



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

WA State Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (PCJJ)

**Full Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 18, 2024
9 AM – 12 PM**

Welcome and Introductions: The Council Chair, Gordon McHenry Jr, offered land acknowledgement and welcomed attendees. Provided opening remarks and introductions.

Attendees: Council Chair Gordon McHenry, Council Vice-Chair Sean Goode, Ada Daniels, Judge Jennifer Forbes, Lorraine Stone, Felice Upton, Megan Boyd, Senator Noel Frame, Diana Cockrell, Dr. Eric Trupin, Nicole McGrath, Jimmy Hung, Michael Johnson, Tashawn Deville, Drew Hill, Chief Jim Kelly, Dre Thornock

OJJ Staff: Les Liggins, Jenny Young, Heidi Sadri, and Whitney Queral

Special Guest: Alice Coil

Meeting Minutes Approval Motion to approve moved by Michael Johnson. Motion seconded by Felice Upton. Council voted unanimously to approve the January 2024 Meeting Minutes.

Public Comment

Community members and advocates were asked to indicate if they would like to provide public comment via the meeting chat. Comments were heard in the order they appeared in the chat. Each participant was allotted two minutes of speaking time.

Karen Pillar, Team Child- Brought up concerns that there is not currently a way to address infractions without the involvement of law enforcement and prosecution. Request to stop prosecuting youth for while in JR custody. Also brought up that young people are unable to seek substance abuse treatment without the risk of consequence for substance use. Shared how UAs associated with SUD treatment lead to risk of increased barriers such as inability to move to community facilities.

Katie Hurley, King County Department of Public Defense- Katie Relayed experiences shared with her by young people currently incarcerated at Green Hill School. These experiences included that outside of school hours youth are unable to be outside of their rooms. Youth report spending as many as 22 hours in their cells during the weekend. Katie spoke to the lasting trauma of solitary confinement on young people.

Roxana Gomez, ACLU of Washington – Raised concern regarding DCYF’s lack of a public health approach to overdose from substances and the continued prosecution of young people

while in DYCF custody. Brought up a need for improvements on internal accountability that take into account youth development and rehabilitative needs. Called for the need to immediately cease cooperation with Lewis County law enforcement.

Rose, community member- Uplifting treatment of young people tantamount to abuse including sexual abuse and substances within JR facilities. Regarding substance use, spoke to the criminalization of young people for the actions of others. Spoke to the need for restorative treatment options to address the issues present without imposing more trauma. Demand to remove current superintendent of GHS to stop the use of DOC practices compromising the safety of young people.

Eliza Cozad, Staff Attorney- Shared that her caseload consists largely of Green Hill School youth, and that she regularly hears about their experiences of abuse. Shared that youth are retaliated against when they bring up their concerns. Also shared that youth face barriers accessing their families and support networks. Highlighted how the practice of bringing charges against youth while incarcerated create barriers to rehabilitation including access to electronic home monitoring and going to group homes. Made the ask that DCYF ask prosecutors to dismiss charges and enact policies to prevent charges while incarcerated for future youth.

Melissa Hamblin, Team Child Attorney- Raised concern about treatment of youth in JR facilities and increased isolation, and transfer of youth experiences behavioral issues to the adult system. Access to MH treatment. Youth are unable to use the restroom due to staffing issues. Shared story of youth who is being charged with assault because they rushed out of their room to use the restroom and bumped into a staff. Stated that lack of staff is not an excuse for human rights abuses.

Komal Kaur, community member- Shared deep concern about conditions youth are experiencing at Green Hill School and the lack of responsibility held by the state of Washington. Youth need to have their basic needs met in order to receive rehabilitation. Referral to the community letter list of demands for clearly outlined action steps.

Liz Trautman, Stand for Children WA- Voiced concerns about conditions at Green Hill School. The juvenile system is meant to be rehabilitation and not punitive. Policing youth behaviors rather than changing their environment. Called for the need to respond to the community demand letter. Called on the members of the council to lean into their mission. Stated that youth should not further be criminalized when in the care of DCYF.

Liz Mustin, Washington State Office of Public Defense- Through Lewis County court observations learned of the high level of GHS youth engaged with the court system in Lewis County. Shared the following data:

- Between 2014 and 2024, 124 prison riot cases were tried in Lewis County. This accounts for over 50 percent of the cases in the entire state of Washington

Other counties that house major carceral facilities produced zero prison riot cases.

Special Announcement Recognizing Alice Coil

- Alice served as Director of the Office of Juvenile Justice from Summer 2019 to December 2023
- Alice was presented with a bound book with messages from the WA-PCJJ and other friends and colleagues
- Group shared appreciations to Alice for her years dedicated to leading OJJ

Legislative Updates Senator Noel Frame & Mari Leavitt

- 2024 legislative session focused heavily on adult justice system
- Successes:
 - o Passing of HB2217 introduced by Rep. Julio Cortez. This bill allows juveniles with a case pending in juvenile court at the time they turn 18 to continue to be under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, with some exceptions, up to age 21.
 - o Passing of SB5974 introduced by Sen. Noel Frame. Follow up bill to end juvenile legal financial obligations. By 2027 all juvenile debt will be rendered uncollectable.
- Bills to watch next session:
 - o SB5981- allows youth to go before the Indeterminate Sentencing Review Board before their 25th birthday. Bill did not pass house committee. Rep. Goodman and Sen. Frame to meet with youth people at GHS on April 29th in preparation for next session. Pathway to be considered for agency request legislation next session.
- Did not pass:
 - o HB 2065 Juvenile Points Bill – would cease the use of juvenile points in determination of adult sentencing.
 - o Shared data that 40% of all Native American adults incarcerated in WA have juvenile points and are disproportionately impacted by using juvenile points in adult sentencing.
 - o SB6063 Persistent Offenders Bill- 3 strikes law currently includes juvenile strikes. This bill would exclude offenses committed under the age of 18.
 - o SB 6037 (HB2001 Rep. Tara Simmons) Judicial Discretion Act. Broader legislation extending judicial discretion to judges for resentencing consideration. Senate Law and Justice Committee to have work session on May 30th.

Policy Studies Updates Heidi Sadri

Upcoming Meetings:

- Community Compensation Policy Recommendations Review- Thursday, May 23 1:00-2:00 PM via Microsoft Teams
- Juvenile Records Sealing Policy Recommendations Review Thursday, June 6 12:00-1:00 PM via Microsoft Teams

Committee Reports

Grants and TA – Ada Daniels

- Received Technical Assistance application from BELONG Partners to implement TRANSFORM curriculum in Seattle. Committee voted to approve funding.
- WSCCR contract amendment made to increase funds to continuation of data dashboard project
- Newest dashboard to be released in the next month
- Grants and TA Committee will partner with OJJ staff to provide training regarding the roll of Council Members in federal funding grant request review process

Racial and Ethnic Disparities – Jimmy Hung

- Co-chairs have been taking time to regroup and discuss focus areas for future efforts.
- Convened planning meeting with co-chairs and committee members
- Identified preliminary focus areas:
 - o Data and storytelling
 - o Early intervention and upstream educational work
 - o Community building and engagement

*See Report

Behavioral Health & Reentry – Dr. Eric Trupin and Dre Thornock

- Mental health services as a diversion service
- Highlighted the importance of understanding the deep rooted historical and intergenerational trauma experienced by Native youth and young people who may be impacted by the justice system.
- Emphasis on building relationships with Native communities and supporting establishment of tribal justice systems

*See Report

Title II 3-Year Plan Priority Areas Jenny Young

- Required by the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- Drafted by each State Advisory Group
- Approved by the Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
- Intended to be responsive to qualitative and quantitative data analysis specific to each state
- Guides activities and spending for the subsequent 3-year period
- Identifies measures for success

Proposed Priority Areas

Priority Area 1: Early Intervention

- Support upstream systems in responding more effectively and compassionately to the needs of children and young people.

Priority Area 2: Reduction in System Involvement

- Continue to support the reduction of the number of youth who enter the juvenile justice system through providing funding and capacity building to community-based

organizations serving youth via positive youth development programming in lieu of court involvement and/or detention admission.

Priority Area 3: Supportive Re-Entry

- Collaborate with systems responsible for serving youth in the deep end of the system with a focus on supportive re-entry and Transition Aged Youth Programming.

Discussion:

- How does the council support upstream work and maintain a targeted focus on the populations most impacted by the criminal legal systems?
- Issue brought up that funds for gun violence prevention in some cases have been diverted to services for affluent youth populations
- OYH early intervention and after school programs- how might the council collaborate with other funders?
- How to make sure dollars are being used effectively and having the most impact?
- How are young people providing meaningful feedback regarding program efficacy?
- How to support culturally relevant programming for native youth? Tulalip wellness court given as an example- youth who participate in wellness court have lower rates of future involvement with the juvenile courts
- Early intervention and preventing contact with the justice system- where does diversion sit?

*See PPT

Juvenile Rehabilitation Updates and Presentation Assistant Secretary Felice Upton

- Provided updates and overview of JR programming
- Population increased at GHS from 162 to 231 between FY 2023 to current
- Average age increasing as young people stay to age 25
- Use of IDEA assessment to identify and match individual needs
- Youth with SUD treatment needs may receive Medicaid-covered services within 90 days of release from JR custody
- At present more than 66% of staff have received training to administer Narcan
 - o 200 youth have received training
- Spoke on the need to be responsive to transition aged youth

*See PPT

Discussion:

- How can legislators work with JR to support JR to 25?

Youth Voice Green Hill School Capitol Classroom
Chris, Edgar, Brian, TJ, and Ron

Youth provided feedback on their experiences at Green Hill School

- Shared concerns about the amount of hours youth spend in their rooms due to staffing issues
- Youth shared that they have witness others get kicked out of the SMART program due to dirty UAs

- Highlighted issues that occur when you spend too much time in their rooms when unable to engage in programming such as using substances and getting into altercations with other young people
- Lack of staffing- you shared that when staff do not come to work, they do not come out of their cells
- “Youth are coming into the system with sentences longer than the years they have been alive”
 - Challenges should be expected
 - Expectations around behavior need to account for brain development and developmentally appropriate behavior
 - Shared about peer receiving multiple year sentences due to charges for fighting
- Shared that on weekend sometimes they only come out of cells for maximum of 3 hours
- Expressed desire to improve youth and staff relationships
 - Requested participation in new employee trainings
- Discussed need for improved transition planning between DCYF and DOC
- Discussed the impact of isolation from community and natural support systems while incarcerated
- Requested support around legislative efforts

Action Item:

OJJ staff to coordinate in-person visits to support Green Hill Youth

Announcements and Closing Statements

Adjourn 12:00 PM

Next Meeting July 25, 2024. Location TBD