

Office of the Child Advocate
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board
Community Based Interventions Subcommittee
Wednesday, November 20, 2024
11:00AM-12:30PM
Meeting held virtually

Subcommittee Members or Designees Present:

Kimberly Lawrence (Probation)
Stacey Lynch (DPH)
Thula Sibanda (DYS)
Leon Smith (CfJJ)
Amy Ponte (CAFL)
Jamie Bennett (YAD)
Susan Gill-Hickey (DMH)
Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
Dawn Christie (PPAL)
Laura Miller (MDAA)
Lydia Todd (CLM)

OCA Staff:

Kristi Polizzano
Morgan Byrnes
Arianna Turner
Kerin Miller

Other Attendees:

Katie Perry-Lorentz (DYS)
Omar Irizarry (DMH)
Kathleen Bitetti (OSA)
Sabrina Araujo

Meeting Commenced: 11:03 AM

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Polizzano welcomed the attendees to the Community Based Interventions (CBI) Subcommittee virtual meeting. She welcomed members to introduce themselves.

Ms. Polizzano then introduced the agenda for the meeting, which centered on reviewing edits and feedback on the draft pretrial phase report.

Review and Approval of Minutes from the October Meeting:

Ms. Polizzano held a formal vote on the approval of the previous Community Based Interventions meeting minutes. Rachel Wallack, Kimberly Lawrence, Thula Sibanda, Stacy

Lynch, Leon Smith, Jamie Bennett, Amy Ponte, and Laura Miller all voted to approve the minutes. No one abstained or opposed.

The meeting minutes for October 21, 2024 were approved.

Pretrial Project: Edits and Feedback

Ms. Polizzano shared that the OCA pulled together the most substantive edits suggested by members to review as a group and welcomed other general feedback on the report. No comments were made.

Ms. Polizzano then began reviewing the major proposed edits to the report and welcomed questions and feedback on each suggested edit.

Members discussed wording changes to findings and specific sentences to ensure accuracy and readability. Members also discussed additions that would provide context in certain sections.

Ms. Polizzano then reviewed the report section by section and welcomed members to make edits and suggestions.

Members discussed several edits, including language additions to a number of recommendations. Some members suggested defining what “adequately resourcing” community-based support programs means and including components to reduce implicit biases and increase cultural competency in judicial trainings. Members also discussed including additional language about the data collection and reporting obligations of relevant agencies. One member suggested adding language about working with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to resolve the issue of kids being held in detention because DCF does not have adequate placements for them.

Pretrial Project Next Steps:

Ms. Polizzano shared the next steps in the project, including:

- December:
 - Latest report draft is emailed to full board members by 12/6
 - Full board discusses and, pending discussion, votes on report
- January:
 - The report is submitted to the Legislature

Ms. Polizzano shared that the group will be meeting monthly beginning in 2025 and will be transitioning to discussing the dually involved youth project. She shared that an availability poll for 2025 meetings will be sent out following the meeting.

Closing Comments:

Ms. Polizzano thanked the members for their participation, welcomed them to reach out with thoughts before next meeting, and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 12:20 PM