

Office of the Child Advocate
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board
Data Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 14, 2025
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM
Meeting held virtually

Subcommittee Members or Designees Present:

Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
Michael Ames (CLM)
David Chandler (DYS)
Joe Mulhern (CPCS)
Kim Occhiuti (DCF)
Sana Fadel (CfJJ)
Laura Lempicki (Probation)
Laura Miller (MDAA)
Lisa Lundquist (OGR)
Dana Bernson (DPH)

OCA Staff:

Kristi Polizzano
Morgan Byrnes
Arianna Turner

Other Attendees:

Jen Rocha (DYS)
Jason Lewis (DYS)
Josh Dankoff (CfJJ)
Baleigh Breaux (CfJJ)
Julia Nardelli (CfJJ)
Omar Irizarry (DMH)
Matthew Broderick (DMH)

Meeting Commenced: 10:03 AM

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Polizzano welcomed the attendees to the Data Subcommittee meeting. Members and attendees introduced themselves.

Approval of November Meeting Minutes

Ms. Polizzano asked if anyone had questions or feedback regarding the November 26, 2024, meeting minutes. None were raised. Laura Miller, Sana Fadel, Lisa Lundquist, David Chandler, Kim Occhiuti, Joe Mulhern, and Michael Ames voted in the affirmative. Rachel Wallack and Laura Lempicki abstained. No one voted against the meeting minutes.

The November meeting minutes were approved.

Ms. Polizzano thanked members for their data submissions and contributions to the JJPAD 2024 annual report and welcomed a general discussion of edits and feedback.

Members discussed the nuances of holding youth after a 58A hearing, and Ms. Polizzano added clarifying language to the report to address the issue of “tolled time.”

Ms. Polizzano asked for additional feedback. None was shared.

Review of the JJPAD 2024 Report Data

Ms. Polizzano shared that she would review the report section by section to allow for members to provide feedback.

Ms. Polizzano began by reviewing the “Key Takeaways,” and “Initial Stages of the Juvenile Justice system” sections and welcomed feedback. One member noted that the number of applications for complaint remained stable, while the overall detention numbers increased.

Ms. Polizzano then reviewed the “Offense Severity at the ‘Initial’ Stages of the Juvenile Justice System” section and welcomed feedback. None was raised.

Ms. Polizzano reviewed the “Arraignments and Pretrial Proceedings, Supervision & Monitoring, and Detention” section and welcomed feedback. One member asked if there was more detailed data on the conditions of release assigned for pretrial cases where youth were not initially detained. Ms. Polizzano shared that that data is not available.

Next, Ms. Polizzano reviewed the “Dispositions & Sanctions” section and welcomed feedback. None was raised. She also explained that a recent edit was made to include clarifying language about the term “dispositions.”

Ms. Polizzano then reviewed the “Youthful Offender Cases” section and welcomed feedback. Members discussed the nuance of the grand jury process, and Ms. Polizzano added clarifying language to the report. Members then discussed the increase in Department of Corrections sentences in FY24.

Ms. Polizzano reviewed the “Youth Engaged in Services (YES)” section and welcomed feedback. None was raised.

Ms. Polizzano then reviewed the “Specific Cohorts of Youth” section and welcomed feedback. None was raised. She added that the Department of Children and Families (DCF) is working on validating the data on dually involved youth, and that the OCA is working with DCF and the Department of Youth Services (DYS) to validate the data before the report goes to the full board; if the data cannot be validated, the dually-involved youth section will be cut from the report.

Members discussed trends in dually-involved youth being held without bail. One member asked if the reason that dually-involved youth were held more often than their non-DCF-involved peers was because of a DCF policy not to bail out youth. Ms. Polizzano shared that the Board cannot confirm this is the case with the current data available, however that is a practice the OCA heard of during interviews for JJPAD-related projects. One member asked if most youth held without bail are held because of 58A hearings. Ms. Polizzano shared that most youth held without bail are held because of bail or personal recognizance being revoked.

Finally, Ms. Polizzano reviewed the “Utilization of Other State Services” section and welcomed feedback. None was raised.

Next Steps

Ms. Polizzano reviewed the next steps on the report, including validating dually-involved youth data, sending the report to the full board, and holding a vote to send the report to the Legislature. She also welcomed members to send additional edits before the board meeting in March.

Ms. Polizzano then shared that the OCA is creating briefs on county level data, girls, and racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system to explore each of these topics in greater depth than was possible in the report. She shared that the subcommittee would reconvene sometime this spring to discuss those briefs in more detail and that members will have the opportunity to review them in advance.

Ms. Polizzano welcomed questions on the annual report and the next steps. None were raised.

Members then discussed the ways that the new federal administration’s immigration policies may require a shift in how child-serving state agencies collect and report data.

Concluding remarks:

Ms. Polizzano thanked attendees for their work on the report. She asked members to look for an email to schedule the next meeting and welcomed members to reach out in the meantime.

Adjournment: 10:47 AM