

# Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board

CBI Subcommittee

Virtual Meeting

July 21, 2022

1:00-2:30pm

# Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review/Approval of June meeting minutes
3. Recap of Draft CRA Report Findings
4. Discussion on Recommendations for Improvements to the CRA system

# Help spread the word!

- DYS posted the latest RFR for new Diversion Learning Lab sites
- The goal is to expand the state Diversion model to **2 new counties**
- Proposals should include (among other things): plans on implementing the model, an outreach plan to referrers (and letters of support from at least one), description of in-house and referred services, a description of experience with collecting data, and how the agency plans on engaging youth/families

## **IMPORTANT DATES:**

- Bidder's (virtual) conference: **July 25, 2022, 11am**
- Bid's due: **August 29, 2022, 4pm**
- [Click here to access the RFR posting learn more & apply](#)

# Draft Findings

1. The goals of the 2012 reforms to the CHINS system have only been partially realized
2. There is no shared understanding of what the current CRA system is for, leading to misinformation at every level
3. The system operates with significant differences in different parts of the state
4. There are disparities in how the CRA system is used and who is referred to it
5. Many youth in the CRA system *could* have their needs better met outside of the CRA system
6. The CRA process can be a helpful “fail safe” for families, particularly for youth with complex needs that require multiple agency involvement
7. There is limited data on outcomes from the CRA system that could be used to evaluate the system

# What Should the Goal of the CRA System Be?

**(Draft goal):** The goal of Massachusetts' CRA system is to provide children and families with the necessary supports to be successful in their home, school and community with as little court intervention as possible.

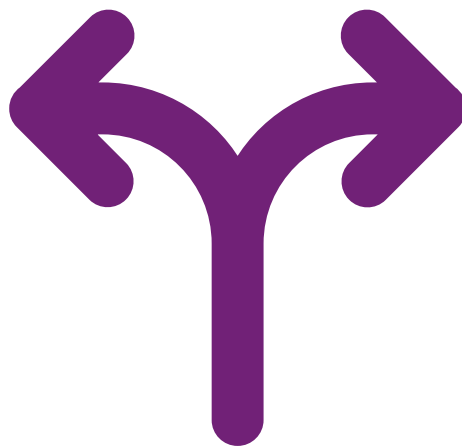
## **A successful system:**

- Connects youth and families to needed supports outside of the courthouse (before filing the CRA, at the informal stage)
- Reserves the formal CRA process (i.e., with judicial oversight) for cases in which a multidisciplinary case conferencing team has identified it as necessary
- Prevents future juvenile justice and child welfare system involvement

# There are two major paths forward

## 1. ELIMINATE PART OR ALL OF THE CURRENT CRA COURT PROCESS (CT Model)

- All petitions
- School-based petitions
- Community-based petitions



*\*Not mutually exclusive\**

## 2. SUBSTANTIALLY RESTRUCTURE THE CURRENT CRA SYSTEM (NY Model)

- Expanding upstream supports
- Reserving the CRA system for youth that have exhausted other options
- Increasing data availability

# Eliminate all or part of the current CRA court process

1. **Eliminate school-based CRA court petitions** by building up schools' truancy response and prevention efforts, providing a path to Family Resource Centers for truancy referrals and supports, and eliminating ability of schools to file CRA petition with court.
2. **Phase out community-based CRA court petitions** by replacing the CRA court process with a community-based referral system to Family Resource Centers

1. Do you strongly support any of these recommendations?
2. Do you strongly disagree with any of these recommendations?
3. Pros/cons to each?

# Expand upstream supports

## 1. Increase Community Service Availability:

- Expand FRCs (number of services & sites)
- Expand availability of mentoring & family/peer support
- Expand community-based MH services (esp: family therapy supports, crisis response, and respite)
- Further study needed re: state agency eligibility criteria for families seeking voluntary services/placement

## 2. Increase School-Based Support:

- Support more school-based interventions where students with needs can be identified earlier
- Require schools to meet minimum standards for school-based truancy prevention programs (and provide TA/support)
- FRCs provide families/students with access to educational advocates (e.g., MHAP for Kids attorneys) to help address school-related issues (e.g. IEP plans)

**3. Expand Education on CRA Process:** Develop an awareness campaign & training curriculum to educate stakeholders (e.g., schools, therapists, doctors, parents) on what the CRA is for, and what prevention services exist as an alternative

1. Do you strongly support any of these recommendations?
2. Do you strongly disagree with any of these recommendations?
3. Pros/cons to each?



# Reserve the CRA system for youth that have exhausted other options

## 1. Increase Engagement with FRCS:

- Mandate referrals to and proof of engagement with the FRC before a CRA is filed (e.g., an FRC “certification” mechanism) including a process that determines all parties have exhausted all other options (e.g., IEP considerations, community-based supports)  
OR
- Promote better communication with parents at the filing stage re: what to expect and what is/is not possible with a CRA by staffing an FRC Court Liaison in each courthouse

**2. Require Case Conferencing:** Require a multidisciplinary team (MDT) to review case at the informal CRA stage and attempt to resolve

**3. Limit Cases that Receive Judicial Hearing:** Reserve the formal CRA system for concerns not resolved through the informal case conference or those cases that need judicial oversight as determined by the MDT

**4. Focus on Needs, Not Behaviors:** Restructure the petition types to be based on supports needed and who the petitioner is (e.g., school, parent), not just the concerning behavior, (e.g., “truant”)

1. Do you strongly support any of these recommendations?
2. Do you strongly disagree with any of these recommendations?
3. Pros/cons to each?

# Increase data availability & establish a CQI process

1. **Mandate data collection and reporting by school districts** to DESE by demographic criteria (race, ethnicity, age, gender, etc.) for youth with school-based CRA filings (similar to requirements re: school-based arrests and court referrals)
2. **Mandate data collection and reporting on *why* the CRA was filed** (e.g., who asked for it, what service was needed as determined by MDT). This would include data collection and reporting by FRCs when a child/family is referred to the Juvenile Court when FRC involvement is unsuccessful (i.e., when the case is “certified” by the FRC to move forward)
3. **Increase cross-branch data collection and reporting** between the Juvenile Courts and Executive Branch agencies (e.g., DCF, DYS, DESE) in order to collect outcome data

1. Do you strongly support any of these recommendations?
2. Do you strongly disagree with any of these recommendations?
3. Pros/cons to each?

# Next Meeting Date:

## *No meeting in August*

September 15, 2022

1:00pm-2:30pm

Virtual Meeting

*For virtual meeting information, email Morgan Byrnes at [Morgan.Byrnes@mass.gov](mailto:Morgan.Byrnes@mass.gov)*

*2022 CBI Subcommittee meetings are on the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month 1:00pm-2:30pm.*

# Contact

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