

**Nebraska Children’s Commission  
Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee**  
Thirty-Third Meeting  
January 12, 2016  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Child Advocacy Center, Gary Lacy Training Room  
5025 Garland Street  
Lincoln, NE 68504

**I. Call to Order**

Nicole Brundo, Co-Chair of the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

***Committee Members present (11):***

Cassy Blakely (9:13)	Dr. Anne Hobbs (10:30)	Juliet Summers
Nicole Brundo	Ron Johns	Dr. Richard Wiener
Tony Green	Nick Juliano	Dr. Ken Zoucha
Kim Hawekotte	Cynthia Kennedy	

***Committee Members absent (5):***

Jeanne Brandner	Judge Larry Gendler	Jana Peterson
Barb Fitzgerald	Tom McBride	

***Committee Resource Members present (5):***

Dannie Elwood	Monica Miles-Steffens	Julie Rogers (9:15)
Christine Henningsen (11:37)	Steve Milliken	

***Committee Resource Members absent (11):***

Jim Bennett	Mark Mason	Judge Linda Porter
Senator Kathy Campbell	Katie McLeese Stephenson	Adam Proctor
Catherine Gekas Steeby	Jerall Moreland	Dan Scarborough
Liz Hruska	Senator Patty Pansing Brooks	

A quorum was established.

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

Katie Bass.....	Nebraska Court Improvement Project
Raevin Bigelow.....	Project Everlast
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 north side of the meeting room.

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

---

---

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 Dr. Ken Zoucha.** No further discussion ensued. Roll Call vote as follows:

**FOR (9):**

Nicole Brundo  
Tony Green  
Kim Hawekotte

Ron Johns  
Nick Juliano  
Cynthia Kennedy

Juliet Summers  
Dr. Richard Wiener  
Dr. Ken Zoucha

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (7):**

Cassy Blakely  
Jeanne Brandner  
Barb Fitzgerald

Judge Larry Gendler  
Dr. Anne Hobbs  
Tom McBride

Jana Peterson

**MOTION CARRIED**

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

---

---

**Ron Johns moved to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2015 minutes as presented. Cynthia Kennedy seconded the motion.** There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

**FOR (9):**

Cassy Blakely  
Nicole Brundo  
Tony Green

Kim Hawekotte  
Ron Johns  
Cynthia Kennedy

Juliet Summers  
Dr. Richard Wiener  
Dr. Ken Zoucha

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (1):**

Nick Juliano

## ABSENT (6):

Jeanne Brandner  
Barb Fitzgerald

Judge Larry Gendler  
Dr. Anne Hobbs

Tom McBride  
Jana Peterson

## MOTION CARRIED

### V. Co-Chair Report

---

Co-Chair, Kim Hawekotte, led with summarizing the Legislative Bills that had been introduced during the current session in the days leading up to the meeting that were of interest to the Juvenile Services Committee. The Legislative Bills discussed included:

- **LB670** – Requires a hearing prior to release for persons taken into custody for mental health reasons.
- **LB673** – Changes provisions relating to appointment of Guardians ad Litem.
- **LB675** – Changes provisions relating to placement and detention of juveniles.
- **LB697** – Provides for a Medicaid state plan amendment application relating to functional family therapy.
- **LB707** – Increases the number of judges in the separate juvenile court.
- **LB709** – Provides for an alternative to detention for juveniles.
- **LB746** – Adopts the Strengthening Families Act, change provisions for Guardians Ad Litem and services for children, and create the Normalcy Taskforce.
- **LB845** – Provides requirements relating to confinement of juveniles and provide a duty for the Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare.
- **LB893** – Modifies jurisdiction of juvenile courts and change provisions relating to temporary custody and disposition of juveniles.
- **LB894** – Changes provisions relating to appointment of counsel in juvenile cases.

The members expanded on LB845 noting that the definition of confinement within the bill was broad, and could require additional education. Juliet Summers, Policy Coordinator with Voices for Children in Nebraska, and Cassy Blakely, Assistant VP of Youth Policy with Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, expanded on LB 866. The bill would create a pilot project to provide services such as securing housing, face-to-face life skills training, and assistance in furthering education or employment to juvenile justice youth transitioning out of out-of-home care.

The Committee agreed that updates on the bills and hearings would be helpful to be aware of. Commission staff, Amanda Felton and Bethany Connor Allen, were tasked with creating a page on the Commission website for members to access information on the relevant legislative bills.

### VI. Standing Update Items

---

#### *a. Court Improvement Project Update*

Katie Bass, Project Data Analyst with the Nebraska Court Improvement Project (CIP), presented information on the office. Ms. Bass informed the members that the office of CIP recently received a grant to assist with providing Multisystemic Therapy (MST) services to offending youth with the goal of keeping them in their home and community. She also highlighted two upcoming events, the 2016 Children's Summit happening September 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>,

and a walkthrough of the 2016 Legislative Bills pertaining to Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice occurring on January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Bass also discussed the Court Observation Project and the expansion of child welfare court observation into the Juvenile Justice. CIP was working to finalize observation instruments in order to have the Project ready sometime between March-May of 2016. Also mentioned was the Crossover Youth Practice Model that was happening that day in Sarpy County.

*b. Georgetown Crossover Youth Practice Model*

Nick Juliano, Senior Director of Community Impact with Boys Town, presented on Douglas County's Crossover Youth Practice Model. Mr. Juliano began by reviewing the statistics listed on the Youth Impact handout. He explained that the population observed were youth involved in both the child welfare and the juvenile justice systems. Other topics covered were focus areas for improvement, information sharing among involved entities, and the documentation of written case plans for each youth.

Ms. Hawekotte inquired about the written case plans and if they were stored and available on any system databases. Discussion occurred as to the procedures for documentation. Mr. Juliano let the Committee know that he would look into the current policies and practices and report back on the issue at the next meeting. Ms. Hawekotte indicated that she would reach out to the Omaha FCRO staff on the issue as well.

*c. Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)*

Monica Miles-Steffens, Director of Juvenile Placement with the Administrative Office of Probation, reported out on the JDAI. Ms. Miles-Steffens reviewed the highlights and next steps in Sarpy County, Douglas County, and the State as a whole. Expansion of the JDAI will begin in Otoe, Cass, and Lancaster Counties moving forward. The steps towards addressing the override rates of the Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI), and LBs 709 and 675 were briefly discussed as well.

*d. Juvenile Services Community Based Aid*

Cynthia Kennedy, Community-Based Juvenile Services Aid Program Administrator with the Nebraska Crime Commission, reported out on the Juvenile Services Community Based Aid program. Ms. Kennedy informed the members of several items including the approved rules and regulations for juvenile community based aid, the end of the submission period for grants, and the annual report from the division. Links to this information would be provided to the Committee members.

Ms. Kennedy also highlighted the study and quarterly reporting of the effectiveness of the aid programs in keeping youth out of the system. Dr. Anne Hobbs, Director with the Juvenile Justice Institute at UNO, discussed the study. She discussed the challenges that came along with the study. She shared that the online data system would begin testing in January. The goal was to determine if the program interventions achieved their intended goal and to see if the program had long term effects on reducing the number of youth entering the system. Dr. Hobbs agreed to present on the progress of the study at future meetings.

## **VII. Screening and Assessment Tools Presentation and Action Item**

Co-Chair Hawekotte gave the floor to Dr. Richard Wiener, Director of the Law and Psychology Program at UNL, to present on screening and assessment tools. Dr. Wiener began with a brief overview of the basic concepts of risk assessment in youth psychometrics. Topics covered included random error, systematic error, reliability, and validity.

Dr. Wiener went on to discuss the two most common risk screening instruments, Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) and Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY). Presented information included several individual studies, meta-analysis, and direct test comparisons for YLS/CMI and SAVRY. Comparisons of the two instruments showed that the SAVRY had a slightly higher predictive validity than the YLS/CMI but both instruments showed moderate predictions of recidivism.

Proposed actions included a study to validity study of the use of YLS/CMI in Nebraska and conducting a pilot study that would compare YLS/CMI and another instrument such as the SAVRY. After lengthy discussion on the issue, the Committee members felt that a study to assess the validity of the YLS/CMI instrument currently used in Nebraska should be investigated. The estimated cost of the study was roughly \$90,000 which would have to be acquired through either public or private means.

**It was moved by Nick Juliano and seconded by Ron Johns to submit to the Nebraska Children's Commission the recommendation of researching public and private funding options in order to perform a study that will assess the performance of the YLS/CMI instrument currently in use.** No further discussion ensued. Roll Call Vote as follows:

### **FOR (10):**

Cassy Blakely	Dr. Anne Hobbs	Dr. Richard Wiener
Nicole Brundo	Ron Johns	Dr. Ken Zoucha
Tony Green	Nick Juliano	
Kim Hawekotte	Cynthia Kennedy	

### **AGAINST (0):**

### **ABSTAINED (0):**

### **ABSENT (6):**

Jeanne Brandner	Judge Larry Gendler	Jana Peterson
Barb Fitzgerald	Tom McBride	Juliet Summers

### **MOTION CARRIED**

Discussion occurred regarding the ways to seek out funding. Grant funding through the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention FY 2016 Second Chance Act was suggested. The information regarding the grant would be emailed to members for review. Co-Chair Hawekotte encouraged members to research other possible leads for funding opportunities.

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

Juvenile Services Administrator with the Children and Family Services division, Tony Green, gave an update for the Office of Juvenile Services. Mr. Green discussed the new position within the OJS of a liaison between the Department of Health and Human Services and Probation. He informed the members that Jana Peterson was hired into this position and would use her experience to help caseworkers and probation officers problem solve and navigate the system.

Mr. Green went on to present a snapshot of Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Center (YRTC) data for December 2015. Information shared looked at the risk level and age of admissions, return rate to the facilities, and the type of placements for youth exiting facilities. Discussion occurred around the higher return to facility rate for females and what placement options were available to women.

### **IX. Probation Update**

Karie Rumbaugh, Assistant Deputy Administrator of the Juvenile Division with the Administrative Office of Probation, presented in the absence of Jeanne Brandner. She expanded on the current conversation around the role of juvenile justice and child welfare, how they are different, and how to advance both in their efforts to work together. She went on to review the topics covered in the handout, indicating that the reports for November and December would be available within the month.

Other subjects discussed by Ms. Rumbaugh were the Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE) program, expanding detention alternatives into western Nebraska, and the partnership between Probation and the Behavioral Health Regions to offer behavioral and mental health services.

### **X. Data Mapping and Analysis Taskforce Update**

Mike Fargen, Research Director with the Foster Care Review Office, reported out on the Data Mapping and Analysis Taskforce. He summarized the initial figures regarding the youth placed out-of-state along with those placed at YRTCs. Next steps would be to test various locations, determine their targeted population, analyze the travel distance for the selected population, and research the services that would be required in each location to best meet the needs of Nebraska youth. Ms. Hawekotte asked if information could be provided on the location of each judicial district for future reports.

### **XI. Public Comment**

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

### **XII. Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Crosswalk Planning Update**

Cassy Blakely updated the Committee on the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Crosswalk plan. She expanded on the many advisory groups and committees that address juvenile justice reform efforts that do similar work. The goal of the crosswalk is to compare the scopes, strategic plans, and charters of each group and see how work can be combined or tasks delegated among the various groups.

### **XIII. New Business**

Co-Chair Hawekotte introduced new member, Steve Milliken, Administrator with the Department of Education. She also informed the members that Kim Culp had recently resigned and that the Committee would be soliciting for a new member to fill the vacancy.

### **XIV. Upcoming Meeting Planning**

Co-Chair Hawekotte reviewed the items for the next and future meetings. They included:

- Updates on relevant Legislative Bills
- Standing Update items
- Update on funding sources for the YLS/CMI study
- Reports from OJS, Probation, the DMA Taskforce, and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Crosswalk.

### **XV. Future Meeting Dates**

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

- February 9, 2016
- March 8, 2016
- April 12, 2016
- May 10, 2016

### **XIII. Adjourn**

Co-Chair Hawekotte entertained a motion to adjourn. **Cassy Blakely moved to adjourn. Ron Johns seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.** The meeting adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

1/22/2016

AF