

SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR'S JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2023 at 10:30 am

Epworth Children's Home

2900 Millwood Ave, Columbia, SC 29205

Members Present: Chairman John Holler, Eden Hendrick, Michael Leach, Jay Elliott, Judge David Guyton, Dionè Carroll, Antiwan Tate, Christopher Ross

Staff Members Present: Aloysius Anderson, Joi Brunson, Jerode Oliver, Jess Leneave, Kayla Boston (recorder)

Guests: Kayla Capps, Jordan Thomas, Trevon Fordham, Stasia Bryant, Michelle Pappas, Tanya Barton, Mandy Bowden, Karen Pendleton, Jabria Wilson, Aleksandra Chauhan, Cathy Floyd, Hans Pauling, Corie Bryant, Juanita Dean-Bates, Christine Wallace

- I. Welcome by the Chair:** Chairman John Holler welcomed everyone in attendance and called the meeting to order. Chairman Holler went over the GJJAC mission and the Core Protections: Racial and Ethnic Disparities, Adult Jail and Lock-up Removal, Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenses, and Sight and Sound Separation.
- II. Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Holler asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes from the December 9, 2022 meeting. Mr. Jay Elliott asked that the minutes be amended to include asking the Superintendent of Education, Ms. Ellen Weaver, to attend the GJJAC meetings. A motion was made to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was properly seconded and carried unanimously.
- III. Old Business**
 - a. Agency Updates:**
 - i. DSS:** Director Michael Leach presented the update. Director Leach explained to the Council that majority of teens entering foster care in Spartanburg, Greenville and Anderson Counties, are due to parent/child conflict, behavior issues, truancy, runaway and mental health. In these counties, 69% of the youth were sent home and 27% were returned to a relative. Statewide, 14% of youth were sent home within 7 days or less and 33% were sent home within 60 days or less. South Carolina teen foster care entries are more than 10% more than the national average. Director Leach informed the Council that DSS has introduced Brief Strategic Family Therapy in Charleston, Greenville, Lexington and Spartanburg Counties; they are seeing less entries and less reentries to foster care with this service and would like to expand the service across the state. DSS has also integrated Intensive In-Home Services in Richland, Fairview, Kershaw, Lexington and Greenville Counties to make sure that more families are receiving services. Another new service called Family Center Treatment for 0-18 year olds will be introduced in March 2023. Approximately \$2 million

in reoccurring Kinship Navigator funds will go out in the spring and summer to support kinship families with all age children. Director Leach also informed the Council that Senate Bill 380 for Kinship Guardianship has been passed by the Senate and is now in the House. This bill would allow family members that take guardianship of a child in foster care to be given a subsidy to financially support them. Director Leach will send the Council more information on the bill.

ii. **DMH:** Ms. Louise Johnson provided the update and informed the Council that DMH is applying for grants to provide support in the community. They have applied for a grant to place a therapist and other services in the Sumter alternative school. The goal is to stay ahead of the crisis and keep the youth out of the system.

b. **DJJ Update:** Director Eden Hendrick presented the update. The Birchwood Bulldogs won their first play-off game. This was a huge win for the basketball team and it was their first time being able to leave campus. Go Bulldogs!

DJJ is still moving forward with the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). One person has been hired under the JDAI grant, a second person will be hired soon. The goal of the initiative is alternatives to detention to prevent youth from coming to the detention center. The detention center is slated for 72 youth, however it averages 120; 41 youth aged 12-19 are charged with murder, these youth are often mixed in with lower level offenders. DJJ has managed to allocate more money for the teen aftercare centers. The agency has submitted a budget request to continue the MST and FFT due to the success of the programs. DJJ is partnering with Serve & Connect, which is a non-profit that works to build connections between law enforcement and the community. The agency has requested \$10 million, some of these funds will be used to restart programs in the community.

c. **Staff Updates**

i. **OHSJP:** Mr. Jerode Oliver has been promoted to the Juvenile Justice Specialist position and will be supervising the Compliance Monitor. The Compliance Monitor position has been posted with plans to fill the position soon.

ii. **Travel and Upcoming Travel:** Potential travel dates have been sent out to the Council. In order to travel, members must respond to the announcement emails promptly.

iii. **Compliance Report:** Mr. Jerode Oliver presented the update. South Carolina is currently in compliance with three of the four core requirements. The state continues to face challenges with complying with the core requirement of Deinstitutionalization of status offenders. The Children's Law Center has formed a task force to come up with recommendations to

provide to community members and alternative programs to decrease the number of status offenders. There is a new requirement from the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA) that requires juveniles that are charged as adults to not be detained in adult facilities. Mr. Oliver will send the full compliance report to the Council.

D. Committee Updates:

- i. **Executive Committee:** The committee would like to schedule quarterly meetings at least two weeks before the Council meetings. Per the bylaws, the Executive Committee should be meeting to conduct business in between the Council meetings.
- ii. **Emerging Leaders:** Mr. Antiwan Tate presented the update. The subcommittee continues to work with local DJJ affiliates and are securing candidates to join the committee. Mr. Tate believes that it would be beneficial to change the current structure of the subcommittee due to the conflict of schedules between young people and adults. Mr. Tate also thinks that they should take a tiered and diversified approach to who is a part of the committee to ensure that there is representation from all different backgrounds. Mr. Tate would like there to be youth that are in the community as well as outside of the community, and youth that are at DJJ a part of the committee.
- iii. **Tribal:** Ms. Dionè Carroll presented the update. The Tribal committee plans to meet virtually every few weeks, the meetings will be before the Executive Committee meetings so that the Tribal members can attend the Executive meetings and contribute. Ms. Carroll plans to appoint new members, possibly someone from Catawba Indian Nation and the Minority Affairs Commission. It is important to have a representative from Catawba Indian Nation because they are the only federally recognized tribe. The committee discussed the fact that funding should be presented in a more simplified way so that people feel more comfortable with applying for funding.

Ms. Eden Hendrick informed Ms. Carroll that it would be a very simple task to add a DJJ intake question about being a part of a tribe.

- iv. **Government Affairs:** Judge David Guyton presented the update. Judge Guyton informed the Council that Director Leach and Director Hendrick will be speaking at an annual conference for Family Court Judges in April. The Drug Corp program is still a success in York County. The youth in the Drug Corp program went to the local men's shelter and helped feed and clean up as a part of community service. The Chief Justice has asked the Family Court Judges to move along the complex DSS cases, especially those that involve terminations of parental rights, and have one judge per case. Two new judges have been elected and will go through orientation in May, there are still three vacant judge positions.

IV. New Business

- a. **Upcoming Legislation:** Item skipped.
- b. **Committee/Member Action Items:** Item skipped.

V. Subgrantee Introductions/Updates:

- a. Columbia Urban League: Ms. Juanita Dean Bates, Chief Operating Officer and Mr. Corie Bryant, Program Manager for Saving Our Sons introduced themselves.
- b. Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Solicitor's Office: Ms. Cathy Floyd informed the Council that they have hired a case manager for their Change Program.
- c. JDAI: Ms. Stasia Bryant, State Coordinator, informed the Council that has hired a new person in Charleston and will soon hire a new person for Aiken.
- d. Fifth Circuit Solicitor's Office: Ms. Jabria Wilson, Juvenile Solicitor and Ms. Karen Pendleton, Grants Manager.
- e. Children's Law Center: Ms. Tanya Barton introduced herself.

VI. Adjourn: Chairman Holler informed the Council that the next Planning Meeting date is tentatively scheduled for November 29th-December 1st. **The next scheduled meeting is June 16, 2023.**

Mr. Aloysius Anderson informed the Council that this will be his last GJJAC meeting as well as his last day at the SC Department of Public Safety, as he will be moving on to the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency and Prevention.

With no further discussion, meeting adjourned.