

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

July 25, 2024  
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Virtual or  
1225 L St, Ste 401  
Lincoln, NE 68508

**1. Call to Order**

NCJJ Chair Elaine Menzel called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM, welcomed everyone and asked Adam Anderson to call roll.

**2. Roll Call**

**Juvenile Services Committee**

***Committee Members Present (13)***

Nicole Brundo  
Proxy for Jennifer Carter,  
    Meghan Svik  
Amy Hoffman  
LaDonna Jones-Dunlap

Judge Denise Kracl  
Mark LaBouchardiere (10:40  
    AM)  
Dennis Marks (10:00 AM)  
Michelle Nunemaker

Sara Quiroz  
Patrick Sailors  
Tammy Sassaman  
Vicky Smith  
Deb VanDyke-Ries

***Committee Members Absent (3)***

Nick Juliano

Kaleb Vicharra

Dr. Richard Weiner

***Committee Resource Members Present (2)***

Bethany Nelson  
Julie Smith

***Committee Resource Members Absent (1)***

Senator Carol Blood

**A quorum was established for the Juvenile Services Committee**

**Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

***Coalition Members Present (12)***

Proxy for Neleigh Boyer, Leslie  
    Remus  
Patrick Connell  
Breanna Flaherty  
Monika Gross

Brian Halstead (9:55 AM)  
Amy Hoffman  
Elaine Menzel  
Daniel Schleusener  
Jill Schubauer

Steve Solorio  
Amanda Speichert  
Tami Steensma

***Coalition Members Absent (5)***

Stanford Bradley  
Karen Bredthauer

Janteice Holston  
Nandi Kumondan

Denise Manthei

***Coalition Ex-Officio Members Present (1)***

Judge Joel B. Jay

***Coalition Ex-Officio Members Absent (2)***

Judge Chad Brown  
Kari Rumbaugh

**Guests in Attendance (4):**

Lincoln Arneal  
Adam Anderson  
A’Jamal Byndon  
Veronique Claudio

Sage Leis  
Navruz Shaw  
Tami Soper  
Erin Wasserburger

*a. Notice of Publication*

Administrative Programs Officer 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 at the sign-in table and on the Nebraska Children’s Commission website.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**A motion was made by Judge Denise Kracl from the JSC and Brian Halstead from the NCJJ to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Sara Quiroz from the JSC and Monika Gross from the NCJJ.** There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**Juvenile Services Committee**

**FOR (11):**

Nicole Brundo	LaDonna Jones-Dunlap	Patrick Sailors
Proxy for Jennifer Carter, Meghan Svik	Judge Denise Kracl	Tammy Sassaman
Amy Hoffman	Michelle Nunemaker	Vicky Smith
	Sara Quiroz	Deb VanDyke-Ries

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (5):**

Nick Juliano	Dennis Marks	Dr. Richard Wiener
Mark LaBouchardiere	Kaleb Vicharra	

**MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee**

**Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

**FOR (11):**

Proxy for Neleigh Boyer, Leslie Remus	Brian Halstead	Jill Schubauer
Breanna Flaherty	Amy Hoffman	Steve Solorio
Monika Gross	Elaine Menzel	Amanda Speichert
	Daniel Schleusener	Tami Steensma

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (7):**

Colleen Barnes	Karen Bredthauer	Janteice Holston
Stanford Bradley	Patrick Connell	Nandi Kumondan

Denise Manthei

**MOTION CARRIED for the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

*\*Minutes do not follow the approved agenda*

**4. Approval of JSC January 25, 2024 Minutes**

A motion was made by Michelle Nunemaker from the JSC and seconded by Judge Denise Kracl to approve the January 25, 2024 JSC meeting minutes. There was no discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**Juvenile Services Committee**

**FOR (11):**

Nicole Brundo	LaDonna Jones-Dunlap	Patrick Sailors
Proxy for Jennifer Carter, Meghan Svik	Judge Denise Kracl	Tammy Sassaman
Amy Hoffman	Michelle Nunemaker	Vicky Smith
	Sara Quiroz	Deb VanDyke-Ries

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (5):**

Nick Juliano	Dennis Marks	Dr. Richard Wiener
Mark LaBouchardiere	Kaleb Vicharra	

**MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee**

**5. Approval of NCJJ October 26, 2023 Minutes**

A motion was made by Daniel Schleusener from the NCJJ to approve the October 26, 2023 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Breanna Flaherty from the NCJJ. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

**FOR (11):**

Proxy for Neleigh Boyer, Leslie Remus	Brian Halstead	Jill Schubauer
Breanna Flaherty	Amy Hoffman	Steve Solorio
Monika Gross	Elaine Menzel	Amanda Speichert
	Daniel Schleusener	Tami Steensma

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (7):**

Colleen Barnes	Patrick Connell	Denise Manthei
Stanford Bradley	Janteice Holston	
Karen Bredthauer	Nandi Kumondan	

**MOTION CARRIED for the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

**6. Approval of JSC/NCJJ Annual Report**

A motion was made by Tammy Sassaman from the JSC and Brian Halstead from the NCJJ to approve the 2024 JSC/NCJJ Joint Annual Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Pat Sailors from the JSC and Monika Gross from the NCJJ. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

**Juvenile Services Committee**

**FOR (10):**

Nicole Brundo	LaDonna Jones-Dunlap	Tammy Sassaman
Proxy for Jennifer Carter, Meghan Svik	Michelle Nunemaker	Vicky Smith
Amy Hoffman	Sara Quiroz	Deb VanDyke-Ries
	Patrick Sailors	

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (1):**

Judge Denis Kracl

**ABSENT (5):**

Nick Juliano	Dennis Marks	Dr. Richard Wiener
Mark LaBouchardiere	Kaleb Vicharra	

**MOTION CARRIED for the Juvenile Services Committee**

**Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

**FOR (11):**

Proxy for Neleigh Boyer, Leslie Remus	Brian Halstead	Jill Schubauer
Breanna Flaherty	Amy Hoffman	Steve Solorio
Monika Gross	Elaine Menzel	Amanda Speichert
	Daniel Schleusener	Tami Steensma

**AGAINST (0):**

**ABSTAINED (0):**

**ABSENT (7):**

Colleen Barnes	Patrick Connell	Denise Manthei
Stanford Bradley	Janteice Holston	
Karen Bredthauer	Nandi Kumondan	

**MOTION CARRIED for the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

**7. Approval of Statewide Plan**

Veronique Claudio introduced herself and spoke about the statewide plan handout. She shared that she will be supporting the work for Nebraska to come under Title II. She noted that they are awaiting for OJJDP to provide guidance. She discussed that the 2024 plan is in anticipation to the feedback from OJJDP. Co-chair VanDyke-Reis shared support for the plan to compensate lived-experience participants.

A motion was made by Brian Halstead from the NCJJ to approve the NCJJ Statewide Plan with corrections as discussed. The motion was seconded by Daniel Schleusener from the NCJJ. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

## Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice

### **FOR (11):**

Proxy for Neleigh Boyer,  
Leslie Remus  
Breanna Flaherty  
Monika Gross

Brian Halstead  
Amy Hoffman  
Elaine Menzel  
Daniel Schleusener

Jill Schubauer  
Steve Solorio  
Amanda Speichert  
Tami Steensma

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

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

### **ABSENT (7):**

Colleen Barnes  
Stanford Bradley  
Karen Bredthauer

Patrick Connell  
Janteice Holston  
Nandi Kumondan

Denise Manthei

## **MOTION CARRIED for the Nebraska Coalition for Juvenile Justice**

### **8. JSC & NCJJ Membership**

Adam Anderson and NCJJ Chair Elaine Menzel shared updates regarding appointments to the JSC and NJCC. Anderson noted that there will be communication with members whose terms expire prior to the next meeting. Chair Menzel noted that discussions are being had with the Governor's Office to fill vacancies on the NCJJ.

### **9. Nebraska Children's Commission Strategic Priorities**

Policy Analyst, Sage Leis shared information regarding the Strategic Priorities for the Children's Commission and Juvenile Services Committee. Leis shared that in the upcoming months the Children's Commission will work on developing a Strategic Plan. Leis noted potential ideas for priorities include entry into juvenile justice, school policing, juvenile justice treatment options. Leis paused to introduce herself to members of the Committee and NCJJ.

Tammy Sassaman questioned the availability of data for drug use by parents or their children. Monika Gross shared that there is specific data regarding this in the Kid's Count Report as well as data from the FCRO. Jill Schubauer added that there is a need for community substance abuse treatment. Leis discussed centralized location for services in other states. Members noted that there isn't really a need for a centralized location for services, but rather there is a lack of services in greater Nebraska. Julie Smith invited members from Western and Central Nebraska to join the Access to Services Workgroup. Michelle Nunemaker speculated that it is potentially a discussion about incentivizing providers.

Co-Chair VanDyke-Ries encouraged the Children's Commission to consider educational outcomes for system involved youth. LaDonna Jones-Dunlap agreed and hoped that the Commission and JSC would work on this, that has been recently put on the backburner. Amanda Speichert advocated for testing for educational needs, as she encounters many youth that are labeled as disruptive when they have actual educational needs. Dennis Marks discussed the occurrences of youth with educational needs being cited by SROs for disturbing the peace, and this creates the potential for youth to get deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system.

### **10. Legislative Update**

Sage Leis noted that the Governor called the Legislature back to discuss tax plan. She noted that the Governor's tax plan has the potential to touch on education funding. Leis shared a selection of LRs that she has been following, and she noted that she will continue to follow the special session.

LR321 examines the scope of surveillance devices in schools.

LR871 focuses on payment rates for child welfare services.

LR381 is aimed at Judicial Branch fees. Leis provided details for this bill.

LR341 examines investing funds to community-based services for behavioral health.

LR386 looks at interpreters for the state and the rate of payment, which hasn't been increased since 2004.

### **11. YRTC Update**

Mark LaBouchardiere provided an update regarding census. He noted 19 youth in Hastings; 10 youth in Lincoln, which is capacity. He shared that the low at Kearney was 52, but by tomorrow it will be at 72. He noted that there is a need to be within staffing ratios

as well. He continued, noting that the YRTCs have hired a psychologist who will be housed at Hastings but work for the YRTC system. He also noted that Dr. Wittry is a psychiatrist with DHHS who provides assistance when needed.

Mark LaBouchardiere introduced Shaylee Fortner, who provided an update regarding recent audits. She stated that Lincoln received a 100% on their PREA audit. Fortner noted that Hastings and Kearney will be audited soon and they are preparing for those audits.

LaBouchardiere answered questions regarding length of stay as well as commitments that fall outside the norm. He answered that currently youth are being directly committed to the YRTCs rather than youth that have been in many placements. He shared that males being committed have extensive history with gangs, and females with higher mental health needs. LaBouchardiere shared that length of stay remains consistent, but commended the Probation staff for transition services. LaBouchardiere also discussed the direct commitments. Sara Quiroz shared that there is around 8% are dually-adjudicated.

## **12. Probation Update**

Sara Quiroz noted that the JJSEN report has been posted on their website. One exploration in the report is connecting youth to services to stabilize youth prior to disposition rather than losing time waiting. Quiroz noted one director is working in Western Nebraska to evaluate services in that area. She noted that they have contracted with UNK to conduct an environmental survey, with a report expected in the fall. Quiroz discussed a recent decline in involvement after an increase coming out of COVID, and a higher risk cohort of youth. Despite this increase of risk, she noted that there hasn't been an increase in out-of-home placements. Lastly, Quiroz also shared that there have been many changes in the year since Jeanne Brandner left Probation, with only one position to be filled.

Quiroz answered questions regarding youth population as well as the services being provided to the youth.

## **13. JSC Workgroup Updates**

### **a. Access to Services**

Smith shared information regarding the work of the workgroup such as mapping, and connecting to MCOs. Smith noted that recent work has revolved around what it would look like to treat and serve youth in the home without funding barriers.

### **b. Racial & Ethnic Disparities**

Tami Soper discussed the role of the R/ED workgroup in the state. She noted that at a recent workgroup meeting, the group decided to pull together a strategic planning meeting with other groups across the state to discuss. She noted that the Veronique Claudio will be leading the discussion among the other groups.

### **c. Continuum of Care**

Tammy Sassaman noted that the workgroup has is in the formation state, but Jones-Dunlap and Sassaman have been visiting facilities to gather data. Preliminarily, they are exploring options to engage families and educate them about what has worked for youth in treatment that they may continue at home.

## **14. NCJJ Subcommittee Updates**

### **a. Executive Subcommittee**

Chair Menzel noted that the Subcommittee worked on planning this meeting.

### **b. Community Planning Advisory Subcommittee**

Erin Wasserburger noted the group met Dec. 4 to discuss plan for upcoming year and reviewed rules and regs as well as preparing a plan and checklist. On March 4<sup>th</sup> it was posted to the website. She continued that the was outreach to community providers.

**c. Juvenile Diversion Subcommittee**

Erin Wasserburger noted that they continue to get partners trained in the NSAT (Nebraska Screening and Assessment Tool) as well as CQI training for tool scoring.

**d. Grant Review Subcommittee**

Erin Wasserburger noted that the CBA closed in December Enhancements Grants closed Jan 5. 33 application that totaled 5.83 M in requests. 82 counties receiving funds, however no tribal nations applied during this round.

Had to make cuts in but awarded 14. Deobligations for previous year are due.....that the grant review committee will have to review to offer the funds out.

Chair Menzel offered that the groups are welcome to new members and to reach out to herself or Amy Hoffman to join.

**e. Young Adult Subcommittee**

Veronique Claudio noted that Nandi Kumondan has joined that Subcommittee, but the group continues to recruit for membership. She noted that there is discussion regarding stipends with the Children's Commission and Nebraska Children and Families Foundation.

**15. Title II Update**

Veronique Claudio noted approximately \$600K funding for 2023 and provided a breakdown in the funding obligations from the budget. She noted there is time to use the funds. Claudio noted that year-one milestones have been met and provided details.

Claudio shared that members can reach out to apply to go to the November 24, 2024 JDP Conference.

Claudio shared that Dr. Navrush Shaw completed a data collection crime analysis which can be used for plans. She noted that the R/ED plan is a year-two milestone that has begun and there is an upcoming meeting in September to discuss collaboration.

Lastly, Claudio shared that stipends for young adults is in discussion with the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation.

**16. Public Comment**

Cheryl Weston asked about data from the Probation update.

**17. New Business**

There was none.

**18. Upcoming Meeting Planning**

- a.** October 24, 2024, 9:00 AM, In-Person

**19. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Adam Anderson