

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

"Expecting Excellence Every Day"

MEMORANDUM

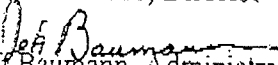
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MAY 23 2005

DATE: May 17, 2005

STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

TO: Patricia Caruso, Director

FROM: 
Jeff Baumann, Administrator
Office of Audit, Internal Affairs and Litigation

SUBJECT: Cain - Reception and Guidance Center Testing/Evaluation Working Group

The above work group was charged with the responsibility of reviewing and submitting recommendations regarding the issues outlined in the attached, as part of the Cain Settlement Agreement.

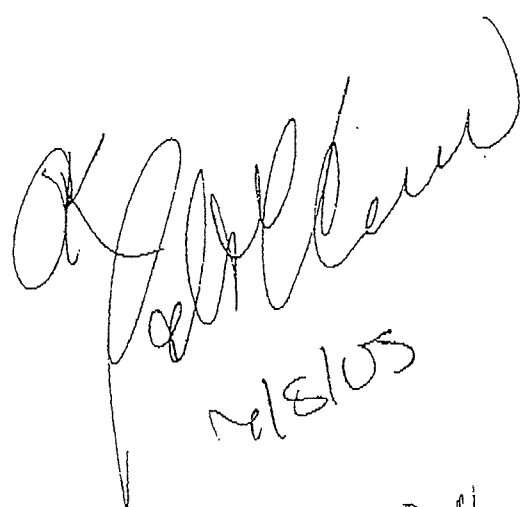
If you have questions or concerns, we can return comments to the working group for further consideration/information/investigation. If you have no changes to consider or recommend, please let me know, and I'll ensure our acceptance is forwarded onto the AG.

Thanks very much.

ATTACHMENT

JLB/lrs

c: Dennis Straub, CFA Deputy Director
Lisa Shedock, Consent Decree Coordinator
Pete Govorchin, Assistant AG
file


rel/05
sent to GJB
7/5/05

DRAFT report of the Reception and Guidance Center Testing/Evaluation Working Group

Pursuant to the agreement in *Cain v MDOC*, the Reception and Guidance Center Testing/Evaluation Working Group was appointed and charged with making recommendations to the Director on nine issues. The issues and the recommendations of the committee are as follows:

A. whether there should be a standardized, system wide computer program used to track RGC recommendations, parole board recommendations and/or prisoner special needs, program needs, wait list assignments, program enrollments, program participation and/or program completions or constraints;

Recommendations: The committee believes there should be such a system. Currently the Offender Education Tracking System (OETS) tracks some of this information and the committee refers this question to the Michigan Prisoner Re-entry Initiative (MPRI) as it assumes this will be addressed by that committee.

B. whether there should be a standardized, system wide computerized program to record prisoners' six month program classification reviews that are required by PD 05.01.100(l);

Recommendation: The committee believes this would be advantageous in the same way as the security classification data is now computerized and feel it should be included as part of the Offender Management/Network Information (OMNI) system.

C. whether vocational testing should be given to prisoners in RGC or should be administered after a prisoner completes their educational recommendation or receives a waiver or exemption from educational programming;

Recommendation: The committee believes that the process should stay as it is now with the Careerscope being administered in RGC to the majority of prisoners. However, the committee also recommends that care be taken to ensure that prisoners who leave RGC with unverified High School Diplomas or GED, and ultimately have their GED verified at a subsequent receiving facility, are given the Careerscope at the receiving facility. The committee recommends that some marker be in place on the education computer system to flag unverified GEDs and High School Diplomas so that these do not get lost at the receiving facilities. The committee also recommends that a means be developed to ensure that prisoners who complete their GED in the Department are then also given the career scope testing.

The committee also strongly recommends that the Career and Technical Education Committee develop guidelines for vocational programs for prisoners who are exempt from the requirement to obtain their GED. The committee

recommends that these individuals be given the opportunity to take some portions of certain trade programs, depending upon the individuals' work and education history and ability to master the work.

The committee members feel there is some confusion among staff related to the boxes on the BIR. The committee recommends that the BIR be modified so that there is one box which says "Careerscope-Vocational Counseling" and another box which says "Pre-release". The committee believes there is some confusion regarding what vocational counseling is and recommends that there be a definition developed as to what vocational counseling consists of and that the definition and explanation be provided to all the classification directors.

The committee also recommends that the MPRI look at making pre-release programs and job seeking skills a mandatory program for all prisoners who are able to participate in these programs.

D. whether prisoners in academic programs should have a periodic break;

Recommendation: The reason for this item of discussion is that there are marginal prisoners who struggle for a very long time in the education program but are not really capable of making any progress. If they do not have a GED they have no choice but to continue in the education program in that they are not eligible for employment. The committee recommends that the teachers be made aware of the meaning of the provision in PD 05.02.112 Paragraph P # 4 b. and that they use it in cases where it is warranted. That provision allows prisoners who have had three or more teaching interventions to improve academic skill development in reading and math, to be exempted from the requirement to obtain a GED.

The committee also recommends that the Education Department develop criteria to allow teachers to grant students a break in the education program without adverse consequence. This means that those students who have struggled in the academic program but who are not exempt from obtaining a GED could be excused from the requirement of attending school, and even allowed to obtain employment, for some period. They would ultimately be required to go back to obtain the GED. This break should not be considered a vacation from school as it is likely to be for a fairly long period of time. The committee feels that these types of prisoners are caught in a negative cycle where they are making virtually no progress in school but have no alternative.

The committee recommends that when the budget permits, there be an increase in pay to attend school so that the wage is equivalent to the starting levels of the average work assignment. The committee also recommends that some type of bonus, similar to the skills bonus, be considered for completion of certain phases of the education program (such as completion of the ABE portions in certain subject areas).

The committee would like the Department to consider recommending to the Department of Education that a centralized data base of high school graduates be maintained similar to what is now done for the GED completions.

E. whether the Psychological Services Unit at RGC should review SASSI scores at the time of the intake evaluation;

Recommendation: This is already current practice. The Psychological Services Unit staff at RGC reviews the SASSI scores at the time of the intake evaluation. The committee recommends that this continue.

F. whether every person with a sentence of guilty but mentally ill should receive full psychological testing and be interviewed by a psychiatrist in RGC;

Recommendation: Currently every prisoner received into RGC who has a sentence of guilty but mentally ill (GBMI) does receive full psychological testing and is interviewed by a psychiatrist. This is required by policy and procedure. There is a screen on CMIS which indicates if a prisoner is sentenced as a GBMI but no other tracking is in place. The committee recommends that this continue.

G. how to ensure identification and tracking of developmentally disabled prisoners;

Recommendation: The committee recommends that formalized screening for developmental disabilities be initiated in RGC and that all incoming prisoners be screened. The committee recommends that developmental disabilities be defined as follows: mental retardation as defined in the DSM, or borderline intellectual ability with serious adaptive behavior deficits, or social maturity and developmental and communication skills deficits. The committee also recommends that a system to track those prisoners be developed. The committee is aware that there may be insufficient housing options available for prisoners identified as developmentally disabled. Therefore, the committee further recommends that, when a reliable system to identify and track these prisoners has been implemented, the Department review the housing options available and consider additional housing options, based upon the identified needs of the population.

H. whether RGC staff should request prisoners' prior mental health records of treatment in the community and should a computerized tracking and follow-up system be developed; and

Recommendation: The committee does not recommend that the requesting of records be an automatic requirement. The committee believes that the option to request the records should remain with the clinician and be based upon her/his individual needs. However the committee does recommend that the clinician be

required to put a note in the health/school record when records have been ordered and school staff and health record staff notify the current treating professional when the records arrive.

I. whether not being assigned to a recommended program should be grievable.

Recommendation: This issue is already grievable and the committee recommends that it remain so. The committee does recommend that the response to the prisoner's grievance indicate why s/he is not in the program, (i.e. the prisoner is not eligible for the program, the prisoner is not yet close enough to her/his out date, etc)
