

WYOMING STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Meeting Minutes

September 18-19, 2025: Worland, WY

Agenda:

Thursday, September 18, 2025

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- New Business
- Ongoing Business
- Committee Reports
- Tour of Wyoming Boys School

Friday, September 19, 2025

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

Present:

Adrienne Freng
Alan Stuber
Brittany Cangialosi
Dale Weber
Damon DeBernardi
Erica Wood
Hattie Calvert
Jennifer Palser
Kassidy Thomas
Logan Christie
Nathaniel Williams
Nicole Hauser
Ruth Ogden
Stacy Nelson

Ex-Officio Present:

Jacob Edwards
Salli Volz
Curtis Biggs
Shawn Sitzman
Maggy Laing

Via Proxy:

Alexandra Bammel
Erika Sanchez

Others Present:

Brandon Schimelpfenig (DFS)
Allen Thompson (WASCOP)
Steve Jett (WYSAC)
Wendy Leach (WYSAC)
Steve Hamaker (GW BBBS)
Sara Serelson (DFS)
Pennie Anderson (DFS)
Amber Nation (DWS, Div. of
Voc. Rehab.)

Absent:

Chris Jones
Dylan Pierce
Melinda Cox
Sophia Gomelsky

Call to Order

I. Call to Order: Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 1:00p.

- a) Roll Call/Introductions
- b) Declaration of Quorum; a quorum was established with 16 members present.

II. Approval of Minutes:

June 19-20, 2025 meeting held in Gillette, WY; Damon DeBernardi motioned to approve the draft minutes; Adrienne Freng seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

III. New Business:

- a) Executive Committee Membership – 2 Vacancies

Erica Wood stated there are currently 2 vacancies on the Executive committee due to the resignations of Stacy Becker and Abbey Kercher. Two names were discussed for nomination; Damon DeBernardi and Hattie Calvert. Nicole Hauser motioned to accept the list of nominations; Adrienne Freng seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed welcoming Damon and Hattie to the Executive committee.

b) Strategic Plan Review

It was discussed regarding the SACJJ's next strategic plan, as the current plan is due to expire at the end of 2026, to contract or hire a facilitator to assist with formulating the next strategic plan. Align was recently quoted at \$12,000.00 and Public Knowledge was estimated at \$7,500.00 and that it was confirmed with OJJDP that Title II funds could be utilized for this expense. Adrienne Freng mentioned that the SACJJ committees should first focus on developing an implementation plan to outline accomplishments, identify completed areas, and highlight gaps; potentially making the process more efficient. After discussion, the SACJJ agreed to conduct the process internally as opposed to hiring a consultant.

Next, the SACJJ discussed a location and date to hold the strategic plan review. After discussion it was decided to host the meeting in Lander, WY on October 9-10, 2025. Committees were asked to compile their findings regarding what has changed, what's been accomplished, and areas that still need work in preparation for the strategic plan meeting.

UPDATE: Due to lodging unavailability in Lander, the strategic plan review location has been changed to Riverton and the date has been changed to just October 10, 2025 as opposed to the 9th and the 10th.

c) NPS Presentation – Wendy Leach/Steve Jett

Wendy and Steve presented updates on their work with the Non-Participating State grant with OJJDP through the Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center (WYSAC). Wendy noted that currently, Wyoming is too far from statewide JJDP (Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act) compliance prompting a shift from compliance monitoring to more technical assistance. Regarding areas for technical assistance consisted of an inventory of programs and services for juvenile justice, jail policy, and improved data collection. Wendy also presented an example of a draft juvenile detention risk assessment (JDRA) which is intended to serve as a genuine risk assessment (covering flight risk and public safety risk) rather than the current tool, which serves more as a detention confirmation. It was discussed to have the SACJJ data committee agree to discuss JDRA analysis further as it was also mentioned that 3 out of the 4 juvenile detention centers in Wyoming are not currently accepting out-of-county juveniles which is creating a struggle for some of the smaller counties that need to securely detain a juvenile. Allen Thompson with the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police (WASCOP) cautioned the SACJJ on the elimination of

the JDRA as it would require statutory changes and would also require approval from WASCOP for changes.

Wendy and Steve also offered to assist the SACJJ in compiling, categorizing, and creating an interactive, shareable map of resources to identify areas of strengths and weakness regarding juvenile services in each area as well as creating a plan for annual updates. The Outreach/Youth committee stated that they are currently working on compiling a resource guide (repository) and updated lists of approved providers and placements. Adrienne mentioned that each SACJJ member should also contribute to the repository by detailing resources in their community.

d) Open Topic Discussion from Members

During the second day of the meeting (9/19), Logan Christie noted a discussed topic of the possibility of the SACJJ creating a uniform screening instrument for Single Point of Entry (SPE) across the state. The SACJJ discussed the challenge of developing a universal tool or guidance for SPE meetings to improve information sharing, noting that 23 counties have 23 different county attorneys handling the process differently. Hattie Calvert noted that Fremont County expressed a need for more solid guidance on when to elevate cases, such as those involving high Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) drinking tickets to district court to access necessary treatment. Damon DeBernardi also mentioned that he will attend the Wyoming Association of County Officials (WACO) meeting next week to speak with county attorneys and gather information on their SPE processes.

e) Public Comment Period

No topics were brought forth.

IV. On-Going Business – Updates From:

a) Council Membership – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that Brittany Cangialosi and Ruth Ogden were reappointed to three-year terms. No new applicants were received from the Governor’s Office.

b) Governor’s Office – Curtis Biggs

Curtis stated that scheduling a meeting between the SACJJ Executive committee and Governor Gordon has been challenging due to schedule conflicts but he noted this will be arranged; likely in October 2025. Curtis also encouraged the SACJJ to utilize him as a resource to discuss challenges and any juvenile justice policy struggles at any time; not just during quarterly Council meetings. He also noted that budget hearings are currently underway.

c) CJSB – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that programmatic discussions have been taking place and that funding for the Community Juvenile Services Boards (CJSBs) in the upcoming biennium (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2028) will be based on juvenile population numbers using 2023 reported OJJDP data as opposed to the current formula that has not changed since the inception of the CJSB program in 2010; 2023 was the

most recent year available in OJJDP's EZ Pop website. This will result in significant increases for most counties and potential decreases for others however for those counties that do not submit an application, their funding will be redistributed in amendments to the less-funded applicants.

There were 7 CJSBs that submitted applications and were approved for additional funding utilizing additional funding in the CJSB program budget. Also, the next biennium's applications will require CJSBs to report more diversion numbers and focus on working with the entire family as opposed to solely the youth such as wraparound services. Members also discussed concerns of how the applications will be funded for smaller communities with less juvenile populations.

d) Budget Report/Grant Update – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that Title II 2022 has the full \$11,875.24 remaining. Title II 2023 also has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. Title II 2024 has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. The 2025 solicitation is expected to be released soon by OJJDP.

Erica Wood mentioned that the Executive Committee agreed to move forward with the Ad-Hoc Training committee to create a valuable statewide training for juvenile justice participants, utilizing Title II funds. It was also discussed that since there is a current vacancy for the chair of the Ad-Hoc Training committee that a member should fill that role. After discussion, it was agreed that Brittany Cangialosi will fill that role. Nathaniel Williams and Erica Wood also voiced that they would like to join the committee.

e) Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ) – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon provided 3 years' worth of data for the SACJJ to review; TOS (Transfer of Supervision) and Return cases where Wyoming was the Sending/Home State and when Wyoming was the Receiving State. A key trend noted is that returns being processed through ICJ are increasingly becoming violent or receiving criminal charges, such as aggravated burglary or fleeing and eluding. It was also discussed that moving forward, Brandon will provide this data annually to the SACJJ.

f) Priority Areas for SACJJ

The SACJJ discussed its priorities to finalize in the November meeting. The first area being that there is a lack of resources and professionals in mental health and treatment alternatives. The second area is a concern regarding crisis beds, not necessarily being the number of beds but rather the capacity (due to staffing) and access (distance and transportation barriers). The last area discussed was access to services by clients and the SACJJ agreed to continue looking at this area including the current situation with JDCs not accepting out-of-county juveniles as well as other resources such as therapeutic foster care.

g) Presentation for Wyoming Dept. of Health Report

Erica Wood noted that she and Ruth Ogden had completed a presentation for the Wyoming Department of Health and had some questions for the SACJJ on juveniles surrounding Title 25 situations.

- h) Ex-Officio Members – Addition of: Allen Thompson – WASCOP; Joe Belcher – Guardian Ad Litem (GAL); Nathan Tedjeske (New WDE Representative)

Erica Wood stated that she would like to discuss the possible appointments of a representative from WASCOP as well as the Wyoming GAL office to ensure juvenile justice is represented in all respective avenues across the state. It was discussed to reach out to the Governor and request respectfully that he appoint Allen Thompson from WASCOP as an Ex-Officio member. Allen Thompson confirmed his continued participation in SACJJ meetings whether or not he is officially appointed by the Governor. Nicole Hauser discussed requesting that Joe Belcher with the Wyoming GAL office be appointed as an ex-officio member to ensure the voice of juveniles in court is always represented during meetings. Damon DeBernardi motioned to accept requesting to the Governor that Allen Thompson and Joe Belcher be appointed as Ex-Officio members representing their respective agencies; Adrienne Freng seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried. Erica Wood also wanted to mention that the Ex-Officio representative for the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) has transitioned from Dustin Brown to Nathan Tedjeske; Chief Innovation Officer for WDE.

V. Committee Reports

- a) Executive Committee – Logan Christie
Erica Wood stated that the Executive committee previously discussed their updates.
- b) Grants Committee – Logan Christie
Erica Wood stated that the Grants committee previously discussed their updates.
- c) Data Committee – Adrienne Freng
Adrienne stated that they did not have an update other than they developed their thoughts for the upcoming strategic plan.
- d) Best Practices Committee – Stacy Nelson
Stacy stated that they met and updated the current strategic plan with items that have been completed or still need accomplished. She also mentioned the current work on the list of service providers in Wyoming.
- e) Outreach/Youth Committee – Erica Wood, Brittany Cangialosi
Brittany noted that the committee met and discussed new members and disseminating SACJJ flyers throughout the University of Wyoming. The committee also discussed the repository list being compiled.
- f) Legislative Committee – Nicole Hauser

Nicole highlighted key Wyoming legislative drafts and topics for the upcoming budget session in February 2026 which included:

- Stalking of minors (still in draft form);
- Grooming of minors (still in draft form);
- K-12 public school discipline;
- Strengthening penalties regarding fentanyl distribution to minors;
- Proposed amendments to current strangulation statute;
- Revising the felony theft threshold and;
- DFS data confidentiality bill (LSO-0075)

g) Ad-Hoc Committee – Brittany Cangialosi
Update provided during the Budget Report/Grant Update

VI. Tour of Wyoming Boys School

The SACJJ was provided a tour of the Wyoming Boy's School by Superintendent and SACJJ member Dale Weber.

Friday, September 19, 2025

VII. DFS Update

Sara Serelson, Field Administrator for the Department of Family Services, was present via Zoom and provided a comprehensive update to administrative initiatives noting that DFS continues to see an increase in mental health needs and services among juvenile justice involved youth.

Sara stated that the DFS PIP has been approved by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and work has begun on 6 identified goals. The primary and priority goal is to ensure children, including those in juvenile service cases, are safe by timely, accurately and comprehensively assessing risk and safety. DFS will also be starting its PIP case reviews which are based on the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that was recently conducted statewide with the first ones taking place in Evanston, Laramie, and Casper.

Sara also noted that there is a new training for foster parents, relative, and kinship providers utilizing the National Training Development Curriculum (NTDC). The NTDC is research-based and includes input from experts, families, and foster/adoptive youth. Feedback has been exceptional with a high typical rating of 4.5 out of 5 with 5 being the highest rating; noting its relevance, engaging opportunities, and supportive environment. The training is held via statewide online cohorts, enabling foster parents to connect. Early research suggests states utilizing this curriculum see more children able to maintain placements within the community. DFS has also partnered with 211 kinship navigators to assist with kinship training, ensuring local community support. Ongoing training on specific topics, such as sexual abuse trauma, is also offered virtually.

Sara also noted new caseworker core training has been updated, combining self-paced online modules (covering foundational knowledge within the first 45 days) with three weeks of intensive in-person skills training. A significant addition is the use of virtual reality (VR), allowing caseworkers to experience realistic scenarios in a safe environment where they can learn through trial and error. Early feedback has been extremely positive concerning the revised and improved training modules.

Regarding the Interagency Children's Collaborative (ICC), Sara noted of 34 ICC youth in therapeutic residential treatment during State Fiscal Year 2025, 88% (22 youth) maintained their placement, while 12% (3 youth) experienced disruption—a significant decrease from the 16 disruptions seen the previous year. The number of days ICC youth spent in detention also saw a 43% decrease. Nine youth accessed specialized, otherwise unavailable treatment due to ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant funding. As these funds are slated to end around September 2026, concern exists that without continued funding, these youth might return to inappropriate placements. In response to a question from Ruth Ogden, Sara confirmed that DFS is actively re-examining models for therapeutic foster care, particularly for older youth. She encouraged the SACJJ to continue asking about the need for these interventions, acknowledging it is a definite gap in the continuum of care.

VIII. Community Participation

a) Washakie County Attorney's Office
No representatives present.

b) Washakie County CJSB
No representatives present.

c) Washakie County DFS
Pennie Anderson was present to discuss trends the local DFS office is seeing regarding juveniles. She noted in the last fiscal year, District 5 had 98 juvenile justice cases; 19 in Washakie county and 14 in Hot Springs county. A noted trend is that most juvenile justice placements had extensive previous CPS history. She also noted that local offices utilize Wyoming Children's Trust Fund (WCTF) money to build protective factors. Washakie County offers activity passes funded by the WCTF and local diversion money to pay for pro-social activities like pool usage fees or martial arts. Hot Springs county does not have a CJSB nor activity passes but instead operates a Learning Center that offers educational support and community volunteer projects. The area also has low placement rates, which is attributed to strong community collaboration and county attorneys favoring voluntary cases outside of court. The local judge in Washakie County orders MDTs (Multi-Disciplinary Teams) for nearly every probation, juvenile justice, and CPS case.

d) Washakie County School District Representative
No representatives present.

- e) Washakie County School Resource Officer (SRO)
No representatives present.

IX. County Highlights

The SACJJ briefly highlighted key areas from the meeting.

- Pro-social activities outside of school for youth; and
- Services are spread out across a very large area of the state.

X. Announcements

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 20-21, 2025, in Laramie, WY.

UPDATE: Due to an upcoming high profile public sporting event in Laramie the SACJJ meeting in November was moved to Casper, WY.

Logan Christie reminded all members within SACJJ committees to work on their respective sections of the current strategic plan.

XI. Adjournment

Damon DeBernardi motioned to adjourn the meeting; Hattie Calvert seconded the motion; all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:23a.