

SAG Minutes 11/13/2020

Members Present: Ned Chester, Gail Wasserman, Christine Thibeault, Colin O’Neill, Mike Freysinger, Bonnie Porter, Jill Ward, Tessa Mosher, Jonathan Shapiro, Atlee Reilly, Todd Landry, Bishop Steve Coleman, Sienna Dana, Chris Northrop, Debra Baeder Tracey Horton (late), Regina Phillips (late)

Members Absent: Abier Ibrahim

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

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

Public Attendees: Alice Preble, Kelsey Park, Tanya Pierson, Mary Lou Michael, Mara Sanchez, Erika Arthur, Jess Mizzi, and Margot Fine.

Call to Order: 8:35am

Minutes: October 16 Meeting Minutes – Motion to approve the minutes, Chris Northrop. Second Christine Thibeault. **Adopted by Unanimous vote.**

JJ Specialist Report: Linda Barry Potter

- Budget (see spreadsheet): \$373k unobligated (systems improvement line) and \$329k unobligated (racial ethnic disparity line)
- Additional \$33,579 in FY20 allocation was discussed for assignment in the budget. Proposal to create a COVID-19 line in the 2020 budget to augment the emergency COVID fund supported by the JJAG with remaining FY17 funds (\$62K), which helps support transitioning youth in community. Discussion about how funds have been used so far and acknowledgement of continued need as cases are on the rise. Confirmation that funds as part of FY20 have until 9/30/24 to be spent down. Christine Thibeault Moved to approve, second Ned Chester. **Adopted by Unanimous vote.**
- Note unspent funds on grants. Suggestion that JJAG, through the Governance Committee, incorporate practice of doing a site visit at least once to grantee to make sure award is being spent down and give the opportunity to make any adjustments so JJAG isn’t in the position of having to return funds to the federal government.
- FY2019-2020 Compliance Report: 13 Juveniles held non-securely; 19 Juveniles were held securely; 23 were Male; 9 were Female; 24 were White; 6 were Black and 2 were Native Americans. No violations of the Core Protections were found.

Place Matters Presentation: Mara Sanchez, USM/Cutler Institute – See www.placemattersmaine.org

Mara shared some of the new work being done regarding mapping assets in Maine. She envisions this as a dynamic tool that can be kept updated and assist agencies and families with locating reliable resources in their counties. Request of members to share the video about the project and the survey tool at: <https://placemattersmaine.org/our-work/>

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Agency Presentations:

DOC (Colin O'Neill): Report on the COVID surge within the state prisons/correctional centers. Adult PO's and now JCCO's have been deployed to assist in staffing levels specifically in the kitchen and laundry. Colin noted that many volunteered to assist to keep facilities safe. JCCOs have been pulled back into remote field services except for the extreme high risk group. 30 youth currently at Long Creek (21 committed, 9 detained). Reviewing census 2x a week to try and move as many kids into the community as possible. The overall number has stayed relatively constant, but there are a lot of kids going in and out, especially on the detention side. Bonnie asked about COVID in Long Creek, 2 staff recently tested positive, but no cases of positive youth to date. , but they also have access to rapid result tests that work well if a person is symptomatic.

DHHS (Todd Landry): DHHS/OCFS also monitoring for COVID in their placements. Due to COVID restrictions there are fewer beds available than there would be normally. In state providers have had to reduce beds to create quarantine rooms, more distancing, etc. Down about 40 beds. A lot of out of state providers are not accepting kids from out of state. Some out-of-state placements are no longer taking out of state juveniles due to the pandemic.

DOE (Jonathan Shapiro): Report that School Safety Training Curriculum development going well. Positive School Climate is also focus area for this training. His office is responsible for PPE procurement and distribution which he forecasts to have enough supplies through April 2021. School are trying to develop and implement a robust protocol with kids who have dropped off during the pandemic, the focus is to 1) find the child, and determine they are safe and 2) re-engage the child with the school system and learning.

Committee Reports:

- Executive Committee (Jill Ward): Thanks to everyone for choosing a committee assignment. Linda will keep calendar of all the meetings and this will be circulated with these minutes. Also hope to begin working on website, so all of this is posted and more easily accessible. Next Executive Committee Meeting is 12/1/20 at 4pm.
- Governance & Legislative Committees (Christine Thibeault): Planning first Governance meeting in December 2020. Per Linda's budget report, Jill requested the Committee look at a policy of site visits to grantees so that we can ensure that the grants get used, rather than returned to the federal government. Legislative Committee will set a meeting time when there is a little more information about the Legislature's schedule and process. Most hearings and meetings are expected to be conducted via zoom due to COVID. Legislature is considering using the Civic Center for the full Legislature to meet safely. Also will need to see what changes may occur at the federal level as the result of the Administration transition. It was also noted that the Senate has already proposed its FY21 appropriations bill and the recommended allocation for JJDPA Title II is an increase.

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- R.E.D Committee (Bishop Steve Coleman & Regina Phillips): Bishop reported that the Committee is supportive of the DOC request for \$25,000 to support Credible Messengers by hiring a Family and Youth Engagement person. Executive Committee did not have time to review, but will provide feedback and recommendation at the next meeting. Members are also asked to review the materials and be prepared for a vote by the full JJAG at the December meeting. The committee is next working on the RED goals for the 3-year plan. Bishop mentioned they might want to focus on reintegration of the youth and helping them become fully accepted and functioning members of their communities. Next RED Committee Meeting is 11/17/20 at 4:30pm.

Review of 3-Year Planning Process and Goals Discussion: Systems Improvement Committee (Atlee Reilly)

Process: OJJDP expects us to have and begin implementing our 3-year plan in January.

Discussion will inform next Systems Improvement Committee meeting to help refine goals if needed and develop the objectives. In addition to this discussion, feedback can be provided through committees, emails, calls etc. Request to provide feedback by the next Systems Improvement Committee meeting on 12/2 at noon. The Committee will then work to integrate feedback for presentation to the full JJAG at the December meeting.

Discussion: Document provide to structure the conversation and put all the information in one place. There are 4 proposed goals. Under each goals is a compilation of information about how that goal connects to the current JJAG 3-year plan, the JJDPA allowable uses of our Title II funds and the relevant recommendations from CCLP's Juvenile Justice System Assessment report. An asterisk next to a recommendation indicates where some of the work is already being done.

Goal 1: The JJAG will leverage available federal resources to support efforts to develop a community-based continuum of care for youth involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in, the juvenile justice system.

- Priority should be on getting resources back in the community. How can we get the money from the State agencies into the community hands? DOC is already doing this with Tree Street.
- Regional Care Teams are seeing transitional housing for young people is a big need.
- Mental health. Consistently raised as a need of juvenile justice involved youth
- Crisis Response (and law enforcement training). Crisis response tends to get a lot of kids into a delinquency program. Would like to see crisis response be a treatment response instead of a delinquency response. Lots of support for this. Youth police interaction is the gateway to system involvement. We can help determine whether that's the CJS or the mental health system. A systems approach on how you get a person that is trained one way to think another way and to access other venues. Law enforcement must be part of the conversation and they aren't often included. Also need to make sure there are actual resources out there so we can refer these kids appropriately.

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- Lack of appropriate alternatives means subset of youth end up languishing in the Emergency Room in hospitals for lack of placement. Some stonewalling on the part of residential placements to take kids from ER. This is another gap.
- More family support. If parents have someone they can reach out to before the kids are getting into crisis situations, this would prevent a lot of youth system involvement. If parents had someone they trusted and could reach out to before the crisis, this would help. Low risk kids are ending up in detention because of a lack of family support. Police are often the gatekeepers to the system, but parents are the first line of defense. If we can provide education to these parents so we are limiting these long stretches of dysfunction that ends up in system involvement. Help these parents to recognize what they are working with, but also how to navigate the system once they are in it.
- Substance Use treatment. The opioid epidemic amongst youth in the state - is this being addressed sufficiently? DOC sees youth brought back into Long Creek not because of criminal activity, but because of substance use issues. Also, there has been an outbreak of intense methamphetamine use among youth in northern Maine. Trying to push that more intensive IOP programming is needed. Trying to pilot something in Northern Maine. Concern is that the JJ system is being used as the safety net for youth with substance use problems, and not the treatment system. The only thing we seem to have is outpatient counseling for kids and Day One. Need more. Where we are failing is when they transition out of Day 1 and back home, it's like falling off a cliff. DHHS is looking to potentially hire a Substance Abuse Coordinator for Maine.

Goal 2: The JJAG will leverage available federal resources to support efforts to address the particular needs of vulnerable populations of youth involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in, the juvenile justice system, including youth of color, immigrant youth, LGBTQ+ youth, youth with disabilities, and tribal youth.

- Focus area for the RED Committee. Some of the suggestions under other parts of the discussion could also fit here. Systems Improvement Committee to sort through all the feedback and try to line up objectives appropriately.

Goal 3: The JJAG will leverage available federal resources to support efforts to improve system policies and procedures consistent with national best practices to reduce the number of youth in the justice system or at risk of becoming involved in the justice system.

- This is the non-direct service related goal. See also DOC and DHHS reports from 10/16 JJAG meeting about activities and focus areas to date.
- Given Sixth Amendment report on indigent representation in Maine and the state of juvenile representation it would be really helpful to have more youth defender training. Training is best handled on a court by court basis. Get everyone together (defenders, DAs, judges) to talk about what's working and what's not working. This notion that this is a team, and to think about the various options in the same way to improve outcomes. Also include the AAGs that represent DHHS.
- Develop graduated sanctions or menu of alternatives before detention. Improve diversion and use of restorative justice alternatives. This is in line with goal of prior 3-year plan. Often the issue is that resources aren't available to youth that aren't on probation formally. These resources that attach to kids before deep system involvement for diversion purposes are needed. This is one of the bittersweet things about graduated sanctions...they are good, but

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often kids have to go through levels 1, 2, 3 and FAIL at them before we can get to the more involved resources. It's just prolonging this time period of failure. So diversionary resources up front are needed. Any time that a kid fails, it potentially results in a crisis and crisis response. Need early intervention resources.

- Risk Assessment. None of our systems are assessing kid's needs appropriately. In Utah, risk assessments are used to move kids from level 1 to whatever level is appropriate without needed to fail through. Every assessment tool ought to include what the child wants and what the child aspires to. We are always talking about "resolving their deficits." We can talk about all the treatment plans, but we need to link them up to what they want. The kids that do well are the ones that use the system because they have goals, instead of viewing it as just another. Some current discussion at about a universal assessment piece. Would reduce the gaps between the agencies. OCFS is really moving away from the linear failure model and moving towards addressing a youth's immediate needs. It's also part of training for juvenile services: addressing immediate needs and not just working down a linear path. The strengths approach is exactly where we need to go. The evidence points towards a peer support model. YAP. Credible messengers. These are not people watching and catching kids that are doing something wrong. These are people that are peers and supporting the youth. We need these resources up front, not just at the deep end of the system. What about a PSSYF/Compass program?

Goal 4: The JJAG will leverage available federal resources to elevate and amplify the voices of youth involved in, or at risk of becoming involved in, the JJ system to ensure that Maine youth are authentically engaged in reform efforts.

- Youth voice, youth empowerment goal, both internal for JJAG youth voice engagement and external to build capacity for youth voice more broadly.
- Suggestion to work with Muskie school's Community Youth and Community Engagement Team through the Cutler Institute. They have partnered with foster care initiatives statewide and are connected to a lot of community partners (MIO, MYC, Outright, etc.). There is a readymade structure there that JJAG could support, and interact with to learn about positive youth engagement and avoid duplication.

Systems Improvement Committee will take this input and work to develop objectives in line with these goals for next meeting. Feedback continues to be welcome until the next committee meeting on 12/2.

Other Scheduling Items: CJJ Conference in November from the 19-21. (Ned, Regina, Chris N., Christine, Mike, Anwar, Sienna, Linda, Luc, Colin, Jill, Debra, Alice, Steve, and Bonnie are registered).

Jill will be sending out, after each meeting, next steps email of items to follow-up on between monthly meetings and draft minutes for review.

Adjourn: 11am