

Office of the Child Advocate
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board
Wednesday May 10, 2023
1:00-3:00pm
Meeting held virtually

Board Members or Designees Present:

Maria Mossaides (OCA)
Cecely Reardon (DYS)
Nancy Connolly (DMH)
Naoka Carey (CfJJ)
Rachel Gwaltney (CLM)
Tom Capasso (Trial Court)
Rebecca Brink (DCF)
Yves Singletary (DPH)
Madison Holden (Sen. Gomez)
Dawn Christie (PPAL)
Rep. Nguyen (House Majority)

OCA Staff:

Melissa Threadgill
Ari Fertig
Kristi Polizzano
Alix Rivière
Morgan Byrnes

Other Attendees:

Joseph Abber (Probation)
Sana Fadel (CfJJ)
Sarah Shepley (CfJJ)
Josh Dankoff (CfJJ)
Patricia Bergin (EOPSS)
Shaplaie Brooks (MCLGBTQ+)
Leon Smith (CfJJ)
Matt Pecoraro (Judge Baker)
Kathleen Bitetti (SAO)
Members of the public

Meeting Commenced: 1:02 pm

Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Juvenile Justice Policy & Data (JJPAD) Board meeting. Members of the Board and guests introduced themselves.

Meeting Agenda

Ms. Threadgill presented the agenda for today's meeting: a review of the JJPAD's 2023 proposed work plan and a presentation by CfJJ on their recent report, *Justice by Geography*.

Approval of Minutes from the December Meeting

Ms. Threadgill held a formal vote on the approval of the previous JJPAD Board meeting minutes. Naoka Carey, Nancy Connolly, Maria Mossaides, Rachel Gwaltney, Cecely Reardon, Yves Singletary and Madison Holden all voted in the affirmative. Tom Capasso and Rep. Tram Nguyen abstained. No one opposed.

The meeting minutes for December were approved.

OCA Updates

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the Board's newest member, Representative Tram Nguyen.

She then gave legislative updates, including a bill focused on the state's Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) system based on the recommendations made by the Board in their November 2022 report on the subject.

Ms. Threadgill then updated the group on the Massachusetts Youth Diversion Program (MYDP), including the introduction of two new sites in Plymouth and Hampden counties and an update on how many youth have been served to date.

Finally, Ms. Threadgill updated the group on the Center on Child Wellbeing and Trauma (CCWT). The update included major active projects currently underway at the Center.

Ms. Threadgill welcomed any questions. Hearing none, she welcomed Ms. Polizzano to begin presenting on the Board's proposed 2023 work plan.

Review and Vote on JJPAD 2023 Work Plan

Ms. Polizzano highlighted the process which informed the proposed work plan, which included reviewing the JJPAD's legislative mandate, meeting with board members to discuss possible projects, and a review of the juvenile justice statewide data trends that were identified in the Board's FY22 Annual Report.

Ms. Threadgill then presented on the Board's first proposed project, a deeper look into the juvenile retrial phase. She presented on:

- Pretrial data trends (FY18-FY22), which highlighted an increase in the use of dangerous hearings and pretrial probation for youth involved in the justice system
- A review of the JJPAD's mandated reporting requirements, and proposed project goals
- A proposed research process, that included research questions and possible methodologies to answer those questions

Ms. Threadgill welcomed members to share comments or submit further research questions.

Members suggested including feedback from young people and their families that have had contact with the system.

Members also discussed the increase in the average length of stay (in days) for youth who are detained to the Department of Youth Services (DYS) prior to their trial and having an agreed upon definition of what pretrial probation is in the context of the proposed project.

Members then discussed the stakeholders involved in the pretrial probation and strategized best practices on how to interview all of them.

Ms. Threadgill then welcomed Ms. Polizzano to present on the Board's second proposed project, a deeper look into youth who are dually involved with both DHS and the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Ms. Polizzano presented on:

- The most recent year (FY22)'s data on this population, noting that 50% (n=335) of detained youth had DCF involvement at time of admission and 47% (n=67) of first-time commitments had DCF involvement at time of admission
- A review of the JJPAD's mandated reporting requirements, and proposed project goals.
- A proposed research process, that included research questions and possible methodologies to answer those questions.

She welcomed members to share comments or submit further research questions. Members discussed focusing on collecting data on behavioral health supports for dually involved youth during this process as well as the youth's DCF placement. Members discussed the availability of data regarding these issues.

Members suggested interviewing diversion coordinators on the youth who are dually involved in their program to get a better sense of what supports this population needs.

Members discussed the pathways in which youth crossover, including through the CRA process. Members also discussed how the stigma of being DCF involved can enhance a youth's chances of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system.

Ms. Polizzano then welcomed Ms. Threadgill to present on the Board's ongoing work, which includes:

- Monitor the implementation of any new legislation passed
- Submit FY23 data as part of the JJPAD Annual Report and update the Juvenile Justice Website
- Monitor the MYDP's continued expansion
- Advisory role with the Center on Childhood Trauma and Wellbeing
- Continued education and outreach re: the Board's RED Brief

Ms. Threadgill welcomed any questions. Hearing none, she welcomed Ms. Polizzano to present on the Subcommittee Work Plans:

Data Subcommittee

- Summer: Discuss the 2023 work plan and the proposed research methodologies for both the pretrial phase and crossover youth projects
- Fall: FY23 data analysis to inform the FY23 annual report, and discuss the available project specific data for both the pretrial and crossover youth projects
- Winter: Review the data section of the FY23 annual report

CBI Subcommittee

- Summer: Discuss the 2023 work plan, update on CRA implementation and the MYDP, discuss data re: pretrial and crossover youth projects
- Early & Late Fall: Discuss the initial findings from the crossover youth and pretrial projects, MYDP update
- Winter: Advise on ongoing projects, MYDP update

CTTF

- Spring: Update on the CCWT and discussion of the 2023 work plan
- Summer: Project updates
- Fall: Update on the CCWT and project updates

JJPAD Board

- Fall: Discuss the initial findings from the crossover youth and pretrial projects and subcommittee report outs
- December: Review and discuss FY23 Annual Report and hear subcommittee report outs

Ms. Threadgill then held a formal vote on the proposed 2023 work plan.

Maria Mossaides, Yves Singletary, Naoka Carey, Rep. Tram Nguyen, Rachel Gwaltney, Nancy Connolly and Cecely Reardon all voted in the affirmative.

Tom Capasso abstained.

The JJPAD's 2023 Work Plan was adopted.

Board Member Updates

Ms. Threadgill welcomed members to share any updates. Commissioner Reardon thanked those who attended DYS' annual art showcase.

Justice by Geography Presentation by CfJJ

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the CfJJ team, Naoka Carey, Leon Smith and Sarah Shepley, to present. Ms. Carey thanked the Board for making the time to discuss this topic and welcomed Mr. Smith and Ms. Shepley to begin presenting. The presentation covered data analysis highlighted county by county trends from various decision points in the juvenile justice, including, applications for complaint, pretrial proceedings, adjudications, dispositions, and youthful offender filings.

Mr. Smith welcomed questions. Members discussed how to disseminate this information to juvenile justice stakeholders at the county level.

Ms. Threadgill thanked the presenters.

Closing Comments

Ms. Threadgill thanked members for their insightful input, and set the next meeting for some time in the fall.

Meeting adjourned: 2:33 pm