

Hanover Township Community Education Support Task Force
MINUTES of the MEETING
April 1, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Task Force Chair Alisa “Lee” Beattie at 4:35 p.m.

Roll Call: Task Force Chair Beattie, Jordan Wildermuth, Kristen Cruthers, Bill Wright, Dr. Elizabeth Ma, Joe Markowski, Jeff Janda. Also, present James Barr, Township Administrator, Tina Houdek, Director of Youth and Family Services, Hailey Matich, Assistant to the Administrator, and Josh Axelsen, Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE), Coordinator of Alternative Programs.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Janda, seconded by Mr. Wright. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Public Comment: None

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Approval of the Task Force Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2024: Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Janda, seconded by Mr. Wright. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Presentation from Kane County ROE Coordinator of Alternative Programs: Although School District U-46 is in Cook County it is served by the Kane County ROE. Coordinator of Alternative Programs Axelsen presented on the state of truancy in U-46 and Kane County. He reported that the Illinois chronic truancy rate is 19.9% and U-46 has a chronic truancy rate of 32.2%. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 18% or more of the school year with either excused or unexcused absences. In Illinois and nationwide, a large increase in absenteeism has been seen following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Kane County ROE receives referrals from the school when a student is chronically absent. The county does not have access to attendance records. Coordinator of Alternative Programs Axelsen discussed current challenges the Kane County ROE is facing including student and parent mental health, vacations and religious trips being taken by students, the updated definition of valid cause for calling a student out which gives all authority to the parent, and situations beyond the ROE’s control, such as high mobility and complex family situations. To improve school attendance Coordinator of Alternative Programs Axelsen suggested increasing community awareness and mental health supports, offering more Alternative Education Programs and pro-social activities to engage students, and taking a community approach as many factors outside of school are impacting student attendance.

Discussion of Future Task Force Meeting Presentations: The Task Force discussed the upcoming presentations suggesting hearing future presentations that discuss trauma informed care, mental health, and social academic instructional groups (SAIG).

Other Business: None

Adjournment: Mr. Markowski moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Janda seconded the motion. Motion was approved. The meeting adjourned at 5:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Hailey Matich
Task Force Secretary