

SMART on Juvenile Justice: Enhancing Youth Access to Justice Initiative

SJJAC Quarterly Meeting Minutes October 18, 2017

Opening

The SMART on Juvenile Justice: Enhancing Youth Access to Justice Committee (SJJAC) Quarterly Meeting was called to order by Dawn Williams at 10:03 am on October 18, 2017 in the Carvel State Office Building, 10th Floor HR Conference Room, 820 N. French Street, Wilmington, DE 19801.

Present

Romie Griesmer (CJC), Lisa Minutola (ODS), Dawn Williams (ODS), Alanna Farber (OPD), Meghan Crist (OPD), Kirstin Cornnell (DCJ), Kate Parker West (DCJ), Nancy Dietz (YRS), Addie Asay (Family Court), Monika Germono (OPD), Linda Carmichael (Superior Court), Michael Arrington (JJAG), Lynn Gedney (DELJIS), Stephanie Volturo (OCC) were in attendance.

Introduction

Dawn Williams gave a welcome and introduction. A motion to approve the minutes from the July 7th meeting was approved. Those present provided introductions.

Implementation Grant updates

- Dawn Williams gave the Training & Education Work Group update: Alison McGonigal (DSCYF) has stepped down from co-chairing this group; Debra O'Neill (DSCYF), Renee Cicone (YRS), and Abby Layton (DOJ) have joined the group. The group met on Friday, October 13, 2017 and debriefed about the Summit which was fairly well received based on anecdotal feedback and the surveys returned. Although the focus of this grant is access to counsel, this group hopes to involve other stakeholders in trainings. The group would like to offer more training on implicit bias. The group is considering a symposium at Delaware Law School this spring. The group is also looking at holding training regarding JJAG processes. Some community engagement was also discussed such as the community resource guide that Meghan Crist is compiling. Committee members were asked to contact Dawn if you have any ideas for the spring summit or other trainings. In July, five additional DE attorneys were trained and became certified as JTIP trainers (able to train other attorneys in juvenile defense representation).
- Lisa Minutola gave the update for the Post-Disposition Group: The group met on 9/21/17 and discussed expungement clinic updates, the next clinic will be held on Nov. 3, 2017 in Kent County. There is a need to raise more money to help kids who cannot afford the \$52 fee for their criminal record. Donations can be made through DCJ. Alanna Farber, hired in the spring as the post-disposition coordinator, has been a major help with post-disposition representation in the state. This summer there were two expungement clinics that helped about 100 kids. All clinics continue to partner with APEX who can help adults with expungements and pardons. Alanna also helps some kids on an individual basis. With discretionary expungements, Alanna may represent the youth herself or refer the youth to outside counsel who have volunteered and been trained. Alanna has been tabling in Kent County and NCC every 2-3 weeks to give out information to the public on expungements. Trainings for volunteer attorneys continue as needed. Alanna and Lisa met with Senate staffers in order to educate them on the expungement process. Alanna now has three DE law students working with her on post-disposition

representation. The students have been observing her meetings at Ferris and she is looking forward to handing over the baton to them. They will also be meeting with YCOP kids 1 or 2 times/month. Kitty Lunger and Lisa did a tour of YCOP and had some concerns. First, because of the sight and sound separation requirements, the kids end up getting less (outside time, church, meals, programs) than the adults. There are about 20 kids there. The educational instruction also did not appear to be interactive. Alanna and Meghan are forming an education work group to work on school-related issues. Eliza Hirst (OCA) will be on the committee and has been providing helpful information. On the community engagement piece: Meghan and Alanna have been visiting programs throughout the state and trying to connect kids with them. Also, through community education, Meghan and Alanna would like to help change the negative image of the Public Defender's Office and build trust in their services. Lisa mentioned that DELJIS gave them information that there are 26,000 children since 2000 that are eligible for mandatory expungement. Alanna suggested the number is even higher, perhaps by 6,000.

- Kate Parker-West gave the update for the Initial Detention Group: This group is focused on initial detention hearings. Based upon some preliminary data from UD, it appears there may be some opportunities for educating JP Judges about the harms of initial detention on youth. We will give the committee an update when the data has been fully analyzed. This group would like to see if DE can move away from video bails as well as cash bail. Lisa and Kitty are giving a presentation later this month at the DCJ Visions of Justice Conference on October 27, 2017 at Christiana Hilton. Other groups have completed their work under this grant (Waiver of Counsel Group: a Family Court Rule was adopted and codified last week. Transfer of Counsel: legislation now makes this decision discretionary except when a firearm is involved. DMC group: Monika Germono said this group is waiting to hear about funding from the new grant for the youth-police training)
- Romie Griesmer provided an update on JJAG and the new grant: JJAG was reauthorized by the Governor and he has made many appointments for the public members of JJAG. JJAG is waiting for a few more appointments before JJAG can be officially seated. JJAG has been told that via the executive committee, it can form the new grant committee in order to begin the work. The goals of the new grant are Improving Diversion, Expanding Civil Citation, Reducing DMC, and Improving Data Collection.
- Agency updates: Nancy Dietz gave a YRS update. YRS is getting a national PBS (performance based standards) award this month in Chicago for Ferris and Grace Cottage. Ferris has been awarded the top level 5 facility in the country. Nancy and Abby Layton are going to talk to the police chief's association about civil citation in the hopes of getting more non-school based referrals.

Conclusion

Lisa announced that she, Dawn, Alanna, Meghan, and Tom Donovan (OCC) are attending the NJDC conference next week and that Donna Pugh (YRS Civil Citation) will be presenting at the conference. Lisa asked that work groups please meet at least once before the next meeting. The meeting was adjourned at about 11:20 am.