

WYOMING STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Meeting Minutes

September 19-20, 2024: Cody, WY

Agenda:

Thursday, September 19, 2024

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- New Business
- Ongoing Business
- Committee Reports
- Tour of Heart Mountain Interpretive Center

Friday, September 20, 2024

- DFS Update/Report
- Community Participation
- Announcements
- County Highlights
- Adjournment

Present:

Abbey Kercher
Adrienne Freng
Alexandra Bammel
Damon DeBernardi
Chris Jones
Damon DeBernardi
Dylan Pierce
Erica Wood
Erika Sanchez
Hattie Calvert
Jennifer Palser
Kassidy Thomas
Logan Christie
Melinda Cox
Nathaniel Williams
Nicole Hauser
Ruth Ogden
Sophia Gomelsky
Stacy Becker
Stacy Nelson

Ex-Officio Present:

Jacob Edwards
Salli Perryman
Christina McCabe
Jen Davis
Shawn Sitzman

Via Proxy:
Alan Stuber
Brittany Cangialosi

Others Present:

Brandon Schimelpfenig (DFS)
Sara Sereslon (DFS)
Laurel Wimbish (WYSAC)
Brooke Benson (WYSAC)
Theresa Clark (DFS)
Jacob Opdahl (DFS)
Bryan Skoric (Park Cty. Atty.)

Absent:

Chris Jones
Dale Weber
Lila Konecky

Call to Order

- I. **Call to Order: Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 1:00p.**
 - a) Roll Call/Introductions
 - b) Declaration of Quorum; a quorum was established with 20 members present.

II. Approval of Minutes:

June 20-21, 2024 meeting held in Sheridan, WY; Damon DeBernardi motioned to approve the draft minutes; Abbey Kercher seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

III. New Business:

a) Review Membership - Members

Brandon Schimelpfenig stated that membership numbers are looking good at 23 members. He also stated that each member that had an expiring term of 08/31/24 and had reapplied for another term was reappointed by the Governor. A youth member, Sophia Gomelsky, was recently appointed from District 2 (Laramie). Brandon stated that the SACJJ is within the youth membership ratio; 1/5 of members must be youth. He stated that to be within the required ratio the SACJJ needs at least 5 members and right now the SACJJ has 8 youth members. He also stated that the SACJJ is almost at the ratio threshold for the requirement that membership of the SACJJ cannot be more than 50% full-time government employees; the SACJJ is currently at 11 of 23 members considered to be full-time government. Brandon also stated that the SACJJ is compliant with the required tribal representation on the Council.

b) CSG Justice Center Proposal-Follow Up

Erica Wood provided a brief overview of the proposal from the Council for State Government that was provided during the April 2024 SACJJ meeting in Torrington, WY. Erica stated that the SACJJ has been approached once more to see if it was still the desire of the SACJJ to not pursue assistance from the CSG. Discussion was held amongst the SACJJ and it was decided to continue with its decision to not pursue the assistance proposal from CSG.

c) SACJJ Training – Possible Committee for Planning/Timeline

Logan Christie discussed the interest of creating an ad-hoc committee of SACJJ members to participate in conducting trainings regarding statewide juvenile justice items such as grant writing, Reroute data collection, diversion best practices among others. Reception of the topic seemed positive and members requested to sign up for the committee.

Stacy Becker volunteered to be Chair of the committee; Adrienne Freng, Jacob Edwards, Abbey Kercher, Jennifer Palser volunteered to serve on the committee. Laurel Wimbish and Brooke Benson from WYSAC also volunteered for the committee.

d) 2025 Meeting Dates/Locations

Abbey Kercher stated that she had reviewed the past 10 years' worth of SACJJ meeting locations in preparation for this meeting. Brandon Schimelpfenig stated that the reason for conducting 2025 Meeting Dates and Location voting during this meeting instead of the November 2024 meeting in Lander was due to his

anticipated departure as the SACJJ coordinator temporarily while he attends Wyoming Army National Guard Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) from November 2024-April 2025. He stated that in his absence, ex-officio member Jacob Edwards will be filling in for him as SACJJ coordinator. Brandon stated that he will be training Jacob on how to complete reimbursements for the SACJJ, drafting minutes, and other coordinator duties prior to his departure.

Meeting dates and locations that the SACJJ has not been in 10 years were discussed. Cheyenne was discussed as a location for January 2025 as that is typically when Wyoming Legislature is in town for its annual Legislative Session. Riverton was discussed as a location in April 2025. Gillette was discussed as a possible location in June 2025. Thermopolis was discussed as location in September 2025 and Laramie was discussed as a location for November 2025.

After discussion amongst the SACJJ, it was motioned by Damon DeBernardi that the SACJJ will travel to Cheyenne on January 16-17, 2025; Riverton on April 17-18, 2025; Gillette on June 19-20, 2025; Thermopolis on September 18-19, 2025 and; Laramie on November 20-21, 2025; Stacy Becker seconded the motion; all in favor; motion passed.

e) Open Topic Discussion from Members

Jacob mentioned the topic of the Wyoming Grant Assistance Program (WYGAP). Nicole Hauser stated that the program is up and running and that it would be great to have a representative of the program present at an upcoming SACJJ meeting. Brandon stated that he would reach out to WYGAP and see if they could have a representative present at the next meeting in November in Lander, WY.

Damon DeBernardi mentioned the topic of rising juvenile crime particularly in Natrona County and asked SACJJ members from around the state if they have seen an increase in juvenile crime in their areas. Stacy Becker from Laramie County stated she has seen an increase in juvenile-on-juvenile shootings. Erica Wood from Campbell County stated she has seen an increase in juvenile crime and that they tend to co-occur with other crimes committed amongst juveniles. Hattie Calvert stated that Fremont County has seen an increase in violent alcohol-related crimes amongst juveniles. Jennifer Palser stated that she has not seen much of an increase in violent crimes amongst juveniles in Sheridan County.

f) Public Comment

No topics were brought forth by members of the public.

IV. On-Going Business – Updates From:

a) Collaboration With Other Wyoming Councils

Abbey stated she has not received responses from other Wyoming Councils that she has reached out to regarding collaboration efforts. She asked the SACJJ if the letter that she is sending out might be too long. Brandon Schimelpfenig suggested Abbey reach out to SACJJ member Nate Williams as he is also the President of the Wyoming Youth Advisory Council (WYAC). Abbey stated that the Wyoming Advisory Panel for Students with Disabilities is meeting September 30, 2024-October 1, 2024 in Laramie and stated they were requesting a representative from the SACJJ to come and speak to them regarding the SACJJ and what they do. Ruth said she could meet with them on one of those dates.

b) Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) Update – Jacob Edwards

Jacob stated the system went live July 1, 2024 and that DFS recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Wyoming Supreme Court for purposes of collecting and sharing data. Jacob also stated that they will be getting two years' worth of historical data to be transferred to the JJIS from the Wyoming courts. Jacob then stated that DFS has received two requests for data from non-profit entities.

c) OJJDP Non-Participating State (NPS) Grant Update-Laurel Wimbish

Laurel stated that they have two informational webinars occurring September 25 and September 26, 2024 to go over the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the NPS grant from OJJDP, approximately how much funding is available, and what the funding can and cannot be used for. She stated that September 30, 2024 is when the RFP will be released. Once the RFPs have been received by WYSAC, Laurel stated that she will meet with the SACJJ Grants committee and review the applications with the committee. She stated that the plan right now is to get funding awarded to applicants on or before January 1, 2025. Brooke also asked if Brandon could post the RFP on the SACJJ's website and Brandon stated he would get it posted.

d) Governor's Office – Jen Davis

Jen stated that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds are coming to a close and that all of that funding needs to be obligated and spent by December 31, 2024. Jen stated that Governor Gordon's office has given agencies a deadline of October 1, 2024 to have their funding obligated so that the Governor's Office knows approximately how much will be reverted back to the federal government. Jen then stated that the next Legislative session is due to occur in early 2025 and that the primaries have concluded for representatives and senators in the Wyoming Legislature. Jen mentioned that the Governor's Office is also preparing for a mental health summit on October 2, 2024.

e) CJSB Reform – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that all of the CJSB contracts have been executed for the current biennium (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026). Brandon also stated that the first quarter's reporting period for CJSB data is due soon; July 1-September 30, 2024. He stated he would be sending a reminder email out to the CJSBs notifying them

of upcoming report due date. These reports are due to Brandon either via email or in Reroute on or before October 15, 2024. Brandon then stated that with the departure of former Social Services Senior Administrator Lindsey Schilling and the arrival of new administrator Kristie Gordy, there could be changes coming to the CJSB program regarding data collection and overall program administration.

- f) Budget Report/Grant Update – Brandon Schimelpfenig
Brandon stated that Title II 2021 has \$12,263.04 remaining and Title II 2022 has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. Title II 2023 also has the full \$30,000.00 remaining. Brandon stated that he recently applied for Title II 2024 but has not received the award notification to-date.
- g) Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ) – Brandon Schimelpfenig
No major ICJ news from Commissioner Clifton however Brandon stated that Commissioner Clifton is currently at the 2024 Annual ICJ Business meeting in Mobile, AL. Brandon also mentioned an ICJ return that he is working on with the state of California.
- h) Additional Updates Requested from DFS from SACJJ
Erica Wood mentioned that this section is for any updates that the SACJJ would like to request regarding future community participation agencies as well as updates to request for the DFS Update from DFS administration. Brandon mentioned what kinds of topics he typically requests from the local DFS for the local DFS presentations during the community participation portions of the agenda as well as topics to discuss from the County Attorney, and if there is one in the area, the local CJSB. Some items that Brandon typically request from these entities is juvenile crime trends in the local area; how many juvenile probation officers work in the local DFS office; what are their caseloads like; what does Single Point of Entry look like for the area; and anything else that might be unique to the area.

V. Committee Reports

- a) Executive Committee – Logan Christie
Logan stated that they met to discuss members to send to the 2024 OJJDP National Conference in Washington, D.C.; November 19-21, 2024. Members chosen include Chair Logan Christie, Vice Chair Erica Wood, youth member Cassidy Thomas, Ex-Officio Jacob Edwards, and Stacy Becker; Stacy's travel arrangements are being made by OJJDP as she will be a speaker on a panel at the conference. A new member orientation has been scheduled for the January 2025 SACJJ meeting in Cheyenne.
- b) Grants Committee – Logan Christie
Logan stated that once the applications have been received by Laurel and her team with WYSAC that December 4th, 2024 should be the date that Laurel's team and the Grants committee should get together to score the NPS Grant Applications. A time of 12p-3p was also discussed.

- c) Data Committee – Adrienne Freng
Adrienne stated that the committee has discussed bringing back Data Report Cards for counties that submit data; DFS data, CJSB data, NPS Grant data, etc. She stated that the State asks a lot of these counties in submitting different kinds of data and she said that she would like to be able to give back some valuable information in these Report Cards to counties.
- d) Best Practices Committee – Alan Stuber
Alan was not present for the meeting however Erica Wood provided an update in his absence. Erica stated that the committee had not met in the interim and also that Alan voiced his apologies for not being present at this meeting and that if a member on the Best Practices committee would like to step forward and assume the Chair position that he would not object to the motion. Stacy Nelson volunteered to become the Chair of the Best Practices committee and there were no objections from members of the committee.
- e) Outreach/Youth Committee – Erica Wood, Brittany Cangialosi
Erica stated that the committee has started a repository for information as well as recruiting efforts for the SACJJ focusing on non-governmental agencies/individuals. Erica also requested the CJSB TA Summary from Brandon and Jacob/s travels when they met with the CJSBs in May 2024. Brandon stated he would send that summary to Erica via email. Sophia Gomelsky stated her interest in joining the Outreach/Youth committee.
- f) Legislative Committee – Nicole Hauser
Nicole discussed previous JDRA discussions and wanted to state her support to the SACJJ for not letting the discussions on progression of the JDRA fall by the wayside and be forgotten. Nicole also wanted to remind the SACJJ that the 2025 Wyoming Legislative Session is due to commence in January and that there were a lot of bills that came up during the budget session in 2024 so she is expecting over 500 bills to be presented during this session in 2025 as it is a full session. Sophia Gomelsky stated her interest in joining the Legislative committee.

Friday, September 20, 2024

VI. DFS Update/Report

Sara Serelson, Field Operations Administrator with DFS, was present via Zoom to discuss recent updates from DFS administration. She started her discussion by presenting on the agency's new case management system WYOSAFE. She stated that WYOSAFE will interact and communicate with other state agency systems to streamline processes and improve DFS staff as well as client experiences with the child welfare system in Wyoming. The system recently went live on September 1, 2024.

Sara then discussed the DFS Program Improvement Plan (PIP) that came from the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) of the child welfare system in Wyoming from November 2023-January 2024. She stated that there are six goals that were identified from the CFSR that DFS will need to submit a plan for improving upon. Those goals include ensuring that children are safe by conducting timely and accurate safety and risk assessments of the youth; ensuring timely permanency for children and preserving relationships and connections while in foster care regardless of ethnic and race; improving engagement with families throughout the life of a case by accurately identifying their strengths, needs, and goals to include appropriate and timely services; leverage the use of WYOSAFE to track and ensure background checks are completed on foster care homes as well as pre-adoptive homes; ensure quality training is being provided to social services supervisors and staff; and enhance and implement a successful quality assurance (QA) and continuous quality improvement (CQI) system at the state and field level.

Lastly, Sara discussed the Interagency Children's Collaborative (ICC) which is in Wyoming § 14-3-215. ICC members include members from the Department of Family Services as well as the Department of Health and Department of Education. The youth that are referred to the ICC are youth that are experiencing severe mental health and violent behaviors and have been found to be difficult to place in foster care or treatment settings. In calendar year 2023, 30 ICC cases were opened and 19 of those 30 were involved in juvenile delinquency and 1 was a CHINS case; Child in Need of Supervision. Of those 30 cases, 23 focused on identifying appropriate specialized residential and therapeutic care options to address the youth's complex needs. Sara then stated that DFS submitted 1,274 total referrals for therapeutic care for these 23 cases; approximately 72 referrals per youth. As of the end of calendar year 2023, all 23 had been placed in a therapeutic residential setting; 3 were discharged unsuccessfully due to the youth's behaviors.

VII. Community Participation

a) Park County DFS-Cody Office

Theresa Clark, Social Supervisor, and Jacob Opdahl, Social Services Worker, were both present to discuss trends that the local DFS office is seeing regarding juvenile delinquency cases. Theresa stated that there are currently 14 probation cases in Powell and 6 probation cases in Cody. She also stated between Cody and Powell there are currently 10 diversion cases. She stated something that might be unique in Park County is that diversion cases are run through the Park County Attorney's Office and referred by Single Point of Entry (SPE). Diversion in Park County involves keeping kids in school, when appropriate, as well as a community services project. She stated that Park County sees a lot of Minor in Possession (MIP) alcohol and/or tobacco citations as well as vaping. Erica Wood asked Theresa if there was a lack of resources regarding counseling services for juvenile and Theresa responded by stating they have an abundance of counselling resources for juveniles.

b) Park County Attorney's Office

Bryan Skoric, Park County Prosecuting Attorney, was present to discuss trends that his office is seeing regarding juvenile delinquency in Park County. Bryan discussed his thoughts on juvenile detention centers and mentioned that Park County has a small wing attached to their adult detention center specifically for juveniles. He stated the max capacity for the Park County juvenile wing is 11 juveniles but that the center has never held that many. Theresa Clark stated that Park County sends their juveniles in crisis to the Basin Group Home and that there has never been an issue with the group home not accepting Park County juveniles. Bryan stated that his office mostly sees MIP citations including alcohol, marijuana and tobacco as well as traffic violations.

VIII. Park County Highlights

The SACJJ briefly highlighted key areas from the meeting.

- It was noted Single Point of Entry works well together with all the agencies involved.
- Diversion seems to have a high success rate and keeping juveniles from progressing further into the juvenile justice system.
- Park County appears to be very non-punitive regarding juvenile justice and gives the youth multiple chances.

IX. Announcements

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 14-15, 2024 in Lander, WY.

X. Adjournment

Abbey Kercher motioned to adjourn the meeting; Stacy Nelson seconded the motion; all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:26a.