

Office of the Child Advocate  
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board  
Data Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
Thursday September 9, 2021  
10:30am-12:00pm  
**Meeting held virtually**

**Subcommittee Members or Designees Present:**

- Kim Occhiuti (DCF)
- Cristina Tedstone (DCF)
- David Chandler (DYS)
- Lydia Todd (CLM)
- Matthew Broderick (DMH)
- Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
- Laura Lempicki (Probation)
- Barbara Kaban (CPCS)
- Sana Fadel (CfJJ)

**OCA Staff:**

- Melissa Threadgill (OCA)
- Kristine Polizzano (OCA)
- Janice Neiman (OCA)
- Gabriel Sultan (OCA)

**Other Attendees:**

- Kristina Sladek (Probation)
- Audrey Wynne (CfJJ)
- Ryan Wilson (CfJJ)
- Emma Moore (CfJJ)
- Noor Toraif (DYS)
- Other members of the public

**Meeting Commenced:** 10:34AM

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Data subcommittee meeting and confirmed that a quorum was present. Members and attendees introduced themselves on the Zoom video conference. Ms. Threadgill thanked the committee members for their diligent work and explained that the group would be reviewing and offering edits to the latest draft of the data availability report after reviewing the July meeting minutes.

**Review and Approval of the July Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Threadgill asked if anyone had any questions or feedback regarding the July 9, 2021, meeting minutes. The group did not offer any feedback or objections. The minutes were approved.

### **Review of the Data Availability Report Draft:**

Ms. Threadgill reminded the group that the editing process for the draft data availability report is ongoing and that data elements may change in the coming months prior to final publication as agencies respond to annual data requests. Ms. Threadgill shared a marked-up copy of the draft report with the group via the Zoom ‘screen-share’ feature. She reminded the group that one of the main purposes of improving data collection practices and accessibility in the Commonwealth is to allow for more well-informed conclusions regarding trends within the juvenile justice system.

Group members were then given an opportunity to offer edits, critiques, and questions on the draft report on a page-by-page basis. Some group members suggested minor wording changes including adding language to reflect the improvements in data availability through the allocation of resources. Some members mentioned that the reason data is not collected or reported by an agency is, often, because there is no operational need for that data. If no comment was offered regarding a page, Ms. Threadgill would proceed to the following one.

Ms. Threadgill told the group the OCA will include additional metrics for measuring visitors on the juvenile justice data dashboard website which was developed by the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) in conjunction with the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS).

A committee member’s question regarding the reporting of diversion data led to a discussion of the shortcomings of MassCourts as a research tool for juvenile justice data as it was intended to serve as a tool of record for individual cases, not as a database for macro-level data to be pulled from. Another committee member followed up with a question regarding the provision of data on 58A hearing outcomes and the implementation of more universal data collecting and reporting practices on judicial diversions across all counties. Additionally, a committee member questioned whether data on the use of electronic monitoring in juvenile cases was being collected. Ms. Threadgill noted all these concerns and agreed to follow up on them before the next committee meeting.

The group discussed the nuances of requiring the reporting and publication of data from short time periods or regarding a small sample of youth. Issues raised included running into privacy concerns due to samples being so small and balancing the desire for disaggregated data with adherence to privacy regulations. Committee members agreed to continue studying this balancing issue and Ms. Threadgill acknowledged that additional work would need to be done on this front.

Upon reviewing the recommendations section of the draft report, a discussion took place within the group regarding the prioritization of requests and the triaging of data needs. Committee members offered their views regarding what factors they believed should be considered in request-prioritization. Some members argued that data pertaining to high-impact processes or outcomes should take precedence (for instance, 72A transfer hearing trends and outcomes). Others suggested that requests should be partitioned based on availability, and that data for which a structured mechanism for collection already exists should be prioritized. Ms. Threadgill acknowledged the positions of all committee members who spoke on this point and noted that the group should prioritize data trends over details and that committee members should always consider specific outcomes, processes, and trends when considering the utility of specific data elements.

**Concluding remarks:**

Following the completion of the group's editing work, Ms. Threadgill thanked the committee for their continued work and input. She reiterated that edits to the draft report would continue to be made and that the committee would revisit the prioritization section of the report at its October meeting. Ms. Threadgill wished everyone well and adjourned the meeting.

**Adjournment:** 11:37AM