



**STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON JUVENILE JUSTICE**

Meeting Minutes

November 14-15, 2024: Lander, WY

Agenda

Thursday, November 14, 2024

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- New Business
- Ongoing Business
- Committee Reports
- Tour of Wyoming Life Resource Center

Friday, November 15, 2024

- DFS Update/Report
- Community Participation
- Announcements
- County Highlights
- Adjournment

Present:

Present:
Abbey Kercher
Adrienne Freng
Alexandra Bammel
Damon DeBernardi
Erica Wood
Erika Sanchez
Hattie Calvert
Jennifer Palser
Kassidy Thomas
Logan Christie
Melinda Cox
Nathaniel Williams
Nicole Hauser
Ruth Ogden
Stacy Becker
Stacy Nelson
Brittany Cangialosi

Absent:

Salli Perryman
Christina McCabe
Jen Davis
Shawn Sitzman

Via Proxy:
Alexandra Bammel*

Ex-Officio Present:

Brandon Schimelpfenig (DFS)
Sara Sereslon (DFS)
Debra Hibbard (DFS)
Jacob Edwards (DFS)
Laurel Wimbish (WYSAC)
Brooke Benson (WYSAC)
Allen Thompson (WASCOP)
Diana Cabriaes (WYGAP)
Christine Emminger (WYGAP)
Cale Case

Others

Chris Jones
Dale Weber
Lila Konecky
Dylan Pierce
Alan Stuber
Ruth Ogden
Sophia Gomelsky

Call to Order

I. Call to Order: Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 1:00p.

- a) Roll Call/Introductions
- b) Declaration of Quorum; a quorum was established with 13 members present.

II. Approval of Minutes:

September 19-20, 2024 meeting held in Cody, WY; Abby Kercher motioned to approve the draft minutes; Melinda Cox seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

III. New Business:

a) WYGAP Presentation

Christine Emminger, Administrator for the Grants Management Office, and Diana Cabriales, the Grants Management Deputy Administrator, presented information divulging the creation, implementation and function of the Wyoming Grants Administration Program (WYGAP). The Grants Management Office (GMO) and WYGAP's main initiative is to assist state agencies, local governments and non profits illuminate and explore grant opportunities and assist in securing funding. The GMO launched a Wyoming Grants Connect Hub, a website platform, that helps increase transparency and ease of use for Wyoming entities finding applicable grants. WYGAP's technical assistance opportunities that include but are not limited to training and webinars, office hours, exploratory needs assessments, and grant management support. Entities wanting technical assistance would submit a request through WYGAPS main website. WYGAP highlighted several grant opportunities that would be applicable to juvenile justice and mental health opportunities. Council members expressed both enthusiastic support for the program as a resource for Wyoming juvenile justice, but also concern and worry that WYGAP could be at risk of losing its momentum due to future budget session changes or cuts.

b) Wyoming Youth Advisory Council (WYAC) Update

Nathaniel Williams, president of WYAC, presented information informing the council the function of the Wyoming Youth Advisory Council (WYAC), including its cabinet or council structure, bylaws, recent efforts to advocate for Wyoming foster youth, and future projects and plans to enact conversation to support that population.

c) Open Topic Discussion from Members

Jacob Edwards discussed modifying the youth picture on the SACJJ Website to be more representative of Wyoming. Council members discussed the intentionality

and history of selecting that specific image and this could be discussed with the Outreach Committee.

It was suggested a member from the Grants Committee could attend the routine WYGAP training, office hours, to stay involved with those efforts. Contact information and resources from WYGAP were distributed to the council via email to explore or enact this suggestion.

d) Public Comment

No public comments were given.

e) Any New Services/Programming

See New Business: WYGAP Presentation

IV. On-Going Business – Updates From:

a) OJJDP Non-Participating State Award – Laurel Wimbish, Brooke Benson

Brooke Benson and Laurel Wimbish with WYSAC discussed the proposal deadline, the proposal documents to review prior to the last meeting scheduled on December 4th. Brooke provided hands-on technical assistance to support some members of the council receiving proposals to review.

b) Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) Update – Jacob Edwards

Jacob Edwards provided updates that the system is live, the agency is receiving data through API interfacing, but program managers wanted to improve how offense and multiple offense data were being displayed in the system. Jacob stated the JJIS rules are awaiting on Director Signature before going to Governor's office and expects public comment will be in early 2025.

c) Council Membership – Jacob Edwards

Jacob Edwards discussed expiring membership, as Lila Konnecky, Brittany Cangialosi, Ruth Ogden and Stacy Becker would expire August of 2025. Jacob stated membership was within appropriate ratio between government and non-government members but would continue to implore non-government members to be recruited.

d) Governor's Office – Jen Davis

Jen Davis discussed and highlighted continued focus on mental health and juvenile mental health, including educating new legislators on those topics prior

to session. Jen discussed efforts towards establishing a second pilot program for mental health diversion in Natrona County, as the Gillette mental health diversion program has shown positive results so far. Jen stated they are monitoring the status of the mental health and vulnerable adult task force, and dual diagnosis supports across the state.

Furthermore, Jen discussed the Governor's office continuing to support the transition of some drug courts into purview of the supreme court, being involved with the University of Wyoming with suicide prevention supports, and recent engagement with Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center (WYSAC) on trauma informed data collection and how to utilize that information.

Erica Wood discussed mental and behavioral health professional licenses and employment shortages. Jen discussed the varying degrees of difficulty both assessing the gaps but are exploring unique pathways to improve employment opportunities, license and certificate acquisition. Jen highlighted processes and pathways the state of Utah has utilized and an eagerness to borrow those to improve Wyoming in that deficit.

e) **CJSB Reform** – Brandon Schimelpfenig, Jacob Edwards

Brandon Schimelpfenig discussed 15 of 23 counties participating in CJSB program funding. Brandon discussed improving data collection and data quality and continues to have conversations with WYSAC and reroute. Brandon had the first quarter of CJSB data come through July - September 2024. Brandon stated later in 2025, he anticipates the agency would revise the governing rules.

f) **Budget Report/Grant Update** – Jacob Edwards

Jacob stated that Title II 2021 has \$1,775.30 remaining and Title II 2022 has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. Title II 2023 also has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. Jacob distributed the most recent expenditure list to the room and was requested by Chair Logan Christie to distribute it online. Brandon Schimelpfenig stated he had re-applied for the 2024 SACJJ award in early 2024 but did not expect to know the reward amount until early 2025.

g) **Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ)** – Jacob Edwards

Jacob Edwards provided updates via Maureen Clifton on ICJ. Jacob distributed the 2024 Annual ICJ report and a FAQ sheet on ICH. Jacob highlighted a Carbon County DFS Supervisor, Megan Sheets, who was nationally recognized for their ICJ efforts. Vice Chair Erica Wood expressed interest in the design of the ICJ report and suggested using elements of its design to improve the SACJJ Annual Report in the future.

h) **Collaboration with Other Wyoming Councils** - Abby Kercher

Abby Kercher discussed continuing to work and strategize consolidated communications to better reach and gain feedback from other councils. It was expressed amongst the group WYGAP presentation shows progress in those collaborative efforts

i) Vaping and School Concerns -

See Community Participation Discussion

j) 2024 OJJDP National Conference: Washington D.C.

Logan Christie highlighted the upcoming OJJDP conference and which council members from the council would be representing.

V. Committee Reports

a) Executive Committee – Logan Christie

Logan reported the Executive Committee met to discuss the current November meeting and its agenda.

b) Grants Committee – Logan Christie

Logan reported the Grants Committee prepares to meet on December 4th to discuss the OJJDP grant review and selection process.

c) Data Committee – Adrienne Freng

Allen Thompson discussed continued efforts to use existing online software for JDRA completion and mentioned officers would likely prefer a virtual option compared to a paper counterpart. Recently, Allen and Brandon Schimelpfenig have hosted a JDRA training for police officers. Brandon has recently completed the 2024 JDRA report and that was distributed to the appropriate agencies. The council and Allen discussed the varying systems that collect data, the overlap and possibility of data sharing enabling both easier access to mandatory information and reducing data entry for various users of law enforcement and Wyoming youth programs.

It was discussed further that while the detention centers collect good data on youth admitted, and law enforcement and JDCS capture information on detained youth, no JDRA's are completed on youth who make contact or receive citation from law enforcement. Stacey Nelson highlighted this as a core issue or misunderstanding because if law enforcement continues to only collect JDRA info

on detained youth, there is no data or information available on the youth who are released or only cited. Jen Palser highlighted different communities law enforcement facilitate the JDRA at different levels, and concurred it was inconsistent. Allen and Jacob referenced a statute that affirms law enforcement is only required to complete JDRAs on youth detained, and that asking officers to be on board with completing JDRAs for all contacted youth would be difficult without statutory strength. The council held further discussions around the utility of the JDRA, whether communities with JDCs detain young people at a higher rate than those who do not, and how the definition of custody can be viewed to facilitate more use of JDRAs for youth, and if an electronic JDRA would open a door to more JDRA facilitation to non-detain youth.

d) Best Practices Committee – Stacey Nelson

Stacey reported the Best Practices Committee was still planning their quarterly meeting at the time of the report.

e) Outreach/Youth Committee – Erica Wood, Brittany Cangialosi

Erica reported the Outreach/Youth Committee met, contents of their meeting and perspective. Erica reported Brandon and Jacob joined the most recent meeting to discuss their high level perspective of various community's needs, feedback, and concerns for juvenile justice to gain insight into recruitment. Erica reported the assembly of an Ad hoc training committee over the past months in anticipation of possible state wide juvenile justice training.

f) Legislative Committee – Nicole Hauser

Nicole reported Brandon communicated with a State Advisory Council of Washington State and received positive feedback on how the legislative committee and Wyoming's SACJJ operates. Nicole anticipated the January session would be both active and bountiful with submitted legislative actions.

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VI. DFS Update/Report

Sara Serelson, Field Operations Administrator for the Department of Family Services relayed that their agency was updating their case management system to a more modern system that is more connective to community partners and improved data. Sara added that the agency received federal feedback on the program improvement

plan (PIP) that focused on interventions around safety, permanency and wellbeing for children.

Sara added the agency was beginning to operate with the NTDC (National Training and Development Curriculum) for Foster Parent training in Wyoming as the current training and curriculum is based on programming and methods from the 90s. This new curriculum is anticipated to roll out around Summer 2025. Sara discussed the agency's involvement with the Confidentiality Bill that allows the agency to better share data with other agencies, particularly across divisions with the Department itself. The Bill has recently passed the Joint Judiciary Committee.

VII. Community Participation

a) Fremont County Attorney

Micah Wyatt, Deputy County Attorney, highlighted a shortage of law enforcement in the area affecting the data on juvenile crime and number of citations being distributed during the 2024 calendar year.

Micah discussed the changing of circuit court judges which resulted in the removal of Delayed Sentencing Bonds. One of the consequences meant less opportunities to get youth experiencing lower-level substance use into juvenile drug court. Despite this, Micah felt this could lead to more voluntary involvement in the county pre court diversion program. Micah described a desire to start a Team Core program to find another way to divert convictions but worries about community backing for such a program.

Micah commented on vaping citations, stating that the vaping sensors in schools has changed what type of citations they receive. Micah expressed that since most citations come from school, this method may just push youth to vape outside of school, although he does feel the county is still helping youth with the underlying issue. Micah expressed a concern with the lack of shame or understanding that comes with youth being cited or appearing in court for vape or other drug issues as a moral concern.

Micah was asked to discuss how his office had been affected by the 14-day filing rule. Micah expressed a slight administrative approach to direct citations including appearance information rather than writing the citation based on information later. Overall, Micah expressed not being heavily impacted but felt the need to have youth services being involved as the precursor in most events, therefore in favor of letting that take as much time as needed.

Micah concluded that during peak COVID years (2021-2023) the Fremont County Docket was one of the largest in the state due to Title 14-involved youth. Micah highlighted the lack of services or placements for youth, and the long waitlisted times, leading to children experiencing an increased risk and placement in adult jails. In addition, the pressure to remove kids from adult jails leads to them being

placed in settings that may not be appropriate for their long term mental health needs or treatment needs. Lastly, despite the youth services day program, there is no good program or resource to address effective step down for youth leaving congregate care placements like Boys School/Girls School and returning to live in the community.

b) Fremont County CJSB

Cassie Murray oversees two programs; has juvenile youth services, both diversion cases and juvenile probation, and day reporting center where kids who are transitioning from congregate care placements can be or kids who are facing suspensions can be. Second, Cassie oversees both the adult and juvenile drug court. Speaking on the age of youth being cited and brought to her programs, the range is 11-15 years old. The drug concern, based on assessment data, are foremost marijuana and second methamphetamine. Cassie discussed a decrease in citations within 2024, however, she noted the community is facing law enforcement shortages and staffing issues, including the school losing their SRO, which has led to a decrease in citations.

Cassie discussed that while their day program takes some short-term suspensions from the school, there is a vast number of students who are being suspended indefinitely from school who they cannot support. Hattie added there are also a large amount of middle school suspensions that are occurring, and while their day program (which consists of just one room) was not designed to be a full-time support program, they are trying to meet the needs of the community due to suspensions and are looking to hire mental health professionals to play a role in their day program.

Cassie highlighted DUIs are a large issue, and that a specific DUI task force was developed to help address the amount of DUIs in the community. Cassie highlighted the lack of drug treatment and no drug treatment prevention services in their community outside of tribal programs and the juvenile drug court. Therefore, many of the drug treatment assessments are written to support inpatient needs to be able to give youth additional options.

Cassie discussed the biggest need for their community is to have more people and people who need to work. The lack of local placements, facilities, mental health and even local detention is dependent on both having no employees available and lack of funds to support or pay professionals reasonable salaries.

c) Fremont County DFS (Lander and Riverton)

Sada Selvig, Lander and Pinedale DFS Supervisor, provided feedback on juvenile concerns in her area. Sada highlighted routine concerns with vaping, lack of resources, and an increase in seemingly more serious crimes committed by

younger children. Sada mentioned their community using adult detention for youth as they have not been able to effectively utilize JDCS out of County. Sada discussed a lack of local treatment opportunities, outside of drug treatment court, for youth.

d) Northern Arapaho DFS

Clarence Thomas, Director of Northern Arapahoe Department of Family Services, highlighted their office was moving physical locations within Riverton and restructured their social services responsibilities over the last year. NADFS now has multiple probation officers, intensive supervised probation, regular probation, and diversion opportunities run through their office. Clarence mentioned their former building would be utilized for drug detox and crisis center opportunities.

Clarence later discussed a community issue wherein local law enforcement allegedly would bring intoxicated youth to the parents rather than taking them to a hospital or following up with proper medical care which Clarence felt is a large liability and pointed out adults are treated differently in the same situation.

e) Eastern Shoshone DFS

Gina Jarvis, the Foster Care Coordinator for Eastern Shoshone Department of Family Services, discussed briefly the ongoing concerns and needs for local youth.

f) Fremont County School District Representative (Lander)

There was no specific Lander School District Representative present for this meeting. Based on the conversation, the Council highlighted an unusually large suspension rate for drug related offenses. The community highlighted there are approximately 45 youth a year on a stipulated agreement wherein they can easily be expelled or removed from the school entirely. One community member described the length of initial suspensions and stipulated agreements as a fast track to expulsions. The Council can see this as a training opportunity for education on long term consequences of such high-level suspensions and expulsions.

VIII. Fremont County Highlights

The SACJJ briefly highlighted key areas from the meeting.

- There is a Youth Service Program supporting diversion, short term suspension, and county probation.
- There is a Juvenile Drug Court
- Respective Program Managers praised the creativity and flexibility of various youth programs.

- Fremont County has an operating Group Home; girls group home in Lander and a boys group home in Riverton.
- Communication between varying agencies, school districts and programs that support youth.

IX. Announcements

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 16-17, 2025 in Cheyenne, WY.

The Council reviewed trends, highlights, gaps, and community feedback provided over the year and proposed recommendations for the 2024 Annual Report and the Governor's office. Logan discussed time frames to meet with the governor in January 2025. Erica Wood took note of the council's feedback on recommendations to write into the report.

X. Adjournment

Abby Kercher motioned to adjourn the meeting; Staci Nelson seconded the motion; all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00AM