

**Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the
Juvenile Services Committee and the
Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

October 29, 2020
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Courtyard Marriott
808 R Street
Lincoln, NE 68508

1. Call to Order

NCJJ Chair Elaine Menzel called the meeting to order at 9:15 am. JSC Co-chair Nick Juliano welcomed everyone and asked that members introduce themselves. Juliano noted his newly appointed role as JSC Co-Chair.

2. Roll Call

Juvenile Services Committee

Committee Members Present (9)

Breanna Anderson	Amy Hoffman	Vicky Thompson Smith
A’Jamal Byndon	Nick Juliano	Deb VanDyke-Ries
<i>Proxy for Tamara Gavin, Lisa</i>	Tom McBride	
Neeman	Bobby Taylor	

Committee Members Absent (6)

Michelle Borg	Patrick Sailors
Nicole Brundo	Kelli Schadwinkel
Mark LaBouchardiere	Dr. Richard Wiener

Committee Resource Members Present (1)

Julie Smith

Committee Resource Members Absent (2)

Nicole Berggren
Senator Patty Pansing Brooks

A quorum was established for the Juvenile Services Committee

Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice

Coalition Members Present (8)

Roma Amundson	Denise Kracl	Bobbi Taylor
Colleen Barnes	Elaine Menzel	Rico Zavala
Patrick Connell	Sheli Schindler	

Coalition Members Absent (11)

Don Arp	Monika Gross	Jill Schubauer
Neleigh Boyer	Brian Halstead	Amanda Speichert
Stanford Bradley	Janteice Holston	Lorilei Stark
Greg Gonzalez	Justin Myers	

Coalition Ex-Officio Members Present (0)

Coalition Ex-Officio Members Absent (3)

Judge Vernon Daniels
Judge Joel B. Jay
Kari Rumbaugh

A quorum was not established for the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice.

Guests in Attendance (5):

Adam AndersonNebraska Children’s Commission
Laura Opfer.....Nebraska Children’s Commission
Jennifer Carter.....Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare

a. Notice of Publication

Administrative Assistant for the Nebraska Children’s Commission, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Children’s Commission and Nebraska Public Meetings Calendar websites in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

b. Announcement of the placement of Open Meeting Act information

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located on the Nebraska Children's Commission Website.

3. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by A’Jamal Byndon from the JSC to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Tom McBride. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

Juvenile Services Committee

FOR (10):

Breanna Anderson	Nick Juliano	Vicky Thompson Smith
A’Jamal Byndon	Tom McBride	Deb VanDyke-Ries
<i>Proxy for Tamara Gavin, Lisa Neeman</i>	<i>Proxy for Kelli Schadwinkel, Julie Smith</i>	
Amy Hoffman	Bobbi Taylor	

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (5):

Michele Borg	Patrick Sailors
Nicole Brundo	Dr. Richard Wiener
Mark LaBouchardiere	

MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee

4. Approval of the Minutes

A motion was made by Tom McBride from the JSC to approve the January 30, 2020 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vicky Thompson Smith from JSC. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

Juvenile Services Committee

FOR (10):

Breanna Anderson	Amy Hoffman	<i>Proxy for Kelli Schadwinkel, Julie Smith</i>
A’Jamal Byndon	Nick Juliano	Bobbi Taylor
<i>Proxy for Tamara Gavin, Lisa Neeman</i>	Tom McBride	Vicky Thompson Smith

Deb VanDyke-Ries

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (5):

Michele Borg
Nicole Brundo
Mark LaBouchardiere

Patrick Sailors
Dr. Richard Wiener

MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee

5. Co-Chair Report

JSC Co-Chair Nick Juliano noted that there is not much to update on the recent work of the JSC, but today is an opportunity to discuss and weigh-in on some of the big changes and challenges facing the juvenile justice system in the coming months. He noted that one role of the JSC is to make recommendations to the Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center (YRTC) system, and to focus on the current changes being made to that system. Juliano added that the JSC is a resource to those involved in making changes in the YRTC system. He continued that he sees the role of the JSC to be systematic at first, but if asked, the committee will look at the fine details. JSC Co-chair Deb VanDyke-Ries added that the potential goal of a YRTC Subcommittee could be to dive into the details of the YRTC system. A’jamal Byndon added that many other issues concerning Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) and disconnectedness of the population, especially during the time of COVID-19 is important, including bringing voices from different communities to the conversation.

6. Update regarding Title II Funds

Elaine Menzel shared that Lancaster County received a Title II Grant for RED. Additionally, the Crime Commission was offered some training concerning Title II Grant. Amy Hoffman added that the Coalition received an additional \$20,000 of State Advisory Group (SAG) funds, which can be used for training for members of the Coalition. Hoffman shared that the original conference in Washington D.C. has moved online and will now be held November 18-20th. She noted that SAG funds can be used to register members for the online conference. Hoffman added that the state is not yet in a position to become a participating state in Title II.

7. Legislative Update

Policy Analyst Laura Opfer gave a brief summary of the Legislative Resolutions being tracked by the Children’s Commission. Specific resolutions being targeted by the JSC include LR393, a resolution by Senator Pansing Brooks which is focused on status offenses. Opfer noted that a hearing date hasn’t been set for LR393, but Senator Pansing Brooks may be asking for members to testify in their capacity as the feel comfortable. Opfer will share more information as it becomes available. Opfer continued, noting that LR421, introduced by Senator Lathrop focuses on RED specifically in the child welfare system, but specifically in the YRTCs. Lastly, Opfer shared that LR386 looks at case transfer between juvenile and criminal courts.

8. JSC Past Workgroup and New Workgroup Plan

- a. Julie Smith noted that the High Utilizers Workgroup, in trying to identify what this group looked like, ran into so many barriers looking at the data that the group decided that they were not the right group to dive into this data. Smith noted that there were many cross-system barriers in accessing the data that this group wasn’t able to understand the population clearly, and that there needed to be a funded research study, with researchers that are experienced and knowledgeable, to be able to mine the data effectively. She added, the Workgroup did find that there is a need for high-quality and effective services across the state, and there are still many gaps where kids are

not being served or they are being served in a rotating number placements; including multiple stays at the YRTCs. This Workgroup could not pinpoint what factors made these youth high utilizers of services. Sheli Schindler noted that Dr. Wiener received a grant to look at data from Lancaster County to look at the juvenile justice population. Schindler shared that Dr. Wiener and his research team will be looking at the high utilizers of detention. Schindler added that she is working with Dr. Wiener to look at the recent data from the last 18 months from Lancaster County law enforcement and Detention. Schindler also shared that she will have information at the next data meeting and is willing to share this information. She noted that this data group is also looking at RED data. Probation representative Julie Smith will coordinate with the data group to determine if there is a way to collaborate, noting that one of the fallbacks in the High Utilizers Workgroup was that Detention had some of the data, Probation had some of the data, and Behavioral Health held some of the data.

- b. Vicky Thompson Smith noted that the Youth and Family Engagement Workgroup had previously made the recommendation to the larger Committee to extend invites to other groups from across the state to present at the larger Committee meetings to share their experience and efforts. Smith noted that a big focus of the Workgroup was to listen to the community groups and evaluate the efforts across the state. The Workgroup found this experience rewarding and would like to invite some of the groups to present at the larger JSC meetings for others to hear what is happening across the state. Co-Chair Juliano noted that he was a member of the Workgroup and reiterated that there is a lot of formal and informal efforts across the state, and he would love to get groups to come before the Committee to get them involved at what is happening at the Committee level. Juliano sees it as an opportunity for these groups to share their information with a larger group that they don't normally have access to.
- c. Co-Chair VanDyke-Ries noted the existence of a prior Suicide Prevention Workgroup and the work that had been done in that regard.

Laura Opfer noted that meeting structure and frequency have been challenging within the last year and that subgroups offer an easier path forward for meetings, as the workgroups are not bound by Open Meetings Act and can meet virtually.

A'jamal Byndon noted the lack of diversity on the Committee and Coalition. Byndon would like to get more people in the room to provide perspective to the Committee and Coalition. He would like to open up our processes to make it plain for everyone to understand, and he questioned how we can allow others to advocate for themselves. NCJJ Chair Menzel noted that one discussion at the Executive Subcommittee level was whether to create a standalone RED Subcommittee or rather to incorporate the RED discussion into the work of all the subcommittees. Bobbi Taylor agreed and added there is very good national guidance regarding power-sharing and the Committee should try to figure out how to incorporate that guidance and how to implement it in Nebraska. Tom McBride agreed, sharing that in the past the therapeutic community would invite people to share their stories and then tell them what they were doing wrong and how to heal. He continued, noting that now the paradigm has shifted in the therapeutic community in that they now ask, "How can we help you do this?" McBride also added that gap analysis needs to be included in the conversation, as well as suicide prevention. Sheli Schindler questioned whether the Committee should also invite perspective from economics, housing, employment organizations, as there are many factors driving families into the system. Julie Smith added that there are still gaps in services in the state, and those gaps in turn send children to YRTC, because treatment services do not exist in the state or long waitlists exist across the state.

Co-Chair Juliano encourage the Committee to take action by creating two or three workgroups so the work discussed could start immediately. He noted that it is up to the Committee to decide whether the discussion of RED be woven into the work of all the workgroups or be a standalone workgroup. Juliano encouraged that a YRTC Workgroup be created as it fits the intent and statutory perspective of the Committee. Patrick Connell offered that a Needs Assessment workgroup would be ideal. Bobbi Taylor noted that the Casey Foundation looking at the needs of the Juvenile Justice System that would offer a great opportunity for partnership on integration. Amy Hoffman noted that the Juvenile Justice Institute is also looking at the needs of the system and could be incorporated into the work of the new workgroups.

A motion was made by A'Jamal Byndon from the JSC to approve the creation of a YRTC, Racial and Ethnic Disparities, and Needs Assessment Workgroups and wind down the work of the existing JSC Workgroups. The motion was seconded by Tom McBride from JSC. Further discussion included the ability of members of the NCJJ to participate in the workgroups created. Roll call vote as follows:

Juvenile Services Committee

FOR (10):

Breanna Anderson

A'Jamal Byndon

Proxy for Tamara Gavin, Lisa

Neeman

Amy Hoffman

Nick Juliano

Tom McBride

Proxy for Kelli Schadwinkel, Julie

Smith

Bobbi Taylor

Vicky Thompson Smith

Deb VanDyke-Ries

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (5):

Michele Borg

Nicole Brundo

Mark LaBouchardiere

Patrick Sailors

Dr. Richard Wiener

MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee

9. NCJJ Subcommittee Updates

a. Executive Subcommittee

Elaine Menzel

Chair Menzel noted that despite the long gap in meeting as a larger group, work has been done at the subcommittee level. She added that the Executive Subcommittee collaborated with the JSC Co-Chairs and Commission staff to set up this meeting and agenda. Menzel encouraged members to reach out to the chairs if there are items that would be beneficial to share with the Committee and Coalition.

b. Community Planning Advisory Subcommittee

Elaine Menzel

Menzel noted that plans will be reviewed in January.

c. Juvenile Diversion Subcommittee

Denise Kracl

Kracl noted that the Crime Commission was kind to allow additional enhancement-based grants to go out. Money could be used to purchase laptops for diversion services, such as meetings, telehealth, and communication with other diversion programs to the state during the COVID-19 pandemic. She added that the November 4-6 and 12-13 Conference email has gone out to the Committees. Kracl noted many opportunities for CEUs. She added there is work being done on an assessment tool for a statewide diversion program. Schindler added that there will be a separate mental health diversion track and crisis stabilization program funding has been approved for youth in Lancaster County where CAPS is not medically necessary.

d. Grant Review Subcommittee

Elaine Menzel

Menzel noted a recent meeting and frequent meetings. Hoffman noted that the Committee met quickly to release grants. She added that the Subcommittee has been awarding grants more frequently rather than once per year in order to best utilize the available funds. Hoffman added that the CBA grant is a formula grant, and the formula needs updating. She shared that the formula will be updated to consider other factors beyond relevant population. The Subcommittee is working with Center for Public Affairs Research (CPAR) to determine other census data that may be used in the formula such as poverty, race, and population growth. Hoffman noted that the revised formula will need to be approved by the Crime Commission. Members discussed specific grant-related issues.

e. Young Adult Subcommittee

Elaine Menzel

Bobbi Taylor noted that the Subcommittee hasn't recently met due to COVID-19 issues. The Subcommittee is looking for Young Adult members as well as professional members. Menzel noted that this subcommittee is doing better than in the past. Amy Hoffman noted that one young adult withdrew from the Coalition. Taylor added that barriers exist contacting youth with lived experience at times due to privacy and other times due to the filtering down of information through workers in the system. Julie Smith noted the same barriers at Probation in trying to get youth input. Co-Chair shared information regarding the Policy Fellowship, an organization that has shared the juvenile

experience with juvenile justice organizations. The Policy Fellowship involves youth in the discussion and legislative process. Juliano added that many of the youth involved are still involved into their young adult lives. Scheli Schindler noted the use of the Mediation Center in Lancaster County that allows youth to productively share their experience. Members discussed some of the youth groups that are active to provide feedback to the juvenile justice system about their lived experience. Co-chair VanDyke-Ries noted the importance of power sharing once the youth are at the table. A'jamal Byndon added that it is important not to bring youth to the table and then interpret their painful story back to them without incorporating it back into the policy changes being made.

10. Juvenile Justice Institute research update

Dr. Anne Hobbs and Dr. Lindsey Wylie from the UNO Juvenile Justice Institute shared a [PowerPoint](#) presentation regarding community-based aid and grant application process. They noted that the timing of the presentation occurs conveniently with the discussions happening regarding RED, gap analysis, and planning involved in the state returning as a Title II organization.

11. YRTC Update

Mark LaBouchardiere and Dr. Janine Fromm from DHHS appeared via videoconferencing link and shared a [PowerPoint](#) presentation regarding the Youth Treatment System. The presentation shared historical, current and future planning for the YRTCs in Nebraska, as well as census, capacity, and admissions data. LaBouchardiere and Fromm answered questions regarding needs for specific treatment needs. Dr. Fromm shared information regarding Applied Behavioral Analytics (ABA) being implemented as a positive behavior modification system. She added that this system is data-driven to determine the antecedents to negative behavior and consequences or reward to the youth for the negative behavior. Scheli Schindler commended DHHS for the use of ABA, as she has seen many good outcomes from this system. Co-Chair Juliano encouraged members to email any questions to LaBouchardiere and Fromm.

12. Probation Update

Probation representative Julie Smith shared that Probation continues to work through the COVID-19 pandemic on how to best stay connected with youth and families to best serve them. Smith brought copies of handouts and access to the handouts electronically at request.

13. Inspector General Annual Report

Jennifer Carter introduced herself and provided background regarding her experience and new position as Inspector General for Child Welfare. She shared information regarding her role at the Office of Inspector General (OIG), noting the main avenues for reporting. Carter gave a brief overview of the [19-20 Annual Report](#). She noted the OIG is currently investigating the YRTC Geneva incident from August 2019 and other issues stemming from that incident. She shared that a specific report will be forthcoming. Carter offered thoughts regarding planning discussions about the YRTC. Carter noted there are currently discussions in place regarding investigations of Probation, of which there are disagreements about interpretation of the law giving authority to the IG to conduct the investigations.

Carter shared information regarding the staff at the OIG. Carter noted two assistants: Sharon S. looks at Room Confinement, and one open assistant position. Additionally there is one Executive Assistant who pulls intakes. Carter noted that at times she feels like there are times she feels there is a need for additional help, although currently she shared that she feels like she is fully staffed.

Carter answered questions regarding the scope of her investigations, specifically as it relates to racial and ethnic diversity. She noted that on one had the OIG is a hindsight organization, investigating what has already taken place, while at the same time investigating situations that are currently unfolding. She added that the OIG doesn't receive much data as it relates to race and ethnicity. Carter noted that she would be interested in looking at that data while investigation how that information determines the system's response to incidents.

14. Public Comment

Co-Chair Juliano opened the floor for public comment. Elaine Menzel thanked members of the Coalition for participating and encouraged all members in attendance to sign up for some of the upcoming trainings.

15. New Business

Co-Chair thanked all in attendance and thanked Adam Anderson and Laura Opfer for planning and coordinating the meeting.

16. Upcoming Meeting Planning

- a. January 28, 2021
- b. April 29, 2021
- c. July 29, 2021
- d. October 28, 2021

17. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Anderson