

**Nebraska Children's Commission**  
**Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee**  
Thirty-Fourth Meeting  
February 9, 2016  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Child Advocacy Center, Gary Lacy Training Room  
5025 Garland Street  
Lincoln, NE 68504

**I. Call to Order**

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Nicole Brundo, Co-Chair of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

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***Committee Members present (13):***

Cassy Blakely	Dr. Anne Hobbs	Jana Peterson
Jeanne Brandner	Ron Johns	Juliet Summers
Nicole Brundo	Nick Juliano	Dr. Richard Wiener
Tony Green	Cynthia Kennedy	
Kim Hawekotte	Tom McBride	

***Committee Members absent (3):***

Barb Fitzgerald	Judge Larry Gendler	Dr. Ken Zoucha
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***Committee Resource Members present (3):***

Christine Henningsen (9:31)	Katie McLeese Stephenson	Adam Proctor
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***Committee Resource Members absent (13):***

Jim Bennett	Mark Mason	Judge Linda Porter
Senator Kathy Campbell	Monica Miles-Steffens	Julie Rogers
Dannie Elwood	Steve Milliken	Dan Scarborough
Catherine Gekas Steeby	Jerall Moreland	
Liz Hruska	Senator Patty Pansing Brooks	

A quorum was established.

***Guests in Attendance (6):***

Katie Bass.....	Nebraska Court Improvement Project
Bethany Connor Allen.....	Nebraska Children's Commission
Michael Fargen.....	Foster Care Review Office
Amanda Felton.....	Nebraska Children's Commission
Kari Rumbaugh.....	Administrative Office of Probation

a. *Notice of Publication*

Co-Chair Brundo, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meetings Calendar website in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

b. *Announcement of the placement of Open Meetings Act information*

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located on the table near the entrance on the west side of the meeting room.

### **III. Approval of Agenda**

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Co-Chair Brundo entertained a motion to approve the Agenda. **A motion was made by Tony Green to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Nick Juliano.** No further discussion ensued. Roll Call vote as follows:

**FOR (13):**

Cassy Blakely  
Jeanne Brandner  
Nicole Brundo  
Tony Green  
Kim Hawekotte

Dr. Anne Hobbs  
Ron Johns  
Nick Juliano  
Cynthia Kennedy  
Tom McBride

Jana Peterson  
Juliet Summers  
Dr. Richard Wiener

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (3):**

Barb Fitzgerald

Judge Larry Gendler

Dr. Ken Zoucha

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **IV. Approval of the Minutes**

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Cassy Blakely moved to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2016 minutes as presented. **Dr. Anne Hobbs seconded the motion.** There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

**FOR (13):**

Cassy Blakely  
Jeanne Brandner  
Nicole Brundo  
Tony Green  
Kim Hawekotte

Dr. Anne Hobbs  
Ron Johns  
Nick Juliano  
Cynthia Kennedy  
Tom McBride

Jana Peterson  
Juliet Summers  
Dr. Richard Wiener

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (3):**

Barb Fitzgerald

Judge Larry Gendler

Dr. Ken Zoucha

**MOTION CARRIED**

**V. Co-Chair Report**

Co-Chairs Brundo and Hawekotte, did not have any information to present under their report.

**VI. Legislative Discussion**

Co-Chair Hawekotte gave the floor to Juliet Summers, Policy Coordinator for Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice with Voices for Children in Nebraska, to review the relevant legislative bills from the current session. Ms. Summers mentioned the probability of the Judiciary Committee condensing several of the proposed juvenile justice bills into one. The bills included would be LB675, LB709, LB843, LB893, and LB894.

Concerns were raised over the unintended consequences that could arise from LB675 and LB709. There was apprehension as to if there was a strong enough infrastructure, particularly in the western part of the state, to support the legislative requirements in the two bills. While Community Aid Funding was mentioned as a resource, there was still the issue of the time required to build up the programs using those funds.

Comments were made that many of the detention facilities have successful programs within them that may better serve youth if moved out of detention and into the communities. This would bring about the challenge of creating a culture shift for the communities to accept responsibility of the well-being of the system involved youth in their area.

The Committee agreed that it was important to distribute information over the next year regarding the availability of Community Based Aid grants. Kari Rumbaugh, Assistant Deputy Administrator of the Juvenile Division with the Administrative Office of Probation, indicated that a catalog of current programs with data mapping resources was in progress. It was suggested that the catalog and information be shared at the Nebraska Community Aid and Juvenile Justice Conference and the 2016 Children's Summit.

**VII. Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association Update**

Co-Chair Brundo invited Tom McBride, Executive Director with the Nebraska Juvenile Justice Association (NJJA), to present. Mr. McBride began by discussing the upcoming NJJA Conference happening May 18-20, 2016 in Kearney, NE. He went on to discuss the three keynote speakers, Françoise Mathieu, Starcia Ague, and Xavier McElrath-Bey. Break out topics would include working with developmentally disabled youth, youth engagement, education services, immigrant and refugee issues, LGBTQ youth issues, gang prevention, and several others. Mr. McBride also noted that several types of licensing credits would be offered for attending the conference.

Also highlighted, was the NJJA website, [www.njja.org](http://www.njja.org). The website was host to nomination forms for various recognitions, provided information on the annual NJJA Conference, and had a registration to receive newsletters from the Association. Mr. McBride discussed a recent meeting with several state Senators and other stakeholders where NJJA was presented as a resource for all entities involved in the child welfare system. Other topics reviewed included future webinars, interest in internship

opportunities, involvement in the Strengthening Families Act Taskforce, and the use of the Associations Strategic Plan to identify the best practices for Nebraska.

## **VIII. Standing Update Items**

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*a. Court Improvement Project Update*

Katie McLeese Stephenson, Project Director with the Court Improvement Project (CIP), provided an update for the Committee members. Ms. McLeese Stephenson highlighted the upcoming events for CIP including a meeting of the Youth Crossover Project teams and the 2016 Children's Summit from September 7-9, 2016 in Kearney, NE. She informed the members that this year's opening keynote speaker would be Shay Bilchik, Founder and Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University.

Ms. McLeese Stephenson went on to discuss the recent webinar walkthrough of the 2016 Legislative Bills pertaining to Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice available at [www.cip.nebraska.gov](http://www.cip.nebraska.gov). She also distributed the recent JUSTICE Statewide Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Trend Analysis for the Committee to review. Other subjects Ms. McLeese Stephenson touched on were the Community and Evidence Based Services grant, CIP's work with the Crossover Youth Practice Model, and the work being done with the Strengthening Families Act Taskforce.

*b. Georgetown Crossover Youth Practice Model*

Nick Juliano, Senior Director of Community Impact with Boys Town, reported out on the Crossover Youth Practice Model in Douglas County. He let the members know that five counties were now participating in the project including Douglas, Gage, Sarpy, Lancaster, and Dodge counties. He reviewed the training efforts being done in Douglas County for staff.

Jana Peterson, Probation Consultant with the Office of Juvenile Services, expanded on the project by talking about the system wide efforts to create standardized policy and procedures. While the Georgetown Model may not expand further, the goal would be to take the established system and turn them into statewide practice.

Co-Chair Hawekotte raised the question as to how the Georgetown Model interfaces with the work of the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation work. Cassy Blakely, Assistant Vice President of Youth Policy with the Foundation, talked about the recent Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant and the Connected Youth Initiatives (CYI) that were benefiting from the grant. Lengthy discussion occurred around the details of the SIF grant and CYI. Ms. Blakely indicated that she could ask the Coordinators for both projects to present more information at the next meeting.

*c. Juvenile Services Community Based Aid (CBA)*

Cynthia Kennedy, Community-Based Juvenile Services Aid Program Administrator with the Crime Commission, provided an update on the program. She noted that meetings have been happening with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation to ensure that services are not overlapping. Ms. Kennedy went through the review process of the CBA grant applications. It was noted that preliminary reviews showed an increased number of Alternatives to Detention programs.

Ms. Kennedy then turned to Dr. Anne Hobbs, Director at the Juvenile Justice Institute to go over the study that looked at the efficiency of the programs utilizing CBA funds. Dr. Hobbs distributed information breaking down the different types of current CBA programs. She focused on the truancy programs, indicating that type of program would be the first to have data entered into the system.

The Committee members had lengthy dialogue surrounding the study and measuring recidivism. Several issues were discussed including the value of a control group, the variance in interpretation of the collected data, and the varying factors that could influence the recidivism outcomes. Dr. Hobbs recognized the positives of the study such as creating common definitions of recidivism, identifying practices that aid in successful programs, and having a baseline to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs where currently there was no way to do so. She indicated that she would provide additional information at the next meeting for the Committee members regarding the study and its progress.

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### **IX. YLS/CMI Study Proposal Update**

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Co-Chair Hawekotte informed the members that the YLS/CMI Study proposal was approved by the Nebraska Children's Commission. Chair Hawekotte noted that Probation would take the lead in the search for funding for the study with the support of the Committee members. Jeanne Brandner, Deputy Administrator of the Division of Juvenile Services with Probation, confirmed that they had a grant researcher on their team who had begun some preliminary exploration into potential funding sources.

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### **X. Office of Juvenile Services (OJS) Update**

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Tony Green, Administrator with the Office of Juvenile Services, noted that interviews were currently happening to fill the role of Facility Administrator at the Kearney Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Center (YRTC). Mr. Green went on to discuss a research proposal that had recently been submitted to the OJS by the University of Nebraska, Kearney. The study would look at what involved youth identify as needs in order to be successful when reentering their community and would also identify if the indicated services were available to the youth in their prospective communities. If approved, the study would operate at both the Geneva and Kearney YRTCs.

Jana Peterson touched on the statewide initiatives. One of the major initiatives focused on technology accessibility. Ms. Peterson explained how Chromebooks were being provided to the youth to assist with school work. There was a goal for each youth to create an e-portfolio and Gmail account so that work such as resumes or projects can follow the youth as they reenter their communities. She continued by reviewing the training, monitoring, and discipline efforts surrounding the use of the technology.

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### **XI. Probation Update**

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Jeanne Brandner provided an update on Probation. Topics covered included the progress of LB954, the work with Jana Peterson to crosswalk the various entities involved in the juvenile justice system, and the exploration of a partnership with Justice Benefits Inc. to maximize Title IV-E funds. Another subject that Ms. Brandner addressed was a pilot project in Lancaster County to address status offence population. The project included use of a new assessment tool, Juvenile Inventory for Functioning (JIFF).

Questions were raised regarding the Nebraska Juvenile Justice System Statistical Annual Report for 2015. After examination of several of the data charts, it was asked if a presentation on the report could be added to a future agenda. Ms. Brandner indicated that she could reach out to Jane Sutherland, who collected a majority of the data for the report.

## **XII. Data Mapping and Analysis (DMA) Taskforce Update**

Mike Fargen, Research Director with the Foster Care Review Office and Chair of the DMA Taskforce, gave a brief update on the work of the group. Mr. Fargen let the members know that the request for information from JUSTICE was approved. The group planned to organize the data, noting that it may take some time to sort. Juliet Summers noted that there was a strong curiosity from the legislature to get more information about the data being gathered. The Taskforce planned to provide an update at the April meeting to share the data and address any gaps to be filled.

## **XIII. Public Comment**

Co-Chair Hawekotte invited any members of the public forward. No public comment was offered.

## **XIV. New Business**

The Committee was informed that two positions were currently open on the committee. Spots to be filled included a member with experience with diversionary programs and a member who was an educator with experience dealing with detention involved and at risk-youth. The Chairs encouraged Committee members to inform the staff of the Nebraska Children's Commission of any interested applicants.

## **XV. Upcoming Meeting Planning**

Co-Chair Hawekotte inquired if the Committee members felt that the March meeting was too soon. Given the Legislative session and the need to gather information for several reports and updates, she offered the suggestion of cancelling the March meeting. The members agreed that the next meeting should not be held until April.

## **XVI. Future Meeting Dates**

Meetings would continue monthly on the second Tuesday unless determined otherwise. Those dates were as follows:

- April 19, 2016
  - Due to the Blueprints Conference happening during this time, the meeting was moved from April 12<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>.
- May 10, 2016

## **XIII. Adjourn**

Co-Chair Hawekotte entertained a motion to adjourn. **Ron Johns moved to adjourn. Tom McBride seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.** The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

2/22/2016

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