



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

**JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL
Disproportionate Minority Contact Subcommittee**

MEETING MINUTES

November 10, 2021

Present: LaTasha DeLoach, Interim Chair; Whitney Buchanan; Terrance Campbell; Diamond Denney; Ivy Menke

Others: Jay Hansen; Evan Johnson; Laurie Nash; Sam Powell

Staff: Steve Michael; Jill Padgett; Scott Musel; Kathy Nesteby; Kayla Powell; Julie Rinker; Monserrat Saucedo

- **Welcome and introductions**

LaTasha DeLoach, Interim Chair, welcomed those in attendance at 10:05 a.m. Introductions were made. The meeting was held virtually. A quorum was not present.

- **Approval of August 11 minutes** – Due to lack of quorum, the minutes were not approved.

- **CJJP Update**

Steve Michael reported the following:

- Staff vacancies—Two justice system analysts and three juvenile reentry navigator positions are open. The analysts will focus on data and research, the navigators will work with the Juvenile Reentry Task Force and assist with career readiness activities for youth transitioning home. The navigators will work in the 5th and 6th Judicial Districts and at the Boys' State Training School.
- CJJP was awarded a five-year, \$1.5 million grant for delinquency prevention. The funds will be used to expand pre-charge diversion. Currently there are six communities piloting pre-charge diversion. Michael hoped the effort would double or triple the number of communities over the five-year period.
- Michael asked members to consider establishing a minimum age for youth referred to Juvenile Court Services. Other states' minimums range from age 7 to 14. Monserrat Saucedo in CJJP is researching the information.

Padgett reported that, in Iowa, between 500-600 youth under age 12 enter the system each year and a majority are Black youth. She shared a link to the [National Juvenile Justice Network](#) regarding what other states are doing. While this is a very preliminary discussion, Padgett was hopeful that the new Youth Justice Council can help champion this effort in collaboration with other state youth councils. Regular updates on this issue will be provided.

Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning

Discussion:

Terrance Campbell provided information on a 7-year-old 2nd grader from Wisconsin that was charged with truancy. He underscored that the responsibility lies with the parents and discussed culpability of a child that age and comprehension in understanding their Miranda Rights.

Padgett responded that this particular case opened discussions regarding youth this age and entry into the juvenile justice system. Several related issues have also been discussed such as the availability of services for younger youth with behavior concerns and that the Iowa Delinquency Assessment (IDA) was not validated on younger youth.

Padgett added that the grant funding for delinquency prevention will provide expansion opportunities for current pre-charge diversion programs. However, it cannot supplant funding for current programs. A competitive bidding process will be conducted and will focus on communities with higher poverty rates, larger minority populations, and disparity.

DeLoach noted the number of years spent working on pre-charge diversion and the effects on outcomes. She noted the importance of statewide consistency.

- **DMC Representation on the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council**

DeLoach reported that she has applied for JJAC membership several times and has yet to be appointed to the Council. She has served as both interim chair and co-chair for a number of years. She noted the importance of having DMC representation on the JJAC—someone who will represent and voice DMC issues. Despite this, she will continue to serve as interim chair. She encouraged members to apply for JJAC membership. A link to the [Iowa Talent Bank](#) website was shared.

Michael added that JJAC members are appointed by the Governor. He asked members to contact CJJP if they apply so that staff could follow up with the governor's office.

- **Spotlight: Local DMC Efforts/ Information Sharing**

- Sam Powell, District 5 Juvenile Court Services

Sam Powell, Diamond Denney, and Whitney Buchanan provided information on local DMC efforts to address racial and ethnic disparities in the 5th Judicial District. Efforts include goals, tracking charges and pre-charge diversion statistics, collaboration with local law enforcement and other entities, and a second chance program. Their pre-charge diversion program follows the [Iowa Pre-Charge Diversion Toolkit](#). Other efforts include post-arrest diversion, use of the Decision Matrix, detention alternatives, and the use of graduated warrants.

Padgett and DeLoach thanked Powell, Denney, and Whitney for their efforts to reduce disparity in the Des Moines area/5th Judicial district. More information will be presented once the delinquency prevention grant gets moving.

- **Iowa Taskforce for Young Women Update**

- Deep end system profile overview

Kathy Nesteby noted the recently-released report on deep-end girls—girls who would have been eligible for a state training school setting/care if Iowa had one. In terms of disproportionality for this cohort of girls, in 2019 40% were Black females. That number has been consistent over time.

At the request of Juvenile Court Services (JCS), a new cohort has been selected. Data are comprised of deep-end girls through September, 2020. Additionally, JCOs have been asked to provide additional case-level information that CJJP is unable to extract from the case management system. The purpose is to identify girls that JCOs would have recommended be sent to a state training school if one were available in Iowa. Nesteby was hopeful that this effort will produce valuable information on high-risk/high-needs girls.

Nesteby also noted the recent closures of group care facilities in Iowa. In 2017, there were 650 beds for use by both boys and girls involved in the child welfare and juvenile court systems. As a result of the facility closures, there are now 364 beds available—of which, 64 are available for girls. There are currently 55 girls in need of deep-end services in a setting similar to a state training school. As a result, more girls are spending considerable time in detention due to the lack of options.

The Iowa Task Force for Young Women is working on the above issues as part of their goals. Prevention is another goal. Nesteby noted the prevention grant application. The award will not be announced until later this year. If awarded, Iowa will focus on culturally-responsive, community-based programs for Black girls.

DeLoach noted the impact on girls since the closure of the girls' state training school. Girls are languishing in the system for a record-length of time. As a result, justice for girls is not being provided. She noted the importance of continuing to push for change.

- **DMC Goals and Objectives Updates**

- **Minimum Age Research (DMC Goal 1, Objective A)**

Padgett reported that the bulk of charges for youth under age 12 over the past five years are: vandalism, theft, assault, disorderly conduct.

Padgett asked what other information is needed. CJJP is currently researching data on age, gender, race, county/judicial district, and charges.

Buchanan commented that 'what brings a young person into the system' are underlying issues such as mental health and behavior in school.

Padgett would like to see these needs and issues addressed prior to a youth coming into the system. Michael concurred and asked what services are needed and how can we get youth to these services.

Buchanan noted that these issues build over time and parents don't know how or when to advocate or find resources.

Laurie Nash added that they are looking at locations and what supports are in schools. However, it is not being met with fidelity and, in some cases, safe spaces are used as punishment. We need schools involved in conversations and interventions within schools, regardless if something happens after school or off school property.

Padgett was hopeful that a newly-formed Youth Justice Council can provide more insight. The Youth Justice Council will serve as a subcommittee of the JJAC.

- **Visible Black Girls in the Juvenile Justice System work group - (DMC Goal 2, Objective A)**

DeLoach reported that the work group has identified two main goals: 1) prevention to avoid entering the system and 2) supports needed within the system to prevent them from moving deeper. The work group is currently reviewing national programs to identify culturally appropriate services and hoping for the prevention grant award.

Padgett invited members to attend these meetings.

- **Deep end system profile update (DMC Goal 3, Objective A)**

Padgett reported that she continues to work on a report regarding boys eligible for placement at the Boys' State Training School. She noted that disproportionality exists for this cohort. Data show that a number of boys had their first interaction with juvenile justice at age 7. The number of placements ranged from 11-20+ and the duration of placement was between 2-4+ years. Due to the number of placements and/or services, more information needs to be gathered on whether the right services and placements were provided at the right time.

The highest charge for 90% of them was a felony offense, 53% were violent felonies. The highest charge on their first complaint, nearly half were simple misdemeanor level charges. The juvenile justice system needs to adequately address behaviors on the front end to avert them from moving forward. The greatest volume of charges was property and violent crimes; the smallest volume was drug charges.

The report will be released soon. Next year's report will begin shortly thereafter. These reports will be issued on a regular basis going forward.

- **Adjourn**
 - **Next Meeting (Tentative): February 9, 2022- information will follow**

There was no further discussion. DeLoach thanked those in attendance. The meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rinker
Administrative Secretary