

STATE OF NEVADA

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NEVADA STATE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION**

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**NEVADA STATE JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
MINORITY/GENDER COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
March 9, 2016**

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Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Co-Chairman John Martin at 5:30 p.m.

Roll Call – Alice Mueller

Members Present by Phone: Kirby Burgess, Noah Jennings, Dawn Lozano, John Martin, Paula Smith, Egan Walker

Members Excused: Lisa Morris Hibbler, Raymond McKay, Ivet Santiago, Lonnie Wright

Staff Present by Phone: Leslie Bittleston, J. Alice Mueller

Members of the Public Present by Phone: Ali Banister, Ben Bianchi, Lynette Gust, Thomas Stockard, Craig Tippens

Public Comment and Discussion

There was no public comment at this time.

Review of Official Minutes from January 20, 2016 Meeting and previous meetings

Commissioner Lozano moved that the minutes of January 20, 2016 be approved as submitted, with a second from Commissioner Walker. The motion was passed by the Committee.

2015 DMC Report – Leslie Bittleston

Chief Bittleston emailed copies of the statewide 2015 Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) report along with the Juvenile Justice Programs Office Disproportionate Minority Report Summary for 2015 to members of the Committee. The individual county reports were sent to appropriate county members and were available to others upon request. Because the actual report produced from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is difficult to understand, a summary based on that data was produced. This summary was what was actually discussed at the committee meeting.

The summary contains a comparison of measurable data for the years 2012 to 2015. Data detailing race was shown for arrests, secure detention, secure confinement, probation, transfer

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to adult court, referrals, diversion, petitions, delinquency, misdemeanors and citations. The last two pages, show a comparisons at all points of contact with population breakdown by race.

From a review of the various charts, it appeared that an adolescent black male was three times more likely to have contact with the juvenile justice system than anyone else in the youth population. The worst example of this was where a youth was referred to adult court. For a black youth, this was 45.65%, for a group representing less than 10% of the population. The second worse example, was in secure confinement, where they represent 35.51% of that population. Percentage of Hispanic youth represented is high, but consistent with their portion of the population.

The Committee determined that what was needed were strategies specifically for working with African American males. Commissioner Walker agreed, he noted that statistically, black youth are overrepresented in every category of contacts within the juvenile justice system. This further highlights the need for DMC training at points of contact. Discussion about training had begun last summer following a basic training on the topic. Apparently nothing more has been done to forward this. Deborah Reyes from the Las Vegas Municipal Police Department was to get back in touch, as she planned on beginning something early in 2016.

It was concurred that generally, those on the Juvenile Justice Commission are in a unique position of knowing DMC issues. They could perhaps work on this type of training themselves, or at least begin brainstorming on what should be recommend to the governor.

Although specific strategies are for the most part unknown, it was suggested that they look at existing sponsored training. Commissioner Lozano did bring up one strategy which is seldom used. That is the process of having a youth between 18 and 21 certified down. This is an existing law that is seldom used but could be beneficial to youth perceived as adults.

The general consensus was that aside from lawyers, training was specifically needed for law enforcement, school police, and school resource officers. School police alone represent thousands of referrals a year, many of which are disproportionately minority. Training on cultural differences would certainly be appropriate. The important thing is, if we wait until a child gets into the system, the battle is lost.

Georgetown has some DMC training, and should be contacted to see what they suggest. There really isn't anything nationwide that has been successful. This committee has the range of experience, with defense lawyers, judges and administrators. A training curriculum could be started and once put to practice, modified as needed. There may be other specific training available, such as was brought in last summer, but the skill and ability is here to formulate Nevada specific training.

School to Prison Pipeline Update – Jack Martin

Commissioner Hibbler was unavailable so Co-Chair Martin gave an update on this section. Eighteen individuals recently completed a trip to Colorado to investigate three forms of assessment centers. Those who attended were from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, juvenile district attorneys, judges, and representatives from the Clark County School District, Department of Family Services, Department of Social Services, along with those from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The three assessment centers were contiguous to Denver in Arapahoe, Adams and Jefferson counties. They represented three different governing models; one being government run, another run by non-profits, and the last run by a quasi-government/private entity. The group took two to three days to research by following youth through the system so as to learn what tools were used for assessment.

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Colorado's process has shrunk the detention population, and probation caseloads. An example is in Jefferson County, where the detention population has gone from 250 to 31. Questions were asked about how the population was reduced so drastically. Instead of getting a referral and going into the system, youth involved with non-violent offenses are taken to the referral center where they are immediately connected with resources. Compare this with Clark County, where youth who receive citations may not enter parole for many weeks. By that time they could have accumulated more citations. The youth continues to escalate without resources or other assistance until they finally see a judge who may then view them as a chronic case. If youth receive resources early, they and their families can be successfully guided toward interventions.

In reviewing their success, it is hoped that the assessment center in Las Vegas will open sometime in August. Additional funding for the estimated four million cost is being sought with the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency (SAPTA) grants. Mr. Whitley of the Department of Health and Human Services has also been very helpful in making services available. A gap analysis is being conducted to see what resources are still needed and what might be available.

The assessment center is scheduled to be open in August from about 11:00 am until 7:00 pm. This will provide a proof of concept model and will assist in demonstrating that positive progressive steps toward successful interventions are being made. It is hoped that the hours will be expanded in the near future.

Clark County has just engaged a new case load management system for their probation department which could help in collecting data and make it more sharable. This is very valuable data which should provide important help for specific populations.

New Business

Commissioner Walker brought up the Wrap Around Milwaukee program. This program saw a similar reduction in numbers of state and out of state placements. They went from a waiting list of hundreds to no waiting list at all and very low numbers. Although this is a mental health services program, the basic model may be adaptable to Washoe County. It was agreed that this might be something to look at as Director Whitley has an abundance of resources such as mobile crisis teams, and drop centers which could be a piece of a wrap-around service. Many in the at risk population lack the ability to follow up with referrals, so the assessment or drop centers are very valuable in positively changing the lives of these youth and their families.

There was a specific request to have strategies which would address DMC training, on the next meeting's agenda. These would focus specifically on DMC among African American Youth. A summit within the state was also suggested. The intent is to get individuals together for a couple of days so as to sort out a statewide strategy. This would be especially useful if experts from across the country could be brought in. They could steward the conversation and keep the summit on track. Elected officials may also benefit from having an open discussion with the participants.

The governor definitely would be interested in a summit as was shown by his recent meeting with Chairman Burgess and Commissioners Lozano and Coppa. He had them remain far longer than their allotted time and was very interested in juvenile issues in the state. His involvement as a family is shown by his wife's work with the Children's Cabinet.

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Comments from Public

There were no public comments at this time.

Set Time, Date and Agenda for Next Meeting

The next Committee Meeting will be on April 13, 2016 and will remain at 5:30 pm. This will be a phone conference.

Agenda:

Specific Strategies to address DMC in African American Youth, emphasis on training.

DMC summit plans and ideas.

Lawyer conversation on certifying youth down.

School to Prison Pipeline

Adjourn

Commissioner Lozano moved to adjourn the meeting with a second from Commissioner Lozano. The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 p.m. by Chairman Martin.