



Governor Kim Reynolds
Lt. Governor Adam Gregg
San Wong, Director

JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

"To advocate for an effective, fair and equitable justice system for every Iowa youth."

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Google Meet

Thursday, March 3, 2022

Present: Andrew Allen, Chair; Rev. Roy Klobnak; Christy Burkhart; Morgan Fritz; Patrick Garcia; Stephanie Hernandez; Chad Jensen; Soomin Koh; Dan Larson; Dave McDaniel; Aaron Sewell; Jennifer Tibbetts; Hon. Cheryl Traum; Jeralyn Westercamp; Doug Wolfe

Staff: Steve Michael; Scott Musel; Angela Leonetti; Kathy Nesteby; Jill Padgett; Kayla Powell; Alison Roe; Julie Rinker; Grier Aspengren

Others: Armi Damken-Navarro, Audi Espinoza, Youth Justice Council; Lora Kracht; Lori Nash; Kylie Spies; Naomi Smoot, Laura Furr, Aide (Sam) Moore, Coalition for Juvenile Justice

I. Call to Order, Introductions & Welcome New Members

Andrew Allen called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. A quorum was present. Introductions were made.

II. Youth Justice Council Introduction

Audi Espinoza provided information on the newly formed Youth Justice Council (YJC). Currently there are seven members. Some officers have been elected—Chair, Ava Palmer and Vice Chair, Espinoza. There are three unfilled officer positions: Public Relations, Treasurer, and Secretary. Meetings are held bi-weekly on Sunday evenings.

Priorities include the following:

- Creating a Bill of Rights for youth in detention
- Ensuring youth have access to feminine hygiene products in detention and out-of-home placement
- Ensuring youth of color have access to appropriate hygiene supplies (based on hair texture and hair/skin type) while in out-of-home placement
- Providing care packages to youth in out-of-home placement

Espinoza and Armi Damken-Navarro reported on recent activities which included attending the NAACP Summit on Justice and Disparities, hosting a Talking Wall at the Summit, sorting and categorizing responses from the NYTD Talking Wall (National Youth in Transition Database) with AMP (Achieving Maximum Potential) members and NYTD Ambassadors; testifying to legislators on changes to Iowa Code §232; and coordinating youth engagement training with JJAC members. Earlier this week, members participated in the DHR Day on Hill by sharing information and meeting with legislators. A youth shadow event was also held this week.

Future projects include planning the second annual Family & Youth Engagement Summit to be held in August and presenting at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) annual conference in May. An

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in-person retreat is being planned to work on their mission statement, subcommittee rules, and review priority areas.

YJC members have been appointed to workgroups on the Chief Justice's Juvenile Justice Task Force. Espinoza gave the keynote address at the kick off meeting.

Allen congratulated Espinoza and Damken-Navarro on their accomplishments and expressed his enthusiasm.

Doug Wolfe shared information on the youth shadow event with Damken-Navarro. He noted the importance of connecting DHS staff to youth, especially youth with lived experience. Doing so allows workers to connect with those they serve. He encouraged members to continue the effort.

Allen asked how JJAC members can ensure that YJC members feel supported. Damken-Navarro commended the JJAC for their support, noting the opportunities they have been given to have their voices heard, without the fear and anxiety that comes with sharing their lived experiences.

Allen encouraged YJC and JJAC members to continue working shoulder to shoulder to advance initiatives.

III. Approve Minutes (December 2021)

Roy Klobnak moved to approve the minutes from the December meeting, seconded by Jeralyn Westercamp. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. Division & National Report

Steve Michael reported the following:

- Compliance Monitoring Manual—This has been submitted to the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and is required to receive Title II funding as part of the 2018 reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Act. Upon approval of the manual, Iowa will receive funding that was awarded last October.
- CJJP budget—On March 1, CJJP presented its budget to the Justice Systems Appropriations Committee. Approval will be known by the end of the current legislative session.
- New staff—Alison Roe has been hired as a Juvenile Reentry Navigator in the 6th Judicial District. The position is funded through Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Grier Aspengren, intern, will graduate from Drake University as doctor of occupational medicine. She is developing tools to teach life skills to youth in transition as part of her Capstone project. Shayla Gilleland has been hired as a justice systems analyst and will be working with Kathy Nesteby on the decision matrix and SPEP.
- Pre-Charge diversion grant—Iowa was awarded a 5-year, \$1.5 million dollar grant and will be releasing a competitive RFP to expand pre-charge diversion in Iowa. A kick-off event will be held March 4. The grant will fund 5-6 communities for 2.5 years and then another 5-6 communities the last 2.5 years. A link to register for the kick-off event was shared.

V. Title II Juvenile Justice Youth Development Allocation

● Council Budget Report

Scott Musel reported that a balance of approximately \$37,000 remains. Upcoming expenses relate to the Coalition for Juvenile Justice annual conference in May. Both Musel and Allen will

attend and have airline credits carried over from 2020. Several youth will conduct a workshop on the newly-formed Youth Justice Council.

- **Title II Judicial District Expenditure Report**

Musel reviewed balances for juvenile court services in each judicial district. Once more information is received, a Program and Policy Subcommittee meeting will be arranged to further discuss the budget.

- **Reallocation of funds targeted toward Young Women Grant**

Kathy Nesteby provided background information on \$52,000 that was set aside by the Council to match a federal discretionary grant application. The grant was not awarded to Iowa and the Iowa Task Force for Young Women (ITFYW) discussed use of the funds at their February meeting.

Jennifer Tibbetts, ITFYW Co-chair, reported that the ITFYW is recommending the funds go towards reentry services for Black girls in the juvenile justice system, and more specifically, towards services and hair/hygiene products. She asked the Council to consider gaps and how these funds can positively impact this population.

Nesteby reviewed comments received from Black girls who participated in the Talking Wall. The comments indicated the following needs: housing arrangements, feminine hygiene products, placements for 18-20-year olds, programs to help single moms, resources for rape victims, cell phones, clothing, money, furniture, job opportunities, and support groups.

Tibbetts brought forth the motion from the ITFYW: The \$52,000 that was originally allocated to support services for Black girls involved in the juvenile justice system should be reallocated to the reentry effort, prioritizing work/services/products for Black girls in particular.

There was no further discussion and the motion was unanimously approved.

Tibbetts thanked council members for listening and noted that this is one of the Council's priority areas.

- **Coalition for Juvenile Justice Annual Conference & Business Meeting**

This was discussed earlier in the meeting and there was no further discussion on this item.

- **Act4JJ Support for Federal Funding Increase**

Jill Padgett reviewed a letter from the Act4JJ Coalition, a broad network of organizations representing states. The letter is addressed to members of the U.S. House and Senate Committees on Appropriations and requests increases in funding for Titles II and V as well as JABG and OJJDP. The letter, shared by CJJ, was included in the meeting packet. The council discussed authorizing Andrew Allen, JJAC Chair, to sign a letter of support on behalf of the Council.

After a brief discussion, Klobnak moved to approve authorizing Allen to sign a letter of support on behalf of the JJAC, 2nd by Dave McDaniel. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Mitigating Gender and Racial Bias Training – April 27 & 28 – Kathy**

Nestey encouraged members to register for the above free training. Last year, this Council allocated funding to train council members. Allen encouraged all members to attend and asked that a reminder be sent.

VI. Prevent Child Abuse Iowa

Nestey reported that “Prevention and Intervention” is one of the Council’s priority areas. Staff have been reviewing prevention organizations to identify areas of overlap.

Lora Kracht and Kylie Spies presented information on Prevent Child Abuse Iowa. Their efforts focus on preventing child maltreatment and adolescent pregnancy through connections and partnerships with community organizations. Their mission is to empower community prevention efforts to provide safe and happy childhoods.

Their efforts focus on the five protective factors that strengthen a child’s environment (nurturing and attachment; parental knowledge; resilience; social connections; and concrete supports). They provide training/technical assistance, promote public awareness and advocacy to prevent child abuse, sexual abuse, and adolescent pregnancy; promote healthy relationships; and provide consent education. Three core programs promote these efforts—Iowa Child Abuse Prevention Program, Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, and Connections Matter.

Kracht encouraged members to reach out regarding their curriculum and ways in which they can meet with youth in the juvenile justice system.

[The Council recessed for lunch from 11:40 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.]

VII. Talking Wall

Soomin Koh, provided an update on the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC). Earlier this week, SIYAC members participated in DHR’s Day on the Hill. Members met with legislators and other student advocacy groups. The Health Committee’s position statement on menstrual equity and providing free menstrual products in schools was introduced by Senator Peterson. Committees are working to draft the State of Iowa youth report.

Kayla Powell provided information on the Talking Wall (TW) results. The TW was conducted in placement facilities from November to January and will be part of the NYTD report on 21-year olds. She reviewed the NYTD report and TW results. The final report will be released in April.

Members noted the importance of listening to youth in placement and their comments surrounding basic needs—housing, transportation, financial assistance, hygiene products, and treatment by facility staff and their attorneys.

Members also discussed ways to inform youth when progress has been made on their concerns and that it is a direct result of their sharing concerns. Powell responded that progress is shared with youth, and asked for further comments. Kracht suggested posters titled “Because of You, This has Changed”. She offered to provide training and staff development on adolescent growth and development. Other suggestions were using Youth Justice Council members to address concerns and highlight changes.

Allen thanked Powell for the information. He thought the information would be used by community organizations in their strategic plans.

VIII. Juvenile Justice Advisory Council Moving Forward
IX. Coalition for Juvenile Justice

Kayla Powell reported that CJJP was awarded youth engagement training and technical assistance from the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ). On February 7-8, training was provided to members of both the Youth Justice Council (YJC) and the JJAC by Aide Moore, CJJ, and Laura Furr, consultant. Furr underscored the importance of commitment to share power, responsibilities, and accountability to develop equal youth-adult partnerships between YJC and JJAC members.

Aide Moore noted the importance of responding to concerns brought forth by youth members. Moore suggested developing partnerships with businesses and other agencies. She gave an example of concerns shared through the Talking Wall regarding the need for hair and skin products for youth of color in placement. She suggested partnering with hair salons to provide hair and skin care to youth of color.

Moore reviewed commitments made during the February training. She suggested developing a plan and goals for mentorship; developing orientation materials for youth members; and dedicating time during JJAC and subcommittee meetings for youth engagement.

Moore asked members to consider how power will be shared to respond to concerns from the Talking Wall and support youth who are in placement.

Jensen responded that focus groups are being held with YJC members who are on the Juvenile Justice Task Force (JJTF). Some of the JJTF co-chairs will be meeting with YJC members to solicit responses to the TW. He noted the impact this will have on system-wide improvements. He would also like to involve YJC members in juvenile court services leadership meetings and contract reviews for community-based services.

Allen suggested developing a report that outlines changes resulting from TW comments and sharing that information with those participating next year.

Jensen added that the Boys' State Training School has implemented Performance-based Services. This effort collects data from youth exit surveys and is used to identify barriers to successfully returning home. The surveys are also being considered for those youth exiting the specialized delinquency beds. The purpose is to improve the quality of treatment to help them transition home.

Padgett asked youth members if they had any thoughts.

Morgan Fritz responded that the feedback from youth in placement provided a lot of context and clarity. Soomin Koh agreed. She noted the importance of amplifying their voice and pleased it is a priority of this group. She would also like to implement partnerships with members of SIYAC and IYC.

Furr suggested including input from the TW in the next three-year plan, perhaps as an addendum. Musel responded that this is already being planned.

Padgett and Michael asked members to provide comments on the best way to hold meetings to accommodate participation by youth members. A document was shared that outlined comments collected during the breakout sessions of the February training. Concerns included shorter, more frequent meetings; a time of day that is convenient for youth. Michael noted the importance of holding hybrid meetings to accommodate youth members.

Furr noted the importance of providing an opportunity for all members to participate and a commitment to address barriers such as meeting length, number of handouts, and definitions of acronyms.

Members discussed time required for meeting preparation, outlining member roles as both individuals and council members, meeting structure, the roles of subcommittees. A survey was suggested to obtain input from all JJAC and subcommittee members. The survey results could be shared with the PnP for further review and recommendations.

Michael reported that these concerns will be further considered to develop next steps.

X. Chief Justice's Juvenile Justice Task Force

Chad Jensen provided information on this task force. Membership is composed of system stakeholders and youth and families with lived experience. The purpose is to address existing challenges, make recommendations to strengthen the continuum of care for youth in Iowa, and reduce disproportionate minority contact. Six subcommittees have been formed. A final report will be presented in November and released in December.

XI. Current Activities (2021 – 2023 Three-Year Plan)

A. Priority One: Prevention and Intervention

Michael noted the presentation by Child Abuse Iowa and their role in prevention and intervention. He asked members to consider ways to connect to other resources.

B. Priority Two: Behavioral Health

Allen shared information on the Children's State Mental Health Board. The child welfare bill provides funds for additional beds in mental health institutes—Glendale, Oakwood, and Woodward. He noted workforce challenges and changes to professional licensing. A new RFP has been announced to solicit new managed care organizations.

C. Priority Three: Transition of Youth

Padgett reported that a Juvenile Reentry Task Force meeting was held in January. Members discussed current challenges in group care staffing. A report will provide updates on recidivism of youth who have exited out of home placement. Grier Aspengren has developed a curriculum for use by reentry navigators and others working with youth transitioning from out of home placement.

Chad Jensen reported that JCS is updating their transition policy and conducting a final review. Additional requirements have been added. The policy will be rolled out to all JCS staff and will be shared with JReS members for feedback.

D. Priority Four: Gender Equity

Tibbetts reported that the February meeting consisted of discussions on the Talking Wall results and the reallocation of the matching funds towards the girls' grant application.

E. Priority Five: Disproportionate Minority Contact

Padgett reported that the DMC subcommittee met in February and reviewed the Talking Wall report as well as 2021 data relating to the various decision points and disparity.

XII. Compliance Monitoring Progress

Musel reported that he has completed facility visits and data collection. The numbers remain similar to previous years. Once the Title II application is received, the data will be submitted by the deadline. He will continue visits this summer for next year's report.

XIII. Unfinished Business

XIV. New Business

There was no unfinished or new business.

XV. Adjourn

Allen requested that agenda items indicate time frames.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm. The next meeting is June 2, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rinker
Administrative Secretary
Div. of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning