



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

April 18, 2023

Attendance: Celina Levy (Executive Director), John Armato (Public Member), Gisele Pemberton (Public Member), Jeff Carrick (DCF), Adam Cortes (DOC), Lu Pereira (DOE), Lashunda Harden (DOH), Annette Riordan (DHS), Rebecca Glinn (DOL), Craig Sashihara (LPS), Chuck Robbins (DMAVA)

Call to Order

The three hundred and seventieth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCADA website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting.

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record. Mr. Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes due to the lack of quorum.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded the Council members that voting on the County plans would take place at the May meeting, so quorum is imperative.

Alcohol Awareness Month Resolution

Executive Director Celina Levy read a resolution recognizing April as Alcohol Awareness Month in New Jersey. This resolution will be voted on at the next meeting.

Presentation: “Increasing Mental Health Supports for Students”

Lu Pereira, Director of the Office of Student Support Services at the NJ Department of Education gave an overview of the initiatives at DOE to increase mental health services for students.

In February of 2020, a Statewide Mental Health Working Group consisting of school leadership, state agencies, advocacy groups, community mental health provider, and parents to develop resources that support the mental health needs of students. From this group, The New Jersey Comprehensive Mental Health Resource Guide was developed which provides schools with a roadmap to assist staff in developing, implementing and evaluating mental health supports and services.

The Strengthening Youth Mental Health Initiative was established by Governor Murphy in July of 2022 and allocates funds to support NJDOE in the implementation of three programs: Enhancing School-Based Mental Health Services, Implementing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) for School Leaders and the Youth Suicide Prevention and Awareness Campaign

NJDOE is also in partnership with the Departments of Children and Families, Human Services and Health in developing a coordinated system of care to support youth who are facing mental health challenges.

Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Celina Levy restated that County plans will be voted on at the May meeting and quorum was imperative.

Ms. Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro continue to discuss with the Governor’s office ways to identify new sources for funding and long-term sustainability and will provide updates as they are available.

Ms. Levy also shared that a Master Plan subcommittee meeting has been scheduled for May 5th and relevant updates will be shared with the Council at the next meeting.

Sara Thode, Director of Prevention and Planning shared with the Council that Phase 2 planning of AGATE has begun with an expected rollout of the online grant system slated for late September.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:40.