



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

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

**MEETING MINUTES
GOOGLE MEET
February 9, 2022**

Present: LaTasha DeLoach, Interim Chair; Whitney Buchanan; Terrance Campbell; Julie Clark-Albrecht; Diamond Denney, Co-Chair; Hon. Kevin McKeever; Ivy Menke; Stephan Pearson, Co-Chair; Miguel Trevino; Chris Wyatt

Others: Diane Beaver; Aayla Larson; Laurie Nash; Ava Palmer; Margarite Reinert

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

Welcome and introductions

LaTasha DeLoach, Chair, welcomed all in attendance at 10:04 a.m. Introductions were made. A quorum was present.

Approval of minutes – August & November, 2021

Christopher Wyatt moved to approve the minutes from the August meeting, seconded by Terrance Campbell. The motion was unanimously approved.

Campbell moved to approve the minutes from the November meeting, seconded by Wyatt. The motion was unanimously approved.

CJJP Update

Steve Michael reported the following:

- **Chief Justice’s Juvenile Justice Task Force**—The Chief Justice has seated a task force to review and make recommendations to improve the juvenile justice system. Six workgroups have also been seated. Disparities are a priority area and will be weaved throughout the process. CJJP staff are on each workgroup and will carry forward advice from this committee.
- **Juvenile ReEntry Navigator**—Through funding acquired by Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, three navigators will be hired to work with disabled youth returning from out-of-home placement. The work will focus on job skills, career readiness, and employment. The navigators will be in the 5th and 6th Judicial Districts and either the Boys’ State Training School or YSS in Ames. Two positions have been re-posted.
- **Proposed Legislation**—DHS has pre-filed a bill that will shift oversight of funding for graduated sanctions from DHS to the Judicial Branch and the Detention Home Fund from DHS to CJJP.
- **Justice System Analysts**—Two analysts have been hired. In addition to data analysis and reporting, one will focus on SPEG program evaluation.

Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning

- **Pre-Charge Diversion RFP**—Jill Padgett reported that Iowa has been awarded a federal grant to expand pre-charge diversion. The focus will be on youth of color.

Youth Justice Council—Ava Palmer and Aayla Larson reported that the Youth Justice Council is planning their first retreat and defining their mission statement, purpose, and member roles. They are also working on care packages for youth and a bill of rights for youth in detention. The latter would be the first in the nation.

DMC Representation on the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council

DeLoach encouraged members to apply for membership on the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council to represent DMC issues and provide committee updates. Applications can be submitted through the [Iowa Talent Bank](#).

Spotlight: Local DMC Efforts/ Information Sharing

- Ivy Menke, District 3 Juvenile Court Services & Maggie Reinert

Ivy Menke and Maggie Reinert provided information on “Unity in the Community” in Sioux City. The effort is a partnership between Sioux City law enforcement, school liaisons, Juvenile Court Services, citizens, and other community stakeholders. Several events are held each year to bridge community connections.

DeLoach asked if these efforts have led to reductions in disproportionate minority contact. Menke responded that frequent meetings are important to maintaining reductions.

DeLoach asked about culturally specific programs, especially for the Native American community. Menke responded that a youth diversion program “Native Youth Standing Strong” is provided through Juvenile Court Services. The group meets regularly, provides meals, a sweat lodge, and does a lot as a local diversion. Reinhart added that there is a Native American unit in DHS which works to ensure that foster/adoption rules are adhered to as well as work by the county attorney’s office. There are CEU learning opportunities regarding race and protocol required for cases involving Native Americans.

Michael asked if any technical assistance was needed with which this group could assist. Menke would like to see a pre-charge diversion program in the Sioux City area.

- **Subcommittee member updates and sharing**

Johnson County--Laurie Nash reported that Johnson County has seen more 5-6th grade kids charged with shoplifting and, thereby, using their “1 shot” at diversion at such a young age. United Action for Youth is working with local law enforcement on a “pre-diversion” diversion program designed for 13-14-year-olds. This includes family mediation, social workers of color, counseling, and understanding brain development. They are exploring pre-charge diversion options so kids can participate in diversion programs more than once. A challenge has been getting law enforcement administrators at the table. Restorative justice efforts ask participants to return and provide information on how/what they are doing – a more reflective approach.

Polk County—Diamond Denney reported that they are trying to expand the service menu in to provide age- and crime-appropriate programs. In other work, they have found that victims

don't like to face offender(s) in mediation/restorative justice. Consideration is being given to a victim-impact panel that would address the overall offense. She noted the importance of immediate interventions.

Age of Culpability

Michael noted that some of the discussion relates to the age of culpability for young people and defining an appropriate age for entry into the juvenile justice system. Iowa Code does not identify a specific age. Some states have established a minimum age that varies from 7-14 years of age. He suggested further exploration to develop ways to address misbehavior.

Padgett added that overrepresentation exists for youth ages 6-12. She asked members to consider whether the DMC goals and objectives should be amended to address this issue.

Hon. Kevin McKeever thought it was important to focus on how we deal with younger people and our attempts to get them to follow rules. Evidence suggests that strict measures do the opposite. He noted the importance of age-appropriate approaches and interventions while responding in a timely manner.

2021 Data Recap

- **DMC decision points**

Padgett reviewed CY2021 minority population and decision point data that are tracked statewide and in the 10 target areas—Black Hawk, Des Moines, Dubuque, Johnson, Linn, Polk, Pottawattamie, Scott, Webster, and Woodbury counties. This information is required by and reported to OJJDP to demonstrate efforts to reduce DMC.

In 2022, there will be an addition of specialized beds that will be counted as secure confinement, so those numbers will increase. Additionally, diversion counts will increase due to an expanded list of diversions.

- **Talking Wall Results**

Kayla Powell reviewed the Talking Wall results—a process used to collect feedback from youth in placement. This past fall, the effort was conducted in 40 locations, involved 383 youth, and resulted in over 1,800 comments.

Last year's results spurred action—an increase in funding for clothing for youth in care, a family and youth engagement summit, and use of American Rescue Plan funds.

Results from the current Talking Wall include a meeting between CJJP and the Department of Education to discuss providing the HiSET (formerly GED) to youth in detention. A separate meeting will be held with between the Departments of Human Services and Public Health, the Youth Justice Council (YJC), and CJJP to address feminine hygiene products for girls in placement. The YJC and the Drake Law Center are working together to add flexibility to the clothing allowance for hygiene products.

Members expressed the following:

- The comments address a lack of humanity in treatment by adult caregivers.
- Staff working with kids need to take accountability in how they talk to youth.
- As one who works with youth, it is embarrassing and personally taken. It should be better than what it is. Many know what is, and is not, being done to youth.

DeLoach thanked Powell for making youth comfortable to share their thoughts. She looks forward to further and immediate action in response to the comments.

Powell asked McKeever about policies regarding one-on-one sessions between youth and judges prior to court proceedings. McKeever noted ethical concerns and explained that both prosecution and defense attorneys must be aware of all information under consideration by a judge. He emphasized the importance of open and fair court proceedings and balanced decisions made by a neutral fact-finder.

Iowa Taskforce for Young Women Update

Kathy Nesteby referenced a recent [report](#) on deep-end girls in the juvenile justice system. The report focuses only on those females who would have been placed in a state training school setting if one existed. She noted the extraordinary amount of services some girls had received—80% had received more than two years of services while 32% had received more than four years of services or placements. Nesteby noted the need for quality gender-responsive services to circumvent lengthy treatment and reduce recidivism. Another report will be coming that will provide information gathered from a survey of JCOs.

The March JJAC meeting will most likely include a discussion regarding \$52,000 in federal funding that the JJAC awarded towards the grant application aimed at Black girls. Since the grant application was not approved, the Task Force is recommending that the funds be reallocated to the juvenile reentry effort to prioritize services for Black girls.

DMC Goals and Objectives Updates

- Revisit goals and objectives and discuss progress

DeLoach referenced a handout that identified goals and objectives that are completed, in process, or may require assistance from another entity.

Padgett asked members to review the document for future discussion on whether the goals and objectives should be modified based on data or the Talking Wall results. The next meeting will include a deeper review of the goals and objectives.

Adjourn

- Next Meeting: May 2022- information will follow

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Rinker
Administrative Secretary