



PROBATION DEPARTMENT



Kalisa Rochester
Chief Probation Officer

**Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council
JJCPA/YOBG
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2021
Meeting via Zoom**

Attending

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| 1. Kalisa Rochester, Chief Probation Officer | Probation Department |
| 2. Lisa Maples, Deputy Chief Probation Officer/Superintendent | Probation Department |
| 3. Joel Daffron, Program Manager | Probation Department |
| 4. Joseph Owens, Program Manager | Probation Department |
| 5. Zach Robertson, Special Projects Coordinator | Probation Department |
| 6. Beatriz Ramirez, Program Specialist | Probation Department |
| 7. Genevieve Valentine, Director | BHRS |
| 8. Jeff Sabeau, Division Director | BHRS |
| 9. Yvonna Brown, Director | Human Services Agency |
| 10. Debbie Perez, Attorney | Fitzgerald, Alvarez and Ciummo |
| 11. Michael Coughlin, Deputy Public Defender | Public Defender |
| 12. Kimberly Lewis, District Attorney | District Attorney |
| 13. Nancy Murillo, Program Director, WRAP Around Services | Aspiranet |
| 14. Dennis Haines, Family Social Services Supervisor | MCOE/Family Resource Center |

Meeting called to order at 10:30 am.

Welcome

Kalisa welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming. She went over the attendee list for documentation in the minutes. She explained the purpose of the meeting. We are going over the JJCPA/YOBG annual report. She wants to update the group on the strides we are currently making in meeting our goals. Joel Daffron completed the report and it must be submitted to the State by May 1st. He will be presenting the highlights of the report.

Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act and Youthful Offender Block Grant

Joel acknowledged that the report was sent out for review to the team. He plans to only cover the highlights. This is a fluid document and changes can always be made. (A copy of this report will also be sent out with the minutes.) He broke the plan down into three parts which are:

1. Countywide Services Needs, Priorities and Strategies
2. Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA)
3. Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG)

He explained what each section means and how they are blended together in funding streams and services. COVID has impacted every agency. All services and challenges are described in meeting the expectations of the plan. This is not an all-inclusive list of the services provided to the youth. These are the most often utilized. Please feel free to let us know if you feel a program is missing. Some of these programs are not completely funded through JJCPA. He gave some examples of the services available. They are:

- The DoWITH Program is a huge program that works with wrap around community services.
- The LINK Program provides services off site. He listed some of the services and programs available to refer out youth to at various times. All these services help meet the needs of the youth. Our assessment drives the train as to what services are utilized.
- The Youth Accountability Board (YAB) is for first time offenders. This is a low-level offender program designed to keep the youth from escalating juvenile delinquency.
- Prop 47 is a program on the West Side. The three (3) year program is coming to an end this August.

We partner with quite a few community agencies to meet the needs of the youth. Education, Law Enforcement and Mental Health agencies are among the groups we collaborate with on a regular basis. These partnerships are phenomenal. Joel gave some examples of the programs we refer to and collaborate with to meet the challenging needs of the youth. He spoke about the clinical team that is now stationed at the Facility. This team addresses the mental health needs of the youth in the Facility. This collaborative effort is proving to be very successful. He opened it up for questions. One question was posed regarding gang referral or prevention programs. As of now, there is not a component in place but it is something that is needed.

Kimberly Lewis shared information about a new infrastructure on the Federal level going into place. A \$5 billion package is being proposed for prevention programs. Perhaps we can work on programs targeting gang prevention and early intervention. The Home Boy Industries would be a model for this program. Tied to this, is the Early Intervention position in the Probation Department. The creation and filling of this position is now moving forward. The Deputy Probation Officer assigned to Early Intervention will be going into the schools and expanding the efforts to increase knowledge and awareness so that we can decrease gang activity. We are trying to set things in motion early on to divert youth from going to the gangs. Genevieve Valentine offer their services and gave examples of how they could be of assistance. They would need funding to help provide the wrap around services. It may take a blending of funding streams to make this component happen.

Joel explained the importance of programming and meeting the needs of the youth. Beatriz Ramirez is the Program Specialist at the Facility. She is responsible for creating and implementing all the programming for the youth. There are programs which will assist the youth and expand opportunities for them. The Facility offers a variety of programs to meet the individual and specific treatment needs of each youth. The MRT piece is a co-facilitation which is opening the door to have Probation Officers trained in evidence-based curriculum. The Deputy Probation Officers are working in tandem with the Facility staff helping to change the dynamics for a more

positive outcome with the youth. He explained how several of these programs are changing the pre-existing mindset. Helping the whole family and not just the youth has benefits on every level. These evidence-based plans are happening in the field as well as in the Facility reaping benefits on both fronts.

Joel recapped on the Early Intervention Position we have in place. He listed some implementation plans and goals. He touched on levels of service needed and how it would be individualized for each school's needs. Collaboratives will be critical.

Prioritizing Focus Areas

Joel explained that we have several issues in our valley. Poverty being at the top of the list. There are struggles that the County has which make it difficult to provide services to our clients. Often there are no Community Based Organizations (CBO's) in place to assist our clients. On the flip side, the CBO's we do have may be inundated and struggling as well. We do not have the resources of larger, more influential Counties. We have look outside the box and try to provide some of these services ourselves. We have to look at our data to determine the need and what works best.

The PACT assessment is the tool we use to evaluate the level of risk and the level of services needed. He went over some of the items listed as problem criteria:

- School
- Family
- Community
- Sexual activity and resulting in parenthood
- Behavioral Health
- Poverty

Juvenile Justice Action Strategy

Joel explained the strategy and how the referrals are doing. The data is critical to make appropriate referrals. He went over some of the groups reminding the team that we cannot assist (youth under 12). We can work on the early intervention of these youth.

Joel explained that information for this report was pulled from various agencies and the data they presented to him. He went over the referrals and other services youth can be referred to. There was a roundtable discussion. Kimberly has some of the information Joel may need and she will share this with him. She has both juvenile and adult data. Her office shows data supporting they do not file on 100% of the cases.

The top referrals made are for the following:

- Runaway
- Driving without a license
- Obstruct/ETC Public Officer

- Battery
- Promote Street Gang
- Assault
- Participate in a Street Gang
- Assault with a Deadly Weapon

He gave a brief rundown on each type of referral. Having the data helps us to evaluate the needs. Lisa Maples shared we are trying to be proactive. There was a roundtable discussion. There was a question and answer period. Dennis Haines filled us in on some of the ways to get the youth and families to more involved. We need to figure out what is really going on that is causing the action. ACE's is critical in helping to get to the root of the problems with some of our youth. Often, we are all working with the same youth and/or family to help them all move forward.

Joel went over all of the graphs in the report.

The Incentive Program was explained. It encourages the population that we serve to do well. All of the results are collected for data purposes. He gave some examples of how this works. Both the juvenile and adult teams work with the incentive program. He also gave some examples of consequences. We are trying to look outside the box. Our officers are working with families to get them referred to services. COVID has made things look very different causing us to do more to keep the youth out of Court and out of Juvenile Hall. Staffing programs was discussed.

He recapped some of the programs and data discussed earlier. All of the new programs are happening. Some may be in their infancy stage, but they are happening.

There are programs that are funded by JJCPA funding as well as some officer positions. Staff positions and funding streams were explained. Case load sizes were discussed. Assessments were covered and explained. The Chief has made it a priority to improve on our current procedure as we are striving to get better at capturing the data. Along with the Deputy for the Intervention Program, we now have another Probation Assistant position. This position will be supervising low risk caseloads. We are seeing less failure with more success. We want to provide services and redirections. We see this as a model and will move forward following the guidelines of this concept.

He went over the RISE Program and the Higher Grounds Mobile Coffee Cart Program. Joel explained how this new program works and how youth qualify for participation. The program has already started through our partnership with MCOE. We are waiting for the truck and coffee cart and the goal is to roll this out in the very near future. This innovative program gives the youth the opportunity to learn new skills and work on interactive skills with the community. It opens up opportunities they would not normally have for reaching goals. The program was just started in March but we have already made great strides.

The RISE Program is very similar to the adult Phoenix Program. It provides the youth with job preparation, interview tips, etc. to work with youth to get them up to par for employment

opportunities. There are incentives for the participating employer and Joel explained how this works for both the employer and the youth. Linkage to programs was explained and how they will better serve our youth. He listed some providers that are phenomenal partners. There was a question and answer period. Joel explained the caps on the programs and where they are housed. There is a cap of twenty-five (25) participants due to limited funding. We currently have fifteen (15) youth in the program. Logistics and barriers were discussed. Currently, we have a cohort in Merced and Atwater. The goal is to get a cohort in Los Banos.

Graffiti Abatement Program is up and running again. We have brought back this commitment to the unincorporated areas in the County. It's a win, win for both the youth who are actually doing the work and the community. Both in custody youth and those outside the facility have the opportunity to participate. Those outside of the Facility have the opportunity to complete community hours that have been ordered through the Court.

Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG)

This program is specific to institutions. He went over the programs we have in place and how we try to keep the youth locally placed. At this time, we have no regional agreements.

Joel addressed the BCA needs and assessments tools. This helps to identify the needs of the youth. He explained that they can earn points and how that helps the youth. There was a roundtable discussion. Rehabilitation is important to our Department. We are seeing these changes make a difference in the youth.

Adjournment

Kalisa thanked everyone who attended. The report will be submitted to the BSCC. It will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors in October. We will reconvene again before then.

Meeting adjourned at 11:53 am.

The next meeting TBA.

Minutes scribed by Maurina Erickson, Secretary III