

INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR JUVENILES

Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice Meeting Minutes

January 18, 2022

3:00 p.m. ET

Via Zoom



Voting Members in Attendance:

1. Sherry Jones (MD), Commissioner, Co-Chair
2. Becki Moore (MA), Designee, Co-Chair
3. Francis “Mike” Casey (DE), Commissioner
4. Agnes Denson (FL), Commissioner
5. Cathy Gordon (MT), Commissioner
6. Edwin Lee, Jr. (NJ) Designee
7. Jessica Wald (ND), Designee
8. JoAnn Niksa (RI), Designee
9. Felicia Dauway (SC), Designee
10. Eavey-Monique James (USVI), Commissioner

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

1. Tracy Howard (FL)
2. April Simmons (IN)
3. Mason Harrington (SC)
4. Raymundo Gallardo (UT)
5. Nataki Brown (SC), ICJ Victims Representative

Members Not in Attendance:

1. Lisa Bjergaard (ND), Commissioner
2. Jennifer LeBaron (NJ), Commissioner
3. Jessica Nash (RI), Commissioner

National Office Staff & Legal Counsel in Attendance:

1. MaryLee Underwood, Executive Director
2. Amanee Cabbagestalk, Training and Administrative Specialist
3. Emma Goode, Logistics and Administrative Specialist
4. Jenny Adkins, Policies and Operations Specialist
5. Joe Johnson, Project Manager

Call to Order

Co-Chair Moore (MA) called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. ET.

Roll Call

Director Underwood called the roll and a quorum was established.

Agenda

S. Jones (MD) made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. A. Denson (FL) seconded. The motion carried.

Minutes

F. Dauway (SC) made a motion to approve the December 14, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. E. M. James (VI) seconded. The motion carried.

Discussion

Establishing Meeting Norms *(by Co-Chair Becki Moore)*

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) presented the list below of twelve (12) group meeting norms, as discussed last month, for consideration and approval:
 1. One person speaking at a time
 2. Embrace the power of active listening
 3. Recognize the difference between intent and impact
 4. Expect and accept a lack of closure
 5. Be willing to be uncomfortable
 6. Keep it here.
 7. Make “I” statements.
 8. Ouch Something said without intending to harm or offend, but harm or offense might result anyway. If we notice ourselves saying it, we can say “oops” and try again.
 9. We don’t have to agree
 10. Demonstrate cultural humility. Hold yourself and others accountable
 11. Commit to having conversations that matter by speaking up
 12. Step-up, step-back
- There were no objections to the list as presented.
- **F. Dauway (SC) made a motion to approve the list of meeting norms as presented. J. Wald (ND) seconded. The motion passed.**

Review of ICJ’s Action Plan for Racial Justice & Procedural Justice Concepts *(by Co-Chair Sherry Jones)*

- Co-Chair Jones (MD) provided a review of ICJ’s Action Plan for Racial Justice. The plan was established in 2020 and is available on the Commission’s website: <https://www.juvenilecompact.org/racial-justice>.
- The Commission was compelled to take action to remedy the long-standing racial injustice, particularly in criminal and juvenile justice systems. A 3-pronged approach was developed from which the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice Leadership Series originated. The plan includes:
 - Internal Procedural Justice Assessment
 - Internal Leadership Development Focused on Racial Justice
 - External Collaboration to Improve Community Supervision
- Co-Chair Jones (MD) reviewed and highlighted four principals of procedural justice graphic.
 - Neutrality – decisions are unbiased and guided by transparent reasons
 - Respect – all are treated with respect and dignity
 - Voice – all are given a chance to tell their side of the story
 - Trustworthiness – decision makers convey trustworthy motives about those impacted by their decisions
- Last year’s work by the ad hoc committee incorporated these ideas for unbiased operations. The graphic and information were shared with the full Commission during the 2021 Annual Business Meeting training session by the ad hoc committee.

Prioritize Committee Goals & Develop Timeline for FY22 (by Co-Chairs Sherry Jones and Becki Moore)

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) opened discussion for the development of the goals and timeline for this year's Ad Hoc Committee. Last month, the Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the feedback from the 2021 ABM Survey. Based on that information, the Co-Chairs drafted potential goals for FY22 for consideration.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) and Co-Chair Jones (MD) provided an overview the draft document emailed to the members prior to the meeting.
 - Draft goals for FY22
 1. Identify and apply racial equity tools for use in rule making, committee processes, and leadership (i.e., Annie E. Casey Foundation or other)
 2. Examine and address disparities in human trafficking (White vs. Black and Brown youth)
 3. Develop and provide training to address racial inequities, implicit bias, and the impact ICJ staff can have. Potential topics include:
 - a. Implicit bias
 - b. Role of ICJ staff
 - c. Report writing and how language matters (consultant)
 - d. How to advocate for services youth at risk of failed placement
 4. Develop Rules Amendment Proposals
 - Additional Benefits
 - Training Strategies
 - Future Meeting Dates
- Co-Chair Jones (MD) shared she experiences related to disparities in the processing of Black/brown as compared white youth in the areas of:
 - minimal advocacy;
 - gender preference;
 - court appearances; and
 - housing whereby white females typically housed in shelters and Black/brown females housed in detention centers.
- J. Niska (RI) suggested acquiring information from the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI). The JDAI is tasked with reducing disparities in detention for youth. Second, she suggested looking at the data. J. Niska (RI) agreed to contact JDAI to acquire their national principals. For more information refer to the website: <https://www.aecf.org/blog/new-webinar-to-look-deeper-at-jdai-results-data>
- A. Denson (FL) updated that Florida has a JDAI Coordinator. She volunteered to check with the Florida Coordinator and share any additional information.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) commented that the training strategies should include a tangible product for the attendees to share the information and message to others. Also, she suggested contracting with an outside vendor to assist in the training in areas, such as writing an unbiased Quarterly Progress Report (QPR).
- F. Dauway (SC) supported the suggested training topic, adding it should filter down to the field staff that prepare reports. She also suggested incorporating information graduated responses.
- E. M. James (VI) suggested looking at real examples for comparison and to avoid unintended implicit bias in the writing. She also suggested good exercises for the Ad Hoc Committee while being mindful and respectful of the

writing. Additionally, she explained the reverse bias in the islands which is predominantly Black/brown population.

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) commented that perhaps the committee could share an example for the ad hoc committee to discuss. Her state's field trainings include being sensitive and "cultural humility."
- Co-Chair Jones (MD) agreed to the importance of removing barriers for children to get the services and sharing information in languages they understand.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) provided a highlight of proposed training strategies:
 - Use case scenarios
 - Develop "Best Practice" document
 - Incorporate racial justice into the ICJ in Action courses
 - Consider Annual Business Meeting (ABM), on demand, or live training
- J. Niska (RI) suggested developing a Best Practice as final product. ICJ Staff what may wish to conduct in their state trainings. Topics might include:
 - Employing Cultural Humility
 - Racial Justice
 - Report Writing
- Director Underwood modified the draft FY22 Goals based on the discussions as follows:
 1. Develop and provide training and/or "Best Practice Guide" to address racial inequities, implicit bias, and the impact ICJ staff can have. Potential topics include:
 - a. Best Practice on Employing Cultural Humility in Report Writing & ICJ Operations
 - b. Report writing and how language matters (consultant)
 - i. Implicit bias
 - ii. Choice of terminology (some may not recognize as offensive)
 - iii. Language accessibility
 - c. Graduated sanctions
 - d. Role of ICJ staff
 - i. How to advocate for services youth at risk of failed placement
 2. Examine data regarding race and runaways, including those subjected to human trafficking (White vs. BIPOC youth), and make recommendations regarding how to address disparities
 3. Recommend racial equity tool(s) for Commission use to the Executive Committee (in rule making, committee processes, leadership, and other processes). Options include:
 - a. Annie E. Casey Foundation
 - b. Other
- The Ad Hoc Committee agreed with the modifications as presented.
- **C. Gordon (MT) made a motion to approved the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice FY22 goals as presented. E. Lee, Jr. (NJ) seconded. The motion passed.**

Old Business

Review Elections Process & Recommend Amendments *(by Co-Chair Becki Moore)*

- Co-Chair Moore (MA) presented the document developed last year. After implementing for the first time during the 2021 Annual Business Meeting (ABM), the following questions come to mind that were not addressed in the document:
 - What happens if no one is nominated in the time allotted?
 - What if someone misses a deadline?
- F. Dauway (SC) supports being all inclusive and retaining nominations from the floor who may or may not have had time to submit earlier.
- J. Niksa (RI) commented, if there is a deadline, a process should be added for those who are late.
- Co-Chair Jones (MD) encouraged members to submit edits, as the Co-Chairs will draft some language for discussion at the next meeting.

New Business

Data Walk Planning *(by Co-Chair Sherry Jones)*

- Co-Chair Jones (MD) updated that the Ad Hoc Committee for Racial Justice will again join the Leadership Series Group for their Data Walk Meeting. The meeting is slated for March 29, 2022 @ 1:00 p.m. ET. All members agreed to attend the March 29th meeting in addition to their regular March meeting.
- Director Underwood updated that the data walk will include current data available in UNITY.
- Co-Chair Moore (MA) requested members to consider the data they would like to see for discussion at the next meeting (February 15).

Adjourn

Co-Chair Moore (MA) adjourned by acclamation without objection at 4:04 p.m. ET.