

SAG Meeting Minutes 1/15/21

Members Present- Jill Ward, Ned Chester, Christine Thibeault, Gail Wasserman, Colin O'Neill, Todd Landry, Tracey Horton, Bonnie Porta, Jonathan Shapiro, Atlee Reilly, Regina Phillips, Bishop Steve Coleman, Chris Northrop, Page Nichols, Tessa Mosher

Members Absent - Abier Ibrahim, Kaitlyn Megathlin, Debra Baeder, Maria Woodman, Elizabeth Ward Saxl, Gifford Campbell, Sienna Dana, Mike Freysinger, Marta Haydym, Lt. Patrick Hood

JJAG Staff Present- Linda Barry Potter (Compliance Monitor and Acting JJ Specialist)

DOC Staff Present: Anwar Whiting (RED and Credible Messenger Coordinator), Sonja Morse (Juvenile Data and Research Coordinator)

Pubic Attendees: Mark Soler, Tanya Pierson, Kelsey Park, Betsy Boardman, Mary Lou Michael, Jess Mizzi, and Bruce King.

Call to Order: 9:05am

Minutes: December 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve the minutes, Ned Chester; Jonathan Shapiro 2nd the motion. **Adopted by Unanimous vote.**

JJ Specialist Report: Linda Barry Potter

Working on getting budget and grants in order. Grant funds have been disencumbered and our awards are active again. Discussion about creating a mechanism for more clearly reporting what funds are available to use in planning and decision-making.

Agency Presentations:

Request that agencies outline their priorities and projects for 2021 that align with the 3-year plan.

DOC (Colin O'Neill):

Planning on producing a semi-annual progress report that will reflect work on recommendations from the CCLP report and other DOC initiatives. More detailed data updates will also begin to be posted on the updated DOC website: <https://www.maine.gov/corrections/juvenile-services>. Below are DOC priorities of the year that align with the 3-year plan goals.

Goal One: DOC will continue to support and facilitate Regional Care Teams. Information can be found here: <https://www.mainejjtaskforce.org/our-work>. Of the 12 youth that have been reviewed so far, none have ended up in Long Creek (LC). Staff secure girls residential unit (STEPS) is open outside of Long Creek. Goal is to ultimately house all the girls in that program and try to eliminate the incarceration of girls. Looking to replicate for boys. These efforts will also lead to the reduction of the length of stay at LC. Current data shows a 13% reduction in length of stay over the last year. Also collaborating with Jonathan Shapiro for a dual department RJ coordinator for DOE and DOC. Developing an RFP to ideally grant to a community provider.

Goal Two: Pilot credible messenger/family outreach program in Region 2 (Lewiston and Auburn) partnering with Tree Street Youth Center to reduce racial disparities/number of youth of color in the system. JJAG supported.

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Goal Three: DOC is reviewing detention practices and refusing to authorize detentions unless there are clear and demonstrated public safety risks. CCLP report showed a lot of youth coming in for 3 days or less: so do they really need to be coming in at all? We have basically eliminated these short detentions. Been able to utilize beds at New Beginnings for these short term stays where a break is still needed, but LC is not the appropriate placement. Hoping to scale up this attendant care model in other communities.

Question (Bonnie): how do you get the houses outside of LC? State owns the one the girls are in. Looking to lease for the boys. New Beginnings owns the other ones.

OCFS/DHHS (Todd Landry):

Outlined areas of overlap the OCFS priorities for 2021, JJAG 3-year plan, and grants.

Goal One: Significant overlap under 1(a) where it relates to crisis response. Crisis response is a significant initiative of ours. Aroostook County pilot.

Goal Three: 3(b), increase the utilization and building up of evidence based models in the state. MST and FFT. The rate now is in a good place. Even though the rate takes into account some of the start-up costs, it doesn't pay out until providers start delivering services. Some opportunity for these \$5k grants to cover the non-MaineCare funded startup costs. This will help to incentivize up front start-up costs for new programming in agencies.

Goal Two: TFCBT. Trauma Focused CBT. Trained over 125 providers in this. Intentional work with that group around LGBTQ and GNC youth.

As it relates to work on restorative justice, it will be important to link the work that JJAG does with that of the Children's Cabinet which also has a goal related to restorative justice practices - that work involves DOE, DOC, Maine CDC, and others.

Questions/Discussion:

(Jill): With Goal 3 and the evidence based practices. You are suggesting an RFP more broadly + the 5k grants or just the 5k to cover start-up cost? Just the start-up cost. The rate should reimburse programs nicely, it's just the hiring and training and starting that needs to get covered.

(Jill): What has the cost of that training under goal 2 cost? \$25k-30k. I'd have to check though.

(Bonnie): Did you also say it was for kids of color as well? Yes, BIPOC is part of the training already. They don't get as deep into the unique needs of LGBTQ and GNC youth, which is why I see an opportunity there.

DOE (Jonathan Shapiro and Page Nichols):

A main focus area will be training. School safety specialist program (train staff from each school district in school safety management). Biggest crosser that we have with the JJAG is our behavioral threat assessment program; a collaborative program between mental health, school administrators, etc to determine whether these are substantive or transient threats. Overlap with DOC and DHHS, to make sure these youth get the services they need. Advocating for a comprehensive mental health systems for schools, which is harder in rural areas. Three pilot programs (Calais, Westbrook, Rumford). Our goal is to train all the schools in the state.

Other areas: Restorative Justice in schools. SROs and police training that is youth-centered. Doing research on food insecurity for students and the correlation between food insecurity and

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external/internal violent behavior. Cyber threats and bullying and opioid treatment within the school system.

Wishlist: Anonymous statewide tip line (3 most common tips around the country are opioid abuse, suicidal ideation, and bullying). Some other programs: SLE for Maine platform, Reinventing Remote Education Venture, MOOSE, Wilderness Activities and Virtual Engagement (WAVE), Connect Kids Now, Redefining School Success.

Questions/Discussion:

(Tanya): Do you have the funds to complete training for all the schools? To start, but it is voluntary for schools to elect to accept the training. Working on sustained funding to meet requests/need. Prosecutors, JCCOs, school boards, etc. should be trained. (Ned): If you are going to train prosecutors, you should also train judges and defense. To change court culture.

(Ned): When you were talking about the need for wraparound services for the youth identified (either for threats or food insecurity). It sounds like this is something that the RCTs can address?

(Jill): Yes, the evolution of that structure could encompass that. It has started with DOC involved youth, but the idea is to expand beyond this. It's definitely possible. I have a follow up question re: timing.

(Tanya): We get a lot of referrals to use coming from specialized schools for behavioral issues. The cherry on top of this is if we can get restorative practices in schools, we will avoid system involvement altogether. String theory: if you have one of these programs, you're pretty well off. If you have multiple of them, you're really cooking with gas and can get things done. (Atlee): DRM partnering with Colin and JCCOs for direct referrals to DRM around those cases coming from specialized schools.

(Bonnie): Why wouldn't some schools take you up on this? Home rule state. Knowledge gap.

(Bonnie): It seems that instituting a tip line for the entire state would involve some education? Yes, but I don't want a tip line until the services and safety nets are in place. Otherwise, you have tips and a one way ticket to a corrections response.

(Christine): Do you think that once you get data on how these programs reduce expulsions and disciplinary actions, other schools will sign on? Yes, that is the hope.

(Gail): Is the learning platform that you mentioned available for other initiatives? We don't have one yet. We are working to get a learning management system for all of the programs that I just talked about. That's really what is holding us back at the moment.

(Gail): The court system has a learning management system for training GALs. So there may be opportunities for collaborative sharing. Yes, my tech team is looking at what other agencies use. We really want a collegiate level experience.

(Regina): Somewhat of a rhetorical question. How come we still haven't done DEI training if it's so easy? Again, it's frustrating to think that we have a perfect plan to do this training for everyone we come into contact with, so why is it so hard to get this DEI training. It's just part of the conversation of when? We have the resources and the data, so when?

Committee Reports:

- *Executive Committee* (Jill Ward): Only update is we have secured contract for website design and work is scheduled to begin in February. Will look for ad-hoc group to support. Meetings are 2nd Tuesday of the month. Next Meeting is 2/9 at 4pm.
- *RED/DMC Committee* (Bishop Steve Coleman & Regina Phillips): Review of RED/DMC plan. Request at next RED committee meeting that members identify specific priorities for 2021, both external and internal to the JJAG (DEI training plan). Also need to align youth

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engagement with the membership needs/slots. Will coordinate conversation with Executive Committee which is looking at youth slots and other open slots and who is about to term out. Meetings are 3rd Tuesday of the month. Next meeting is 2/16 at 4:30pm.

- *Systems Improvement Committee* (Atlee Riley): Nothing new to report; waiting on OJJDP solicitation. Meetings are first Wednesday of the month. Next meeting 2/3 at noon.
- *Governance Committee* (Christine Thibeault): Met on Jan 4 and tackled 3 big issues: budget, bylaws, and compliance with Maine's Freedom of Information Act.
 - Budget: Committee would like to look at broad structures for the budget. For example, do we want to place caps on how much money goes out? Do we want to set aside funds for RFPs? Want to make the budget more easily understandable, so we don't end up scrambling to spend funds or risk sending them back to DC.
 - Bylaws: The bylaws were last discussed in 2017 and a lot has changed since then (law was reauthorized in 2018). Setting up ad hoc committee to revise the bylaws, and then we will put in back in front of the entire board for a vote.
 - Compliance with FOIA: Need to make meeting notices and information public. DOC will post on website for now until we get the new website up and running.
 - Meetings are the first Monday of each month at 3pm. Next meeting: Feb 1st, 3-4pm.
- *Legislative Committee* (Christine Thibeault): Bumped Legislative Committee out a bit to 1/25. MCJPAL practitioner work group has been working with Representative Talbot-Ross on a comprehensive record sealing bill. JJ Clinic also has a bind-over bill. Criminal Law Advisory Committee meeting on the 22nd to look at these bills. Jill will send out a letter to the legislature to formally introduce the JJAG.

Guest Presentation: Mark Soler, Center for Children's Law and Policy

The Juvenile Justice Task Force co-chairs (Randall Liberty/ Colin O'Neill, Jill Ward, Michael Brennan) continued to meet all of last year. John T. Gorman Foundation has funded CCLP to keep working with co-chairs through COVID crisis and to write up a case study on what has been done since the Assessment report was released. Should be released in June 2021.

Questions/Discussion:

(Jill): Rep. Michael Brennan has bill similar to 2020 bill that includes provision shifting the work of the task force under the JJAG.

(Christine): Just because there is so much overlap between DOC and DHHS, has anyone from DHHS been a part of the conversation? (Colin): Todd not a part of the co-chair meetings, but there are regular DOC-OCFS meetings to discuss overlap. Also both on the Children's Cabinet.

(Ned): DOC and DHHS are the prime prongs for dealing with youth issues. But what about DOE and DOL? How important is it to incorporate those departments, and what have other states done? (Mark): Some other states talk about including education and labor. Education and Labor are often the agency missing from the table, and people recognize this.

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(Jill): This came up during the Task Force meetings. There was some dissatisfaction about the ability to delve deeper into some of the gaps in education system. There was a scope limitation for what Mark and his team could cover (school to prison pipeline, etc.)

(Colin): I think there is real importance in looking at cross-system collaboration. So any grants to local providers, one of the things the JJAG can leverage is this cross-system collaboration. We do look at getting agreements from other state agencies to be involved for sustainability and so we aren't working in silos. This should be part of our values.

3-Year Plan Priorities and Values Discussion: Main Takeaways

Priorities:

- Build the full continuum of care with focus on building up community providers instead of agencies to build up these programs. But recognize COVID and tough year for state budgets. Community funded services are great, but state services also play a role and will likely be impacted by the shortfall in revenue.
- Cross-system crisis response
- Programs that intersect with youth justice and workforce/employment
- Training for shared understanding of and language around adolescent development among practitioners, providers and community.
- Re-entry and transition planning to help youth succeed.

Internal for JJAG:

- Youth engagement
- RED/DEI training
- Tribal representation

Values:

- Embedding resources in the community, in partnership with community, to support sustainability of continuum.
- Prioritize anything that is cross-cutting or gap-filling; if it can address more than one goal, that should be an indicator of importance. Multiple agency involvement should be a criteria – DOE, DOL, DHHS, etc. Everyone has skin in the game.
- Cultural competency and equity
- Least restrictive alternatives are the assumption; secure settings should be last resort.
- Emphasis on youth-based and strength-based.
- Victim voice in RJ/diversion models that are considered for support.
- Evidence-based, evidence-supported, but also context specific supports.
- Value of supporting families; holistic approach.

Mark: The discussion of priorities is a little different than the discussion of values. Priorities are what to address first, values are what is important no matter what the priorities are. The process is the product, and it has been great to be an observer of that here. It is terrific to see everyone fully engaged in it.

Jill: Next meeting you can expect to see a list of priorities and values coming out of this discussion. Values can inform by-laws revisions as well.

Adjourn: 11:57am.

Next Meeting: February 19th at 9am.