

# OYA *In the Loop*

October 7, 2008

## Summary of remarks at OJDDA

I attended the **Oregon Juvenile Department Directors Association** conference last week and had the pleasure of meeting with the directors to give them an update about the department and to hear about their needs in the juvenile justice system.

I want you to have the same information. Here's a summary of my presentation.

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I appreciate OYA's **partnership** with OJDDA and intend to not only maintain it, but strengthen it. I am here to serve you as well as OYA. With **Bob Jester's** departure, we are losing not only 35+ years of experience, but also his huge heart and passion for the kids. I will serve as interim director and have offered to stay on as long as needed to help the new director become established.

The **new-director hiring process** has begun, and DAS is leading the recruitment. It is starting with a questionnaire sent to a sampling of OYA's key constituencies that asks what attributes the new director should have. From that, a recruiting announcement will be written. A team from DAS and I will screen the applications by matching them with the desired attributes and required KSAs (knowledge, skills and abilities). DAS plans an interview process that includes management, represented staff and some constituents. From there, names will be forwarded to the Governor. I know he has been giving a great deal of thought to the new director, and will appoint a terrific candidate that embraces the mission and embodies Oregon values.

OYA has filled many **leadership vacancies** including the assistant director of Facility Operations (Joan Palmateer) as well as superintendent positions at MacLaren (Mike Riggan), Hillcrest (Troy Gregg) and Oak Creek (Lory Humbert). Recruitment for the Rogue Valley superintendent position has begun. A new assistant director of Business Services (Jean Straight) will start mid-November, and until then Sue Wilson will be the interim assistant director of that division. Perrin Damon joined us as Public Affairs manager last month. Deputy Director Phil Lemman will be leaving this fall and I am considering options for filling that position.

With all of these changes, it is important that OYA remains stable and maintains its momentum doing terrific work with kids. We will continue our strong record of partnering with the community to get the job done.

The **state budget situation** is tenuous and will probably get worse. Agency directors have been directed to prepare two budget reduction scenarios in ten percent increments. In brief, here's how it measures up:

- Revenue is up 10 percent, but needs to be up 13 percent to maintain current service levels
- Ballot measures could create an additional gap.
- Human services program enrollment is expected to rise, creating more pressure on the budget.
- Every biennium agencies are asked to develop contingency budgets that include reductions. This year, those proposed reductions are in ten percent increments.

OYA's **current plan** to absorb a 10 percent decrease is to eliminate capacity growth. The second 10 percent is still being discussed, with the likely response to be proportional cuts across the system. I'm open to hearing from you.

In the budget cutting five years ago, OYA was hit very hard, and I think that many of our problems stem from those changes. To heal, the agency needs resources. **The Transition Team** is very focused on the adequacy of resources. We will use their conclusions to advocate for an appropriate budget in the next legislative session.

The **Timber Task Force** recommendations are designed to ease the impact of these impending cuts on the counties. They include 58 BRS residential beds in November (23) and January (35), and 45 close custody beds in March. OYA will present the recommendations to the Governor in October and, pending his approval, the Legislative Emergency Board in December. We will continue to work with county juvenile departments, providers and other stakeholders regarding implementation.

OYA has submitted a policy option package to either renovate or replace **Corvallis House**, which currently houses 10 girls in transition. This is a four-level building, making it hard to supervise youth. Current estimates are \$5 million to refurbish the existing facility. It would cost \$2.5 million to build a new facility on existing Oak Creek YCF property, which is our preference. Corvallis House is attractive because of its downtown location.

I have been traveling the state visiting our **field offices and facilities**. The caliber of the staff is consistently reassuring to me. I have been encouraging them about their good work and rallying them around the mission and values of the organization. We are trying to be better decision makers, and I'm aware that sometimes things linger.

As the interim director, I will continue to work to bring stability to OYA and to its partnerships. I know you won't be shy.