that she is an advocate for the Honor Program and that it is a program that works. In the first year it saved over \$200,000 but the criteria is no longer being followed, allowing for a disruptive influence. She said that due to competing priorities, oversight from headquarters is needed to ensure that the guidelines of the operational procedures are being followed and that the program continues to save money.

Patrick Wilson, questioned why Secretary Cate was not present for the meeting. He also stated his concern that the legislators have had no training in applying constitutional principles to the management of the State and that because of that, the State is in the process of collapsing politically. He feels the board is pretty smart and should bring the legislators in for a meeting to see if some progress can be made.

Item 12. Adjournment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

C-ROB Secretary

Dated

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