

Patricia Michalak, MA  
Youth Service Bureau Coordinator

**APPROVED**  
**Mansfield YSB Advisory Board**  
**Minutes**

Tuesday November 10, 2009  
12:00pm at Mansfield Town Hall  
Conference Room B

**Board Members**

*Present:*

Ethel Mantzaris, Chair  
Frank Perrotti, Co-Chair  
Patricia Michalak, YSB Coordinator  
Kathleen McNamara, YSB Senior Social Worker  
Kevin Grunwald, Director of Human Services  
Eileen Griffin, Social Worker  
Jerry Marchon, Police Officer  
Jay O'Keefe, Parks & Recreation  
Candace Morrell, Assistant Principle MMS  
Sheila Riffle, Vice Principal EO Smith  
Jen Abele, EO Smith Student  
Amber Hoyt, EO Smith Student  
Lauren DiGrazia, Graduate MSW Intern

**Proceedings**

- *Meeting called to order* at 12:04pm by Chair, Ethel Mantzaris
- October 13, 2009 meeting minutes were accepted and approved
  
- Report from the Director of Human Services, Kevin Grunwald

-Instead of issuing a director's report Kevin will be submitting topics for consideration for future YSB board meeting.

-The Holiday Program has begun. There are approximately 60 families that have sent in applications.

-The Town of Mansfield "Freedom of Information Guidelines for Boards, Commissions, and Committees" flyer was distributed to board members.

- Report from YSB Coordinator, Patricia Michalak

-The activities for the YSB were distributed for group members to read. No action was needed on these items.

-Activities include the following:

- Results Based Accountability Training: Staff participated in training at the Connecticut Association for Youth Services annual conference.
- Big Friends Mentoring Program: This program is functioning at full capacity and recently took the entire group of 50 plus mentors and mentees to Edmonds Pumpkin Patch. UConn provided 4 vans and the event was highlighted in the UConn Daily Campus newspaper. Each child took home a pumpkin and decorated it with their mentor the following week.
- MMS Book Celebration: The YSB is joining MMS in celebrating reading by participating in their school wide reading event. A non fiction book has been picked out for all to read. The program will last 10 – 15 days. Our mentors will be participating
- JOY: Children enjoyed the “Shaolin Warriors” at Jorgenson auditorium. According to an attendee: The seats were great and the performance was “mouth open” awesome!!!
- Friends of Youth Services Awards Banquet: Nominated Jean Ann Kenny and Janit Romayko for their outstanding work with our Grandparents’ Raising Grandchildren Group.

- *Old Business*

-The need for a new student representative on the board was addressed. Patricia Michalak, YSB coordinator, introduced a new freshman student, Jen Abele, who is interested in becoming a YSB board member.

-Themed meetings were revisited. Some ideas that were presented and discussed were High School Transition group with Dr. Haney, Indicators, and Domestic Violence. Some possible themes to be discussed are Challenge, the quarterly report, gap in services, and Big Friends.

- *New Business*

-Jen Abele read a speech about her experiences with the YSB and how they impacted her life. She ended by asking if she could be the new student representative on the YSB board. The board officially voted Jen in as the new student representative.

-COPE: Kathleen McNamara, YSB Senior Social Worker, Pat Michalak, YSB Coordinator, and Lauren DiGrazia, YSB MSW Intern, gave an overview of the COPE program. In this discussion it was explained that the outreach from this program is continually evolving and working to reach out to these families in other ways.

-This led to a discussion of the transitions that the YSB help to facilitate. Programs such as LEAP, Multi-Family group, JUMP, and challenge were discussed.

-Sheila Riffle, Vice Principal of EO Smith, began discussing the development of the freshman transition group in the High School. Teachers identify students that

may have difficulty connecting and work with these students in a six week rotation.

-Sheila Riffle, Vice Principal of EO Smith, also discussed the advising group concept that is in its second year at the High School. The overall goal of these groups is to facilitate more opportunities to connect with adults and other students in the school.

-Jen Abele, EO Smith student, after hearing the discussion on transition made a suggestion to Sheila Riffle, Vice Principal of EO Smith, to have freshman begin school 2 days earlier than continuing students. During this time new freshman would go through a typical day, locate classes, teachers, and fellow classmates.

- Meeting adjourned at 1:13pm
- Minutes submitted by Graduate MSW Intern, Lauren DiGrazia