

Governor's Report

JJAG ANNUAL REPORT
BARRY POTTER, LINDA

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Copies of the following publications may be obtained free of charge from the JJAG or their website,
www.mainejjag.org 3-Year Plan

Children's Policy & Law Center Systems Assessment 2019.

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Year: 2022-2024

Unit: 201J

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVIOSRY GROUP

PURPOSE:

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) was created in response to the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, as reauthorized in 2018, (JJDP). The JJDP creates a voluntary partnership between states and the federal government for the purpose of improving the administration of juvenile justice. In order to receive an annual formula grant award, based on the state's juvenile population, each state must demonstrate compliance with four congressionally defined standards ("Core Requirements") for the management of juvenile offenders. These Core Requirements include:

- 1) Deinstitutionalization of status offenders: Ensure that non-offending youth, and those alleged to have committed only a status offense, i.e., conduct that would not be illegal if committed by an adult, are not securely confined.
- 2) Sight and Sound Separation from Adult Inmates: Ensure separation of juveniles from adults who have been charged with or convicted of criminal conduct in secure facilities.
- 3) Removal of all persons under the age of 18, including those being prosecuted as adults from adult jails, lockups, and prisons; and
- 4) Identify and Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R/ED) within the juvenile justice system: Compile and analyze data on race and ethnicity of youth at decision points in State, local, or tribal juvenile justice systems to determine which such points create racial and ethnic disparities and develop and implement a work plan that includes measurable objectives for policy, practice, or other system changes, based on the needs identified.

The JJAG operates as the supervisory board for all planning, administrative, and funding functions under the Act.

ORGANIZATION:

The JJAG was first established as a committee of the Maine Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance Agency. It was formalized by Executive Order 4 FY80 on October 5, 1979, and authorized by statute in 1983 (34-A MRSA,

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section 1209). The Department of Corrections (DOC) is the statutorily designated administrative and fiscal agent of the JJAG.

The JJAG Board consists of not less than 15 and not more than 33 representatives of various constituencies including: units of local government; law enforcement, juvenile justice, corrections, probation, and the juvenile courts; and those public and private entities responsible for delinquency prevention or treatment, welfare, social services, mental health, education, neglected or dependent children, education, and social services for children, public and private agencies that utilize volunteers to work with delinquents or potential delinquents; businesses and business groups employing youth; and persons with special experience and competency in addressing the problem of school violence, victimization, vandalism, and learning disabilities.

- Neither a majority of members, nor the chairperson, may be a full-time governmental employee.
- At least one fifth of the members must be under the age of 28 at the time of appointment.
- At least three members must have been or currently be under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system or closely related to someone who has been under the jurisdiction of the state's juvenile justice system.

PROGRAM:

The goals established by the members of Maine's Juvenile Justice Advisory Group for years 2022 through 2024 include:

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

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

Goal 3: The JJAG will leverage available federal resources to support efforts to improve system policies and procedures consistent with national best practices and recommendations reflected in the Maine Juvenile Justice

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System Assessment published by the Center for Children's Law and Policy in February 2020 to reduce the number of youth in the justice system or at risk of becoming involved in the justice system.

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 juvenile justice system, to ensure that Maine youth are authentically engaged in reform efforts.

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Goal 1: Leverage available federal resources to support development of a community-based continuum of care for youth at risk of, involved with, or previously involved in the youth justice system in Maine.

The JJAG funded the following initiatives:

\$100,000 to Lewiston Middle School for Crisis Response: FY 2022 – FY 2024 Maine Inside Out was contracted to provide a 2-year in-school crisis response program designed to reduce suspensions and expulsions among at-risk youth. This initiative was funded following a Request for Proposals (RFP) and competitive application process.

\$20,000 annually to support Regional Care Teams: FY 2023 A Regional Care Team is a coalition of many stakeholders across agencies to address individual youths' immediate needs. Regional Care Teams provide low-barrier funding for urgent youth and family needs not met by other agencies and conduct individual case reviews to explore solutions for particularly complex or multi-system cases.

Goal 2: Leverage federal resources to address historically and currently marginalized populations of youth at-risk of being, being involved with, or having been involved with the youth justice system in Maine:

The JJAG funded the following initiatives:

\$50,000 to the MidCoast Community Collaborative for Targeted Diversion: Trekkers serve as the fiscal agent for MidCoast Community Collaborative to organize a tiered referral system for youth in their schools with targeted services in their communities. The goal of this initiative is to prevent youths from entering the formal juvenile justice system. The award was issued following a Request for Application (RFA) process.

\$5,000 to Old Orchard Police Department: The Old Orchard Beach Police Department Juvenile Community Review Board provides an alternative to formal justice system involvement for youth who have been issued summonses for low-level non-violent juvenile crimes.

\$36,000 to Downeast Restorative Justice: to fund restorative justice services for youth in Hancock County. This initiative was funded as a sole source contract.

\$24,0000 to Boys and Girls Clubs of Border Towns; Mi'kmaq Cultural Engagement Mentor \$64,000.00, Maliseet Cultural Engagement Mentor \$64,000.00.

\$3,600 to Learning Works to support training for 4 new Restorative Justice facilitators.

\$5,000 to Youth Led Justice to expand their youth-facilitated restorative justice programs.

\$5,000 to New England Arab American Organization to support an Art and Healing event in Lewiston: A 4 -session art and healing event was offered to families in Lewiston following the mass shooting in October 2023. Sixteen families attended every all four sessions of the event.

\$5,000 to Maine Immigrant and Refugee Services (MEIRS) to support a youth internship/paid work experience by funding stipends for youth who are working with adult community members but are between 14 – 15 years of age and do not qualify for Department of Labor programs for youth.

Capacity Building:

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\$25,000 to the New England Arab American Organization: (1st Renewal) This program is specifically for girls who are Arab American. The program provides activities in after school hours regarding culture, arts, social concerns, prevention programing and at time field trips to increase the girl's exposure to relevant culture and social experiences. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$25,000 to Tree Street Youth Center, (2nd Renewal) to hire staff to expand their restorative School program (Rooted) to serve youth who are on their waiting list. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$25,000.00 to Immigrant and Refugee Services of Maine (1st Renewal) to hire staff to coordinate within Lewiston School Restorative Justice Boards. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$25,000.00 to Boys & Girls Clubs of Border Towns, to provide funding for a part-time adult mentor to assist all three Cultural Mentors in obtaining supplies, strategizing for attendance increases at Clubs where activities are provided and supporting the C.E. M's, as needed. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$24,960.00 to Midcoast Youth Center and Skate Park to provide the inclusion of a support group for middle school and high school age students from the LGBTQ+ community, to support a group facilitated by a mental health professional, to have bi-monthly social field trips, to attend LGBTQ+ positive social interactions, and to meet positive adult from the LGBTQ+ community to raise the youth's sense of belonging and increase skills and protective factors for youth. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$10,000.00 to the Old Orchard Police Department to establish a full time Juvenile Community Review Board to divert youth from the formal justice system and facilitate repair the harm the youth's acts have caused in the community for non-violent offenses. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$24,596.00 to Out Maine to build and host a remote support group in the Bath area for LGBTQ+ middle school students. This group will also conduct some in person field trips to engage youth in positive social skill building and increase their sense of belonging by being exposed to positive adult LGBTQ+ adults. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$19,383.00 to Restorative Justice Project Maine to provide Restorative Justice Facilitator training in May-May and Somali for adults in the Lewiston Area. This group will translate training materials into these languages and conduct the training in these languages. This will help parents who speak Maay-Maay or Somali to be assisted by native speakers at court hearing, RJ circles, or school meetings so they can truly engage in these areas in their first language. The goal is to have 3-4 students in quarterly sessions 4 times a year. Every year 12-16 adults will be trained as Restorative Justice Facilitators. This funding also includes a stipend for the adult learners. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$25,000 to Smooth Feather Theater to support a salary for the director of this program who has never earned a salary despite operating the program for the past 10 years. His projects will include Thursday afternoon circles with community youth, making a movie with the community youth, and participating in self-care retreats with community youth with 4 major activities being done per year. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

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Sustainable Restorative Transformative Practices: All the programs listed above have restorative and transformative practices within them.

Goal 3: Leverage federal resources to support efforts to improve system policies and procedures thereby improving Maine's juvenile justice system consistent with national best practices recommendations and recommendations of the 2020 Maine Juvenile Justice System Assessment.

The JJAG funded the following initiatives:

Support training for judges, court staff, defense attorneys, law enforcement, and other juvenile justice personnel: trauma informed responses; adolescent development, mental and behavioral health needs.

\$25,000 to Strategies for Youth to do a 3-day training June 2022. This initiative was funded as a sole source contract.

\$57,000 to Strategies for Youth 3 2-day trainings 2024 Fairfield, Rockland and South Berwick. This initiative was funded as a sole source contract with certified evidence based practices.

5,000 to support the School Resource Officer Summit for 2 days in 2021.

\$5,000.00 to Intercultural Community Center for staff attendance at a series of training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in America including cultural trauma experienced by members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations of Maine.

\$5,000 to Spiritual Care Services of Maine to provide clergy to help at the New Beginning Emergency Youth Shelter, for staff as well as youth in the Lewiston following the mass shooting in October 2023.

\$86,335.00 to the Carter Development Group to deliver Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Implicit Bias training to the members of the JJAG and strategic planning to prepare the Board to look at policies and practices within DOC.

\$175,388.00 to Mindbridge to provide Implicit Bias Training for staff of Long Creek Youth Development Center and Juvenile Community Corrections. This training was also made available at no cost to providers contracted with DOC to provide services to youth as a means of fulfilling DOC's annual diversity training requirement.

\$46,000 to Carter Development Group to assist the JJAG in drafting the 3-Year Plan for 2024 through 2026. This initiative was funded as a sole source contract.

JJAG will work with DOC, DHHS, and others to ensure evidence-based programs and practices are in place throughout the state.

Funding listed above to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Border Towns includes funding to the Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, and Sipayik tribal nations of Maine to provide SMART MOVES, SMART GIRLS, SMART BOYS, HEALTHY CHOICES, & HEALHTY RELATIONSHIPS to youth who are 5 – 18 years of age. These programs have been culturally adapted to reflect each tribe's unique values, history, traditions, language and arts.

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\$50,000 to Augusta Boys & Girls Club to expand their services to young people including alternative education, restorative justice programs and a youth advisory board to work alongside adults. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$50,000 to Aroostook Community Action for Teens Helping Teens to help support the use of restorative practices in area high schools and develop a youth counsel to work with adults regarding Teen Centers programming and problem resolution. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

\$50,000.00 to Mid-Coast Community Collaborative (Trekkers is their fiscal agent) to develop a leadership team and create a referral process for services needed by students to help achieve the mission of care for all community youth from birth to adulthood. This award was issued pursuant to the RFA process.

JJAG will work collaboratively with all youth-serving programs to advance policies and procedures to address inequities across all points of system contact.

Goal 4: Elevate and amplify voices of youth at-risk of or involved with the youth justice system to ensure authentic youth engagement.

The JJAG funded the following initiatives:

\$150,000.00 to University of Southern Maine Young People's Caucus over 3-years to support its programming to introduce youth to and hopefully seat JJAG youth member.

\$27,000.00 Boys & Girls Clubs of Border Towns to send 5 adult tribal council members and 6 youth council members to a 4-day Indian Youth Summit in San Diego, CA last December.

\$5,000 to Smooth Feather Theater to support direct involvement of youth in writing, filming, producing, and editing a short film regarding adolescent anxiety disorder.

Develop and implement a plan to increase youth participation in the work of the JJAG:

\$18,000 allocated for Stipends to incentivize and support youth member engagement in JJAG Board meetings, trainings, committee meetings, or other organized Youth Council activities. Our youth members have been coordinating with other interested youth from the Youth Caucus to discuss issues in common.

Work with systems, schools, and community-based organizations to connect with justice involved youth across the systems and amplify youth voice, help promote racial equity: Refer to Goal 2 funding list.

\$10,000.00 - \$15,000.00 annually to be allocated for the Paul Vestal Scholarship. Youth with prior involvement in Maine's juvenile justice system can apply to receive up to \$5,000 to support their demonstrated willingness to measurably improve their life and the lives of others.

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Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Membership as of January 8, 2025

Name	Email Address	Government Employee?	Appointed Prior to Age 28?
Edwin Chester	chester@chesterandvestal.com	NO	NO
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Kelly Rackler	Kelly.A.Rackler@Maine.gov	YES	NO

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Hon. Sara Churchill, MJB	<u>Sarah.Churchill@mainecourts.gov</u>	YES	NO
Christine Thibeault, DOC	<u>Christine.Thibeault@Maine.gov</u>	YES	NO
Samantha Fenderson, DOL	<u>Samantha.J.Fenderson@Maine.gov</u>	YES	NO
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