

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Youth Justice Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2022

Time: 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

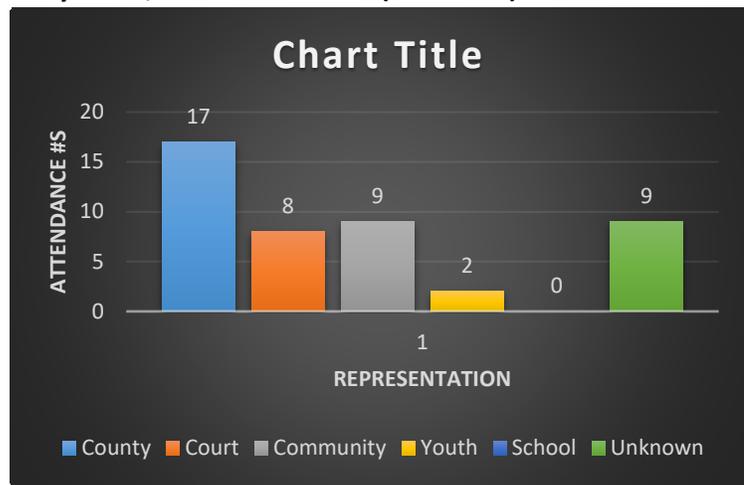
Location: Virtual

Minutes

Welcome- Judge Mark Kappelhoff, Dr. Brittany Lewis, and Jerald Moore (5 minutes)

Highlights from Meeting:

- YJC will do better in honoring space for young people. YJC has committed to adding a young person as a member of the YJC Steering Chair Committee and looking into various trainings to ensure the YJC is holding properly holding space for our young people and the community.
- Community Forum portion discussed youth and community engagement; setting goals and timelines as a collective; what are the root causes and how can the YJC address those root causes of young people that are served within the juvenile justice system; rethink/re-imagine the process of reviewing cases that come to the Hennepin County Attorney's office; and discussion around education and how can YJC support positive school engagement.
- [YJC 2022 Workplan](#) on the [YJC website](#) for review.



Purpose and culture of holding space in YJC- Jerald Moore (10 minutes)

Discussion regarding how space has been for young people and we, the YJC, need to do better for our young people. We want to honor their experiences, and greatness. We as a system need to realize that we have caused traumatic experiences within the juvenile justice system. We need to look at opportunities to empower our young people, such as adding a young person to the YJC Steering Chair. We are also looking into the Brooklyn Bridge Alliance to help us all in engaging, honoring, and supporting our young people at the table.

Community Forum - Dr. Brittany Lewis (35 minutes)

How do we grow together to be successful? We need to actively listen and accurately articulate when we are communicating, which is a human thing that we all need to work on. *"Come to listen ready to learn before we lead."*

Brainstorm ideas that active listening is taking place. What we do and what we say, actions must match the words. Young people are hearing a lot of words with good intention, but we also must realize that many young people may not understand the process. Youth have not heard our commitment or witnessed the commitment. Are we all talking about the same thing, same action? We need to listen first before going into assumptions. Listen with your heart, how are you hearing their pain, their frustrations and get to understand the root causes of the pain and frustration. We, the system, look at the behavior before we look at the root. How do we change that process? Are we unwilling to learn? Systemic harm leads to the behavior.

Are we communicating the process to young people, so they understand? The young people are not being honored, not being heard. There is a deep frustration regarding those in leadership positions within the system are defining the action instead of it being a group process. Wins are different for different people. Win for system people is not the same for a young person or the community.

We as a group need to come up with goals and timelines.

Hennepin County needs to get to the root causes and realize that they, the county, have caused Black and Brown, people over the years and continues to do so, harm. Using a tree as the symbolism where the system is the root and trunk of the tree and the leaves are what we, systems, have been working on, pulling the leaves away, instead of working on the roots and the trunk. Small wins that disrupt causes.

Root = childhood trauma, how do we identify the trauma and address the trauma before the leaves of the tree become extremely large. Root causes happen before a youth has contact with the juvenile justice system. How do we prevent before we intervene? Parents need to have access to programs/services that are currently available to those that are already in the system, so they (the parents) can prevent behavior that can lead to the juvenile justice system. Need to be pro-active and not re-active when working with young people. Need to change the thinking that there must be something wrong with a person before they can receive services/programs.

What are the results, and do we all want the same results, who's accountable to achieving these results, and how do we measure to see if we are achieving the results? Are the right people at the YJC table because a lot of the issues are intersectional. How much can this group really achieve?

What is the strategy or approach we should take to get at the root cause? How can we disrupt the root causes?

We may need to restructure the YJC due to the discussion that has been taken place over the year and today. A lot of work is done in the sub-committees, but it may be helpful to restructure the YJC. Discussion regarding the trauma and pain youth experience that has been through the system. How do we do prevention work? How can this committee work differently collectively?

Can we provide healing space within the YJC for our young people?

Have youth meet in person instead of virtually because it can provide support when there are other youth together who have similar experiences.

Rethink/re-imagine the process of cases, who reviews the cases and how can we engage the community to be a part of this process?

Discussed process of initial contact with the system for youth and how the community can be more of this process in the decision of charging, cases, resolutions, transformations? When can we do this and how can we do this?

Divest funds into community. Have the community be more involved in the juvenile justice system.

Concrete examples of things we can work on collectively:

1. Having community be a part of the case review process for crimes that are committed.
2. Plea bargaining -- every person has a right to a jury trial. There shouldn't be a high number of people being charged with a crime because of plea bargains, especially young people. Is there anything we can do within Hennepin County regarding plea bargaining specifically for young people?
 - a. What is the process that needs to take place to begin this work?
 - b. Shifting leadership and voices
3. Challenge each stakeholder within the system to come up with goals/initiatives within their space/system along with action items and being accountable to achieving those goals. This process has begun and will be shared with the larger YJC.
4. How can truancy look different for HCAO (Hennepin County Attorney's Office) that doesn't involve bringing the youth and/or parent to court? How can improve/support education for our young people? (Prioritize this issue)

What does next steps look like? Divest funds that goes to the county into the community and organizations that work with the young people, support organizers that work with the community. How can system people support other people doing the work within the community? Build an infrastructure within the community.

Need to bring these issues, discussion to other tables/meetings that are taking place within the county.

As we digest and develop steps internally, how does this group want to receive, digest, and be engaged in the process when system people present the work to everyone that is part of the YJC.

What does change look like to each of us?

An idea shared was to have direct efforts put in to creating scholarships/funds to assist a young person, who has been involved with the juvenile justice, with their higher education.

What else could truancy look like for the HCAO that doesn't involve bringing a youth/parent to court? We must meet people where they are. Teaching young people on being responsible is part of their duty and how do we support that for a young person. Plans need to be individualized for each young person. Step-Up program is a great example. Wall Street program may be of interest for young people. Finances, activities, community service are some examples. Create a space where students are coming together, and we are encouraging them to be responsible along with supporting and encouraging them on what their future looks like to them.

Let them find things they are interested in. Creating a community space for youth. Parents should not have to go to court because of their child being truant, especially if the parent is doing everything possible to ensure the child is going to school. There is a lack of values among youth, and the lack of programs/services for youth. Older youth become less involved and interested in school. Ask schools to co-collaborate/lead with community organizations to encourage young people to get excited about school/education. This goal regarding education/raising up education should be prioritized. Maybe create a workgroup or a sub-committee. Include principals and parents in the committee.

HCAO is developing a work program that involves the private sector for young people that are justice involved.

Host BE@school educational sessions at the schools and educate the youth on how to avoid the Be@school program.

2022 YJC system stakeholder goals -- Will post the goals, the YJC workplan, on the YJC website. Tabled for May YJC meeting to answer any questions and discuss.

Meeting dates and times for 2022 (also available at Youth Justice Council | Hennepin County website)- Jerald Moore (5 minutes)

Wrap up and next Steps - Judge Kappelhoff- (5 minutes)

CHAT:

Raj he/they to Everyone:

deep listening let us to root causes and not only pay attention to behavior. Yes --- invest in our communities advocate for community led solutions colonization, racism, and other institutional and historical harm does strip folks of their agencies

Sierra Leone (She/Her/Hers) to Everyone:

If there is anyone participating in this meeting and is not being compensated through another organization, please let me know so we can be sure you are compensated for your time. Sierra Leone Samuels: sierraleone.samuels@hennepin.us / (612) 695-5432 cell

Raj he/they to Everyone:

Judge, i think activist and families pushed hard for those changes ... the system came after that i am not ready to compliment them ... we have been pushing for change. Let's free up resources yes sister ... funding is tied to enforcement and compliance ... not to address pain, suffering and trauma

Judge Tanya Bransford (she/her) to Everyone:

Raj, I appreciate that the system responded to the push of the community and activists agree with you. I am just reflecting on the change from 20 or 25 years ago when judges could send young people to out of home placements without getting to the underlying trauma.

Raj he/they to Everyone:

that defines colonialism and racism yes, it was and will be denied to communities because we are "less than"

Megan Jablonski Johnson-HCAO to Everyone:

There is certainly a lack of voluntary services available to youth and families. In my experience, much like everything else, I find that these services seem much more readily available in certain more affluent and predominantly white communities.

Kristy Snyder--she/her to Everyone:

I struggle with a vision for this group. Are we all aligned with a vision? I'm not sure the youth, system folks and community folks are aligned. I'm also not sure we have a vision of what will be tangibly different because of the work of this group. What is the data we are using? How will positions in the system be transformed? Do we have all the right system players here?

Sarah E to Everyone:

Kristy, would you feel comfortable speaking more about this?Raj he/they to Everyone:

yes. youth and we must work towards being ...justice (love) protectors. Kristy is invoking critical race theory, intersectionality hey!!!

Lexi Prah Martin (she/they) to Everyone:

Sounds very similar to the new strategy implemented in Child Protective Services around the Intake Review Team

Raj he/they to Everyone:

community council to work with the courts, corrections etc.

Kristy Snyder--she/her to Everyone:

I think we should do a factor analysis. Let young people lead it. Decide together and prioritize.

Raj he/they to Everyone:

decenter the courts and corrections

LATONYA REEVES-PROBATION to Everyone:

THERE ARE NO COMMUNITY SPACES FOR OLDER KIDS TO GET SERVICES. THE PARK BOARD HAS PROGRAMS FOR YOUNGER KIDS, BUT THE OLDER ONES ARE LEFT ON THEIR OWN. COMMUNITY NEEDS TO BE AT THE TABLE. NOT THESE MONEY HUNGRY NON-CULTURALLY COMPETENT PROGRAMS THAT DO NOT CARE ABOUT OUR KIDS. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT EARLY ON IS THE EQUIVALENT OF THE VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT AT SENTENCING. THEY ARE THE ONE'S DEALING WITH THE HARM.

Kristy Snyder--she/her to Everyone:

Curious about the budget. Alignment with the priorities. And about the government liaison who works with the legislature. How does that align with this work?

Raj he/they to Everyone:

stakeholder/co-holders (come to collaborate and thrive together) how do we co-hold space and create transformation. Because every child =\$\$\$\$\$ for our schools

Kristy Snyder--she/her to Everyone:

Amen. Let's look at what is pushing young people OUT of school and figure out new ways of inviting them back into new places of learning. Let's think about what would delight young people to go to school. So many young people EXPECT to hate school. So, they don't expect to ever to delight in school.

Sarah E to Everyone:

When we talk about pushing youth out of school, it's the most real and true thing that young people experience in our American education system. These effects "troubled" kids, students of color in PWI, low-income students, foreign born students, and more. Teachers and faculty are allowed to put their biases on to their innocent students. The way I was treated so differently by teachers after they saw my house arrest band for example. This cannot fall on the kids but on the administration

Malaika Eban (she/her) to Everyone:

It would be great to hear the information about the goals. And/or to have them posted publicly.

Mark Kappelhoff (he/him) to Everyone:

yes, we will post them on the website

Terrence Shambley Jr. (she/t) to Everyone:

Agree w/ Malaika. Important to know what this youth justice council has in mind for goals.

Mark Kappelhoff (he/him) to Everyone:

Yes, every stakeholder in the system has agreed on a set of goals and a timeline for accomplishing the goals -- Judges Probation, County Attorney, and Public Defender.

Raj he/they to Everyone:

it is a systemic practice to shut down discourse and systems refuse to be vulnerable --- it will reform but not transform lol

Malaika Eban (she/her) to Everyone:

Could representatives from MPS or other local educational entities join as key stakeholders at this table?

Kristy Snyder--she/her to Everyone:

I do think that it would be great to see the goals, have young people analyze it and do their own factor analysis and pose their own goals. I am worried that we are all doing some knee jerk reactions without including young people.

Amanda Harrington, (she/her), HCAO to Everyone:

Be@School is clear that attendance is usually NOT the actual problem- it's a symptom of something deeper. That is a shift for some folks though- we aren't all there yet.

Sierra Leone (She/Her/Hers) to Everyone:

If anyone has connections to individuals within the MPS please send me their email address so I can add them to the email list and invite them to the next YJC meeting, share the YJC website, or any of the charter schools. Thank you

Desola Oni She/her to Everyone:

Sarah E, i want to ensure you didn't feel bypassed in your comment. I think i heard you say that we should be mindful that while it may be helpful to have historical context and other perspectives, it can also feel invalidating. So perhaps we might consider how those lands for folks both in being able to understand why and how information is shared as well as how it might be received.

Carrie Yeager to Everyone:

@ Sierra. I would reach out to the Principal at North-Mauri Friestleben.
Mauri.Friestleben@mpls.k12.mn.us

Terrence Shambley Jr. (she/t) to Everyone:

Education is important. Both/and if the problem of using crime/lawbreaking/punishment as the lens for the system, focusing on education wouldn't address the root either.