

WYOMING STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

Meeting Minutes

June 20-21, 2024: Sheridan, WY

Agenda:

Thursday, June 20, 2024

- Call to Order
- Approval of Minutes
- New Business
- Ongoing Business
- Committee Reports
- Tour of WGS

Friday, June 21, 2024

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

Present:

Abbey Kercher
Alan Stuber
Alexandra Bammel
Brittany Cangialosi
Chris Jones
Damon DeBernardi
Dylan Pierce
Erica Wood
Erika Sanchez
Hattie Calvert
Jennifer Palser
Logan Christie
Nathaniel Williams
Ruth Ogden
Stacy Becker

Ex-Officio Present:

Jacob Edwards
Shawn Sitzman

Via Proxy:

Adrienne Freng
Nicole Hauser

Others Present:

Brandon Schimelpfenig (DFS)
Lindsey Schilling (DFS)
Laurel Wimbish (WYSAC)
Mark Torbert (WGS)
Allen Thompson (WASCOP)
Melinda Abbott (DFS)
Codi Walden (DFS)
Wendy Sweeney (County Atty.)
Dan Lindly (Sheridan CJSB)
Chase Christensen (Sheridan School Dist. #3)

Absent:

Dakota Jackson
Dale Weber
Kassidy Thomas
Lila Konecky
Melinda Cox
Narina Nunez
Ronald Howard

Call to Order

I. Call to Order: Thursday, June 20, 2024 at 1:00p.

- a) Roll Call/Introductions
- b) Declaration of Quorum; a quorum was established with 17 members present.

II. Approval of Minutes:

April 18-19, 2024 meeting held in Torrington, WY; Damon DeBernardi motioned to approve the draft minutes; Erica Wood seconded the motion; all in favor; motion carried.

III. New Business:

a) JDC Concerns from Communities

Logan mentioned that it is a shared concern within Wyoming communities regarding juvenile detention centers (JDC) that they are becoming more insular and not accepting out-of-county juveniles. Logan had also mentioned that Allen Thompson with WASCOP stated previously that there is no Wyoming statute that states the JDCs must accept out-of-county juveniles; each JDC is operated by their local Sheriff's office and each Sheriff can object to acceptance of out-of-county juveniles.

Nicole Hauser cautioned the SACJJ against advocating for more juvenile detention beds and/or centers in the state. Stacy Becker also mentioned there might be a growing need in the state for more crisis shelter beds as opposed to detention beds. Allen Thompson acknowledged the concerns from counties and he also mentioned that counties without a JDC struggle with the initial finding of a secure placement as well as the ongoing placement should the juvenile(s) act out aggressively at staff or damage property in the detention center once they are placed.

b) Open Topic Discussion from Members

Erica Wood mentioned that she was approached by the Wyoming Behavioral Institute (WBI) in her professional capacity in Campbell County regarding a new outpatient program being offered by WBI. She asked if anybody else had been approached by WBI in their local communities regarding the program. Chris Jones mentioned that she has heard positive things regarding the program.

Nicole Hauser cautioned against the SACJJ promoting services from WBI as they are a for-profit entity.

c) Public Comment

No topics were brought forth by members of the public.

IV. On-Going Business – Updates From:

a) Collaboration With Other Wyoming Councils

Erica Wood mentioned that Abbey Kercher had submitted the approved letter to collaborate with other Wyoming State Councils but that she had not received responses from them to-date. Erica mentioned that Abbey thought that maybe the letter should be shortened as currently it is a two-page letter.

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

Jacob mentioned test users in the system are currently completing user acceptance testing (UAT). The system is set to go live on July 1, 2024 however there are still some bugs in the system that need to be remedied.

c) 14-Day Requirement-Updates

No updates.

d) Vaping and School Concerns

Chris Jones mentioned that she has seen a large increase in filings for violation of juvenile probation in Sheridan County for vaping concerns in the last six months. Jennifer Palser also mentioned that fines have proven to not be a deterrent in the campaign against vaping.

e) OJJDP Non-Participating State (NPS) Award

Laurel stated that she is working on getting the final budget approved for the NPS 2022 and 2023 awards by the budget office for OJJDP. She also mentioned that the solicitation for NPS 2024 was released and that WYSAC will be applying for that grant as well. She said the 2024 application is due in mid-July and the total award will be \$540,000.00. She also stated that she has sent notice to counties stating that should they apply for the '22/'23 and/or the '24 award that any person who works for the program that applies for the award and will be working with juveniles in that program must submit a background check in the application per requirements for the grant.

f) Council Membership – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that the SACJJ is currently at 25 members. There have been 2 appointments with Hattie Calvert from district 9 and Nathaniel Williams from district 1. There has also been 1 resignation from the SACJJ with Patricia O'Brien from district 3 resigning. Brandon also listed the members whose terms are expiring on August 31, 2024. It was asked if Brandon has been notified by the Governor's Office on who has sent in their reapplication and he said he has not been notified but that he would verify with Gabi Farmer with the Governor's Office Boards and Commissions on who has submitted their renewal applications.

g) Governor's Office – Jen Davis

Jen was not able to be present at the meeting but provided an update to Brandon Schimelpfenig to present to the SACJJ. He stated that the Governor's intensive suicide prevention effort has started and the model that is being used is called "PROSPER" and will be an intensive community effort to empower communities. It will be starting in Sweetwater and Sublette counties as well as Washakie, Park and Campbell counties.

h) CJSB Reform – Brandon Schimelpfenig

Brandon stated that he and Jacob Edwards with DFS as well as Laurel Wimbish and her team with WYSAC recently completed a CJSB Technical Assistance road trip around the state in May through early June 2024. During these trips, Jacob and Brandon visited each CJSB in their respective community and discussed numerous topics including the recent CJSB application for July 1, 2024-June 30, 2026, the revamping and application process for the Non-Participating State grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the Reroute data collection system through WYSAC and data collection

requirements that will be required in CJSB contracts and some other juvenile justice topics.

Brandon stated he recently sent out draft contracts to each CJSB for their review and once approved in draft form then Brandon moves them forward in the state contract approval process. Jacob also mentioned that the CJSBs requested ways to network with each other to discuss what works in their counties and what doesn't. He mentioned possibly putting together a diversion symposium or gathering to bring the CJSBs together and discuss these things.

- i) Budget Report/Grant Update – Brandon Schimelpfenig
Brandon stated that Title II 2021 has \$16,327.82 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 has not received the solicitation for Title II 2024 to-date.
- j) Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ) – Brandon Schimelpfenig
Brandon stated that there has been an uptick in runaways from other states as well as travel permits being processed as we are hitting the beginning of summer. No other updates.

V. Committee Reports

- a) Executive Committee – Logan Christie
Logan stated that they met and drafted the agenda for this meeting.
- b) Grants Committee – Logan Christie
Logan stated that the Grants committee is available when the NPS application is ready to be sent to communities from WYSAC.
- c) Data Committee – Adrienne Freng
Adrienne was not present to provide an update however she sent an update to Brandon Schimelpfenig stating that the Data committee has been working with Allen Thompson with WASCOP on the Wyoming JDRA and drafting it into a statewide electronic format.
- d) Best Practices Committee – Alan Stuber
Alan stated that he did not have an update available but that he would like to open it up to the rest of the SACJJ to see if anyone would like to take over as Chair of the committee. He said if not he understands and that he would work on scheduling a meeting in the interim between now and the next meeting in September to be able to provide an update at the next meeting.
- e) Outreach/Youth Committee – Erica Wood, Brittany Cangialosi
Erica stated that the Outreach committee did not meet but that they would be scheduling a meeting in the interim.

- f) Legislative Committee – Nicole Hauser
Nicole was not present to provide an update however Damon DeBernardi provided an update in her absence. He stated that right now is a quiet time with legislation and that if anything comes up regarding social services, juvenile justice or education, the Legislative committee would track the discussions.

Friday, June 21, 2024

VI. DFS Update/Report

Lindsey Schilling, Senior Administrator for the Social Services division, was present via Zoom to discuss administrative updates from DFS. Lindsey started by mentioning that on 06/17/24 the Wyoming State Legislature Joint Judiciary Interim Committee heard discussion on the Wyoming foster care system. She said the Committee is looking at ways to improve the foster system possibly through statute changes. She also said she would like to extend an invitation to the SACJJ to provide suggested language changes to statute or if they had any suggested changes to the foster system. Lindsey stated that if the SACJJ would like to email her personally she would collect that information and have it ready to present with the update when DFS goes back before Joint Judiciary in September 2024.

Lindsey then highlighted the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) that DFS completed in early 2024. She stated they do not have a final report of findings but have a rough draft and idea of what DFS will need to work on in their Program Improvement Plan (PIP). She wanted to highlight some strong areas from the CFSR stating that “Placement with Siblings” for the state was at 92% and Stability of Foster Care Placement” was at 86%.

Lindsey highlighted the recent updates regarding the Department’s new case management system; WYOSAFE. She stated that the Department has started user acceptance testing and has begun to enter test data into the system and routing processes. Lindsey also highlighted the one-time funding to group homes to assist with their capacity to serve local youth around the state. Lindsey then briefly highlighted a pilot program in Laramie County for therapeutic foster care that will be starting soon.

Information was provided from Lindsey and shared by Brandon regarding the 307 Conflict Resolution programming.

VII. Community Participation

- a) Sheridan County Attorney’s Office
Wendy Sweeney, Deputy County Attorney for Sheridan County, discussed what sorts trends her office is seeing regarding juveniles in the Sheridan County area. She stated the office has five (5) attorneys that have varying roles in which agencies they represent. Wendy also stated she is the main juvenile justice contact in the office. Wendy then described the Single Point of Entry (SPE) process and how they interact with the various agencies within Sheridan County.

Wendy stated that her office currently has 40 open delinquency cases and 23 abuse/neglect cases. Wendy stated that one need that Sheridan County has is an in-patient substance abuse center as well as a hardware secure juvenile detention center in the community for juveniles that need that level of care. She also mentioned that reintegrating juveniles back into the community from the Wyoming Boys School and Wyoming Girls School is a challenge as there is no current step-down program. Wendy also stated that Sheridan County is seeing more Title 25 kids. Wendy shared that they are seeing more serious situations of children having mental health needs with limited treatment facilities. Sheridan County also spoke about having the Milestones Youth Home in Sheridan as one alternative.

b) Sheridan CJSB

Jen Palser and Dan Lindly from the Sheridan County Justice Office (SCJO) were present to discuss trends their office is seeing regarding juveniles as well as services the SCJO offers. Dan stated that the Sheridan board operates as a Joint Powers Board as opposed to a Joint Powers Agreement amongst county and municipal agencies. The SCJO provides probation services for Municipal and Circuit courts. Adult Drug Court is an additional program provided through the SCJO. Jen mentioned that the 14-day rule for Sheridan has not necessarily been an issue in their area as citations are addressed post-adjudication. Jen also stated that so far in 2024 the Sheridan SPE team has screened 85 youth.

c) Sheridan County DFS

Melinda Abbott, Social Services Worker, and Cori Walden, Social Services Supervisor, were present to discuss trends and things they are seeing in the local DFS office regarding juveniles. Melinda said that she feels Sheridan County does place juveniles out-of-county at a fairly high rate but she wanted to state that it is in part due to a need for providers that accept juveniles on Medicaid with particular mental health or substance abuse issues. She stated when you factor in all those needs that it really narrows down the list of providers and that there is a definite need for more of those types of providers in the Sheridan area. She stated that the small list of providers that do accept juveniles with particular issues on Medicaid usually have wait lists that are numerous months long; which can create a backlog and issues with the families waiting for those services. Melinda also said that the local school district has been suspending juveniles for vaping in the schools.

d) Sheridan School District Representative

Chase Christensen, Superintendent with Sheridan County School District #3, was present to discuss juveniles in his area and what trends he is seeing. He requested from Ms. Sweeney to be added to the Sheridan County SPE team to be able to voice his concerns with juveniles in the SCSD #3 area as some juveniles are residents of other areas (Johnson County and Campbell County) but go to school in the SCSD #3 area. Wendy advised that he should reach out to Johnson

County Attorney Tucker Ruby and the Campbell County Attorney's Office if the juveniles are residents of those areas.

VIII. County Highlights

The SACJJ briefly highlighted key areas from the meeting in Sheridan county.

- Great collaboration and communication between agencies for Single Point of Entry;
- Would like to see an inpatient substance abuse treatment program for juveniles in Sheridan County;
- Would like to see a transition program started in Sheridan County for a stepdown from the Wyoming Girls School back to their respective home;
- Would like to see secure facility in Sheridan County for those juveniles needing a secure placement.

IX. Announcements

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 19-20, 2024 in Cody, WY.

X. Adjournment

Damon DeBernardi motioned to adjourn the meeting; Jennifer Palser seconded the motion; all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03a.