



JJPOC Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2016

2:00PM

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Attendance:

Rep. Toni Walker

Sec. Ben Barnes

Abby Anderson

Erica Bromley

Martha Stone, JD

Hon. Judge Patrick Carroll

Hon. Judge Bernadette Conway

Hon. Judge Lisa Wexler

Deb Fuller

Joseph D'Alesio

Christine Rapillo

Linda Dixon, Ph.D.

Fernando Muñiz

Warden John Alves

John Frassinelli

Francis Carino, JD

Derrick Gordon, Ph.D.

Faith Van Wenkel

Rep. Robyn Porter

Deborah Stevenson, JD

Astrid Ferron-Poole

TYJI Staff:

Bill Carbone

Kitty Tyrol

Kendell Coker, Ph.D.

Danielle Cooper, Ph.D.

Erika Nowakowski

Laura Downs

Representative Toni Walker called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the May 19, 2016 meeting. Francis Carino asked that the exchange between Honorable Judge Bernadette Conway and himself be included. A draft will be sent to all committee members for approval. Attorney Deborah Stevenson requested that everyone's comments be accounted for in the minutes. Rep. Walker agreed but would prefer a more abbreviated version.

Update on Closure of CJTS

Deputy Commissioner Fernando Muñiz of the Department of Children & Families (DCF) provided updates on the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS) closure. DCF plans to complete the closure of CJTS by July 2018. To date, there have been 20 public meetings. The process is delayed because they are gathering input from young people in CJTS, which will begin in the next month. Boys that have been readmitted to CJTS will be asked what would have been helpful in the community and what they think can be done to prevent their recidivism. The plan will include recommendations for community service changes and expansion, policy and practice changes, risk assessments, structured decision-making methods for determining who needs a secure facility for a short period of time, and recommendations on the number of state-run secure beds needed and what facilities could be repurposed. Deputy Commissioner Muñiz clarified that there is no plan to close CJTS quickly as its immediacy would be detrimental to the juveniles at this point. There are currently 43 youth at CJTS. 12 out of 43 boys have returned/recidivated in the recent months. Before Governor Dannel Malloy called for the closure of CJTS, an architect came to the facility and conducted focus groups with the idea of redesigning the physical plan. While these focus groups were more so about the facility, the upcoming focus groups will pertain to the program and services.



Abby Anderson, Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance, thanked Deputy Commissioner Muñiz for including the youth in their plan. She hopes to have focus groups for the girls at Journey House. Focus groups have met in Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven and Ms. Anderson will send the feedback to Deputy Commissioner Muñiz.

Secretary Ben Barnes discussed the Office of Policy and Management's (OPM) roles on policy and planning with real estate resources. OPM has assisted DCF in identifying logistical and pragmatic issues surrounding the closure of CJTS. Sec. Barnes hopes the number of children who need to be housed in a secure facility is fewer than 40. OPM is waiting for DCF's evaluation in regards to how many juveniles they need to plan to house and how many can be diverted to less secure facilities. Sec. Barnes discussed alternative facilities. There does not appear to be strong interest in a new, secure private facility. DCF is also searching for an appropriate facility, which can be acquired by leasing. DCF has approached The Judicial Branch who has no interest in pursuing use of the juvenile detention facilities. OPM is also looking into shorter duration and permanent solutions to a new location. Sec. Barnes explains that temporary measures and shorter term solutions need to be considered while we wait. DCF and OPM welcome suggestions and ideas on facilities. Please approach Sec. Barnes or Deputy Commissioner Muñiz if interested.

Attorney Francis Carino inquired about identifying specific problems with CJTS and then trying to correct those problems. Ms. Anderson expressed concern about building a new facility and believed incarceration of young people does not work. Sec. Barnes confirmed that there is not a plan to build another prison and extra capacity does need to be accommodated for in the plans.

William Carbone, University of New Haven, Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI), believed that Connecticut is fortunate to have a low number of youths in need of secure housing. He explained that we have learned community-based programs work better than residential programs and residential programs usually work better than institutions. Mr. Carbone suggested borrowing from Judicial's experience in privately run secure placement and searching for private non-profits who can provide this. The facilities would ideally be more similar to group homes but would still be secure.

Honorable Judge Lisa Wexler, Westport/Weston Probate Court, suggested using something similar to a Step Approach and entitled to a mental health evaluation at hospitals with adolescent wings.

Rep. Walker is concerned because progress on community outreach has not been made quickly enough. Governor Malloy does not believe a large facility is the place children should be served and Rep. Walker does not want to divert far from this idea. She also suggested a mental health evaluation be administered as soon as juveniles enter the system.

Deputy Commissioner Muñiz will update the committee at next month's meeting regarding what caused the 12 youth to be readmitted to CJTS. He predicts the population will be between 25-40 youths in need of secure confinement. Rep. Walker wants this number to be closer to 15-20 boys.



Mr. Carbone suggested Deputy Commissioner Muñiz look into the differences in recidivism rates between boys in CJTS and other residential treatment programs. Mr. Carbone also expressed a belief that privatization could be less expensive and a better option than state-run facilities. Deputy Commissioner Muñiz stated that the Children's League of Connecticut recently publically took the position that secure facilities should be state-run. Sec. Barnes discussed possible challenges of using state facilities with state employees versus using privately run facilities with their own qualified employees.

Dr. Derrick Gordon, Yale University, discussed the issue of clearly identifying what the needs of the youth are so they do not end up deeper into the system.

Deborah Stevenson, J.D. clarified a statement in regards to an earlier comment, stating that she is not opposed to identifying the mental health needs of children. Her concern did involve getting consent and where that information goes because it is absolutely critical to identify the needs and to address them properly.

Update on JJPOC Progress

Mr. Carbone updated the committee about the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The MOA has been fully executed (through December 31, 2016) between the UNH, JB-CSSD, DCF, and DOC. The three studies can now officially move forward. The date on the PowerPoint should be amended as it is being requested now.

Implementation Plan for PA 16-147 An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the JJPOC

Laura Downs, Consultant, and Erika Nowakowski, Director of Youth Justice Initiatives, Tow Youth Justice Institute discussed the Implementation Plan. The Committee has been provided with a packet containing timelines for the workgroups and a meeting schedule. The workgroups have reconvened and will be meeting monthly.

The education and mental health recommendations have been integrated into existing workgroups. The JJPOC studies and research projects have also been embedded into the workgroups so that the studies themselves are grounded and that the workgroups can inform the studies. The workgroups will do the oversight and monitoring of the implementation of the legislative requirements. Some of the larger workgroups may set up ad-hoc sub-groups as needed. The workgroups will also provide monthly updates to the JJPOC and continue to receive facilitation and staff support from the TYJI. By January 2017, there will be two major community-based plans, three studies completed, and all the major changes in detention.

Erica Bromley, Chair of the Diversion workgroup, provided further information on the primary tasks for the next six months including a plan for community-based diversion system and mental health plans with cost options. The plan will begin with an inventory to see what is available and what the needs are in terms of gaps and access. The state team that went to Georgetown for the Juvenile Justice Diversion Program has a capstone project they are working on simultaneously, which focuses on the Juvenile Review Board. In regards to the police and field training, further discussion was needed for implementation and the curriculum. The Diversion workgroup will coordinate with the Incarceration



workgroup because their plan for children diverted or released from detention includes comprehensive mental health services.

Mr. Carino discussed recommendations calling for expansion of programs and services in regards to existing services being discontinued because of financial concerns. Rep. Walker stated that at some point the committee will need to discuss downsizing. At this point our concern should be on evaluation and redirecting instead of expansion. Martha Stone, J.D., Executive Director for the Center for Children's Advocacy, expressed concerns regarding timing and the budget. In response, Sec. Barnes discussed the Governor's budget.

Honorable Judge Bernadette Conway, Co-Chair of the Incarceration workgroup, requested the workgroup be given until January 2017 regarding the recommendations of the youth under 18 in Manson Youth Institute. The Judicial Branch and DCF will develop a plan for the provision of community-based services for children diverted or released from detention. The budget will pose significantly greater challenges to all of us as we attempt to address the requirements of PA 16-147. The Judicial Branch will continue to collaborate with the government and community stakeholders in figuring out how to best serve this population of children. The Judicial Branch has begun reviewing existing policies and procedures to assure that they are in compliance with the new public act. The changes made to the statutory grounds under which a child or youth can be detained will go a long way to reducing incarceration at the pre-adjudication stage. The workgroup will also be developing a detention risk assessment tool. By late spring of 2017 the workgroup is confident they will have a good sense of the impact of what the statutory provisions will have because the risk assessment tool will coincide with the enactment of the restrictive grounds for detention. Judicial staff and judges will go through the necessary training to learn these new changes before implementation is enacted. Dr. Linda Dixon, DCF, addressed the quality assurance regarding community-based services and will share their information.

Christine Rapillo, co-chair of the Recidivism workgroup, discussed working towards the adoption of the recidivism framework. The workgroup is waiting for the recidivism study, which will help guide some of the work of the group going forward. The workgroup will work on beginning reentry planning and have this done at admission into out-of-home placement. Dr. Gordon discussed how children access the available services relating to the assessments.

Rep. Walker had to leave early and Rep. Robyn Porter took over as moderator.

Brian Hill, Co-Chair of the Cross-Agency Data Sharing workgroup, discussed the primary tasks over the next six months. They will be reaching out to state agencies to identify individuals with a particular expertise in data development, information technology, and research to become members of the workgroup. One sub-committee would focus on IT and data, including challenges, barriers, and strategies. The other sub-committee would focus on legal aspects, particularly as it relates to cross-agency data sharing. The workgroup will serve as the hub for the Raise the Age (RtA) study being done by Harvard. Part of the work would also focus on a data integration plan with cost options. The results-based accountability (RBA) plan will be housed within the data sharing workgroup.



Other Business

William Carbone updated the committee about the juvenile probation system. They have fully implemented the framework for recidivism reductions, specifically the one recommended by Dr. Edward Latessa. They began implementation around 2007/2008 and in that time, they have been able to document how their use of assessment tools, strength-based approaches, motivational interviewing, client engagement, and their contracted network of evidence-based services has yielded a 15% reduction in recidivism.

Tasha Hunt, Deputy Director of Juvenile Probation, Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (CSSD) informed the committee about their standing with the American Correction Association (ACA), which provides a professional organization for agencies that share a common goal in improving the justice system. In juvenile probation, ACA would look at intake, supervision, administration, management, programming, stakeholder involvement, and various others fields. Accreditation is typically granted for three years and maintaining continuous accreditation and integrating these standards daily is something they have to always strive for. In June 2010, they sought accreditation with the ACA. At that time there were 227 standards which needed to be met. Connecticut was awarded accreditation in 2010 with a score of 100%. Connecticut is one of very few state-run agencies of juvenile probation departments, out of hundreds in the country, which have gained this national distinction. They went through a reaccreditation process in 2013 and 2016, both at 100% of the standards. CSSD also received the Golden Eagle award in 2015.

Abby Anderson would like further discussion surrounding the scope of the changes due to the lower population at CJTS and detention facilities. Deb Fuller has prepared a two-page sheet discussing CSSD juvenile services concerning the reductions and the eliminations.

Presenters were thanked and the meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: July 21, 2016