



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 Meeting

Thursday, September 2, 2021

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

Staff: Steve Michael; Scott Musel; Angela Leonetti; Kathy Nesteby; Jill Padgett; Julie Rinker; Abby King

Others: LaTasha DeLoach; David Epley; Evan Johnson; Alison Ver Schuer; Isabel Waller

I. Call to Order & Introductions

• Welcome New Members

Andrew Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. Introductions were made. A quorum was present later in the meeting; action was taken at that time.

Allen welcomed new members—Soomin Koh, Morgan Fritz, and Dan Larson. (Dave McDaniel and Patrick Garcia were reappointed.) Allen noted that the federal Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has developed orientation videos. These will be shared with all council members.

II. Approve Minutes (June 2021)

Roy Klobnak moved to approve the minutes from the June 3rd meeting, seconded by Stephanie Hernandez. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. Division & National Report

Steve Michael, Division Administrator, shared the following:

- **New members/reappointments**—Michael welcomed new members. He thanked all members for their guidance and expertise and looked forward to learning from new members.
- **Staff**—Jeanne Foster, Budget Analyst, retired at the end of July. Angela Leonetti was hired as her replacement. Jeff Regula, Statistical Research Analyst, retired at the end of June. We are working to fill his position. Kayla Powell had a baby boy last Friday. Everyone is healthy.
- **Grants**—Two federal grant applications have been submitted. One is a competitive discretionary grant for delinquency prevention and, if awarded, would facilitate statewide expansion of pre-charge diversion (PCD). Funds would flow thru CJJP to local communities. The other grant is the Title II Formula funds grant which the JJAC oversees.
- **OJJDP Audit**—federal staff performed a routine audit/virtual site visit. Title II funding now requires that agencies ensure the suitability of individuals who work with youth (providers and contactors). A policy will be developed and added to contracts and will be monitored.
- **Boys' State Training School**—Allen asked about the status of the Boys' State Training School and Wendy Leiker, Director, who resigned in early August. He asked about the path forward for deep end youth. Michael responded on the importance of insuring that resources are available for both

boys and girls and that the system provides the best services available. There are some court-related issues regarding civil rights and isolation rooms, and that is playing a role. He noted the importance of preventing youth from entering the adult corrections system. Allen will invite the next superintendent to speak at a future meeting.

IV. Juvenile Justice System Involvement Questionnaire

Musel reported that he would be sending a questionnaire to members asking them to anonymously indicate if they had prior experience in the juvenile justice system. OJJDP requires that at least three members have prior experience. A second questionnaire will ask members if they currently hold any elected positions and/or any professional licenses with the state.

V. Title II Juvenile Justice Youth Development Allocation

- **Council Budget Report**

Musel reviewed the Council budget. A balance of \$23,283.06 remains; \$3,283.06 will expire on September 30, 2022. Another \$20,000 will be added on October 1 of this year and \$20,000 will expire on Sept 30 2023. Due to the pandemic, travel expenses for council and subcommittees has remained low.

Musel reported that staff are requesting approval to purchase an 'Owl' video conferencing device. This device includes a 360-degree camera, microphone, and speaker that directionally picks up individuals speaking during a hybrid meeting. Several systems were reviewed and the 'Meeting Owl' was found to best fit our needs. Allen noted that the cost is generally around \$1,000.

Roy Klobnak moved to approve purchasing an 'Owl' system, seconded by Stephanie Hernandez. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Title II Judicial District Expenditure Report**

Musel reviewed Title II Formula funding and expenditures by each judicial district. Claims are due within 90 days from September 30.

Two districts may not expend all their funds:

- 6th District – Utilized funding for a gender-specific program for girls, however, due to the pandemic and in-home learning, school referrals were low. They have implemented a new, in-home day treatment model and should expend these funds more consistently for the remainder of the federal fiscal year.
- 8th District – The pandemic affected their ability to operate their restitution program.

As we return to 'normalcy', funding will be expended as in the past.

- **Title II Judicial District Proposed Allocation Projects**

Jill Padgett reviewed potential projects for judicial district. Title II funding must be allocated to communities for activities that benefit at-risk youth or those in the juvenile justice system. Due to funding requirements under the Family First Prevention Services Act, Functional Family Therapy will be covered by DHS.

Musel provided an overview of the allocation process. Iowa was awarded approximately \$400,000, of which two-thirds must be allocated to the local level based upon child population in each judicial district. The remaining funds go towards the Council budget and staffing. This past year, Iowa received an additional \$139,000. The Council voted to use those funds towards special projects—youth justice subcommittee, prevention programming, and matching funds for two grants.

Judicial District proposals for the next federal fiscal year beginning October 1:

1st Judicial District—restorative justice, pre-charge diversion services

2nd Judicial District—will continue to facilitate meetings for youth transitioning out of group care

3rd Judicial District—mental health services for juvenile justice youth

4th Judicial District—will continue current direct intake model used as a detention alternative

5th Judicial District—three services were indicated on their application. Staff are encouraging them to fund services for a gender-specific specialty court using the Girls Circle model and provide trauma-informed parenting workshops for youth and families

6th Judicial District—in-home day treatment services

7th Judicial District—looking at planning meetings for youth exiting group care

8th Judicial District—will focus on restitution and professional development

- **CJJ Racial & Ethnic Disparities Conference, Louisville, KY, November 2nd & 3rd**

Musel provided an overview on the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ). Each year, CJJ holds several conferences. During the June meeting, the Council approved 2 in-person attendees and 20 virtual attendees for the above conference. Tibbetts and Allen expressed interest in attending.

VI. Policy and Program Committee – Scott County Juvenile Detention Expansion Debrief

Allen reported that, as JJAC Chair, he occasionally receives inquiries. During the CJJ conference, he was asked if Iowa was expanding the number of detention beds. After further inquiry, the Policy & Programs Subcommittee met to learn more about the proposed 40-bed Scott County Juvenile Detention Center. CJJP has recommended a 24-bed facility.

Following a presentation by Jeremy Kaiser, Director, Scott County Juvenile Detention Center, there was consensus not to take a stance on the new detention center. Kaiser had explained the importance of being able to separate youth based on a variety of needs while keeping kids close to home.

During the meeting, there was discussion that DHS could reallocate licensed beds amongst the detention centers and avoid increasing the number of detention beds in Iowa.

Dan Larson agreed and added that adult waiver youth will also influence how beds are used. Polk County has notified DHS that they would be able to give up 11 beds to Scott County.

Michael reported that since the PnP meeting, he has learned that some legislators want to raise the state's bed cap. A number of beds are licensed and assigned to each detention facility. CJJP prefers reassignment of beds based upon needs. Discussions with DHS have included reassignment of beds in the event of an emergency and that periodic reviews be conducted statewide. A meeting will be held next week with detention directors and information will be shared with legislative staff.

VII. CJJ Virtual Conference Debrief

- **CJJ Policy Platforms: Law Enforcement in Schools & Community Investment**

Allen, Jennifer Tibbetts, and Padgett provided an overview regarding their virtual attendance at the CJJ conference. They reported the following:

- A young person now chairs the Executive Board;
- Steve Michael and a youth from Iowa's 3rd Judicial District served on a re-entry panel during one of the breakout sessions.
- During the Council of SAGs meeting, two policy platforms were voted upon and approved—1) Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline; 2) Addressing Racism at the Front End of the Youth Justice System.

Padgett reviewed the two policies unanimously approved by the Council of SAGs. The following was discussed:

- Garcia reported that a Las Vegas school district has hired their own police.
- Tibbetts reported that Marion is looking at removing SRO's, she suggested contacting the school board to further inquire regarding their plans. She was hopeful that law enforcement would not be replaced by staff hired as enforcement.
- Michael noted that Des Moines Public Schools decided to remove SROs and use a restorative justice model. It would be beneficial to discuss the roles of schools and pay attention if school districts are hiring others to police schools.
- Nesteby added that the DMC Subcommittee and the Iowa Task Force for Young Women (ITFYW) were identifying joint projects based on feedback from the [Talking Wall](#). One area tagged as a potential priority is disrupting the school-to-court pipeline.

VIII. Mitigating Gender and Racial Bias Training Debrief

Nesteby reported that 19 individuals attended the training. These individuals represented both the DMC Subcommittee and ITFYW, as well as juvenile court services. Based on feedback received, most thought the training was informative.

IX. Family and Youth Engagement Summit Debrief

Padgett reported that 263 participants attended the morning session. The afternoon session was reserved for judicial district planning teams—detention staff, providers, law enforcement, school personnel, juvenile judges, county attorneys, public defenders, Chief JCOs, JCOs, and youth/family. A facilitated discussion sought commitment towards positive change and outcomes as voiced by system youth. JCS and CJJP will work to help planning teams move forward on goals envisioned for their respective area.

Chad Jensen hoped to have another summit in future years and encouraged members to submit ideas to strengthen and improve. This year's summit originated as a result of the Talking Wall which solicits concerns and suggestions from youth in placement.

The next Talking Wall project will begin in November. More youth and locations will be added. Typically, youth respond to five open-ended questions. The information is collected and themes are analyzed. Padgett encouraged members to recommend facilities and questions.

X. Youth Justice Council Progress

Padgett reported that Nixon Benitez, a summer AmeriCorps member, developed a recruiting [video](#) and member materials for the Youth Justice Council. Twenty applications have been received; interviews will begin in mid-October, and the first meeting will be held in November. This subcommittee will be comprised of youth representing each judicial district. Technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation will provide coaching and support for seamless integration with the JJAC. Padgett encouraged members to refer youth members.

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

A. Priority One: Prevention and Intervention

Nesteby is reviewing various clearinghouses that list programs and services for 6 to 10-year-olds. Thus far, 55 services best fit that age category and are shown to be highly effective. Several other clearinghouses are left to review. Upon completion, information will be shared with members.

As we determine the leading, effective models, expansion will be through the oversight of the PnP Subcommittee. She encouraged interested members to participate in those meetings.

Padgett noted that if awarded, the delinquency prevention grant will help to standardize pre-charge diversion in Iowa. The effectiveness and success of current efforts in Iowa is being reviewed. Members were asked to submit information on current PCD efforts in their respective communities for participation in data collection and measurement of program success.

B. Priority Two: Behavioral Health

Michael reported that the focus is providing services to youth who need them. The process requires a needs assessment and availability of services. The September 23rd Justice Advisory Board meeting will include a presentation on Marshalltown where a therapist responds to calls with law enforcement and addresses needs. He invited members to attend.

Allen reported that the third wave of requirements around Children's Mental Health legislation went into effect July 1. He noted the importance of crisis stabilization. The Mental Health Region made a commitment to support YSS in developing a 50-acre campus to provide services to youth.

C. Priority Three: Transition of Youth

Michael reported that additional state funding was awarded to Vocational Rehab for reentry navigation services and workplace training to youth exiting group care. The initial program will be a pilot in several areas. Voc Rehab has partnered with CJJP for this reentry project and meetings are being held to finalize details.

Technical assistance through Georgetown University continues to enhance and expand family engagement supports, services, and strategies for youth transitioning out of group care.

D. Priority Four: Gender Equity

Nestey reported that the ITFYW and the DMC Subcommittee have identified potential joint projects— healing-centered engagement and the school-to-court pipeline. A third potential project is “parent partners” for families in juvenile justice. A meeting was held with Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) staff.

The two data reports on deep-end boys and girls are close to being released. The girls' report focuses on girls eligible for placement at a state training school if there were one.

Nestey also reported on a recent incident in a group care setting that involved approximately 12-15 girls. As a result, child welfare girls are now involved with JCS. Concerns have been raised many times on mixing these populations due to different risk levels. A Talking Wall was conducted at a detention center with several girls, however, some originally involved had already left. The issues surrounded the use of restraints and resulted in pushback from the girls. Nestey noted safety concerns and managing kids. More information will be provided later.

Members voiced concerns surrounding staff recruitment and retention. The matter has universally reached critical levels which impacts the ability to provide structure, safety, and supervision in congregate care.

Jensen suggested members develop staffing strategies at a future meeting. Nestey agreed. The girls noted that experienced staff left and new staff came in.

Tibbetts added that this has been an ongoing problem and underscored the importance of having appropriate services for girls in placement as well as appropriate wages for those working in the

system. Girls who would not have been involved in juvenile justice are now involved. Need to evaluate how we value staff in this field—many workers are at the poverty level.

Jensen agreed. And underscored the need for additional funding to provide a reasonable starting wage to recruit qualified workers.

Allen noted that this employment sector doesn't have lobbyists to support workforce—the ninth largest employment sector in the state.

E. Priority Five: Disproportionate Minority Contact

Padgett reported that the DMC Subcommittee met and identified potential joint projects with the ITFYW. The top two priorities relate to 1) law enforcement in schools and the development of a toolkit for schools through a youth-empowerment lens and 2) healing-centered engagement.

The Black Girls in Juvenile Justice Workgroup continues to meet monthly. The workgroup has reviewed data and identified priorities—develop and increase the capacity of prevention programs to prevent Black girls from entering the system; and develop and increase capacity for providers to appropriately respond to and support Black girls in the juvenile justice system. The Workgroup continues to look for additional members.

The reports on deep-end boys and girls are almost finalized. A comparison report will be released for the next legislative session.

Padgett reviewed current DMC data reported to the federal government—child population, complaints, diversion, pre-trial detention, secure confinement, and adult court transfers. The data are tracked statewide and the ten pilot communities and show overrepresentation.

XII. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

XIII. New Business

Dan Larson voiced concerns regarding several girls housed in detention—one for 456 consecutive days others for several months. He underscored the need for a state training school for girls. Nesteby will contact Larson to learn more. Tibbetts encouraged Larson to partner with the ITFYW.

XIV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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