
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

It's already February 21! Where does the time go? Seems like it was just New Year's and now February is almost over. Mardi Gras is looming - March 4 will be here before we know it. I hope spring comes in with Mardi Gras – with this unpredictable weather every week we are having winter, spring, with violent storms across the state one day and gorgeous sunshine the next.

As most of you know, we met with JJIC yesterday. The meeting planned for several weeks ago was postponed due to “Sneauxmageddon” so this was the regularly scheduled meeting. Of course, the biggest topic was the transfer of the Jetson youth to our other facilities. The commissioners questioned us about several issues around the transfer after our testimony, but I think that overall most of them came away with the understanding that our actions were mission-driven and taken in the best interest of the youth in our care and custody. We are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of our kids and our staff, as well as for responsible stewardship of state funds. When I testified that the Jetson campus had become a money pit, I think that point struck home. Many thanks to each member of the executive team and their respective staffs for pulling together all the data we needed to present, and for support and testimony at the meeting. There were former Jetson staff present and a couple made comments to the commission. I respect their right to do so and understand that this is a difficult situation for them.

Work continues at the Jetson campus – we are working very hard to sort and organize the property we are responsible for, creating an inventory, and coming up with a plan for distribution of the assets where needed in other facilities and offices throughout the agency. I appreciate everybody's hard work, and there is still a lot of work ahead of us. Probation and Parole employees continue to staff the Jetson campus where needed, and they continue doing rotations to supplement the staff at Bridge City and Swanson, until all the staff transfers are complete. Many thanks to all staff who have been working their regular shifts and then reporting for extra duty in the evening and on weekends to get the job done.

I'm happy to report that everything is calm and quiet and operating smoothly at Bridge City and Swanson. We have great staff all over the agency. Thanks to all of you for doing whatever it takes to ensure that we meet the needs of the youth, and ensure a safe environment for youth and staff.

In addition to maintaining regular operations, facility staff has been putting in extra effort for their audits. Last week we talked about Bridge City's PREA audit. The folks at Swanson have their upcoming audit for ACA re-accreditation in a few months and I know they are going to be working hard to get everything in shape for that audit. I am confident that we will pass with flying colors once again.

Wishing you all a great weekend and hoping the nice weather holds out so we can get outside to enjoy the sunshine. I'll close with my thanks to each and every member of the OJJ family, wherever you serve, for your tireless efforts 24/7/365, to meet the mission. It's always uplifting to say, “OJJ, you rock!”

Sincerely,

Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary

Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov