

Minutes

STATE ADVISORY GROUP ON JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION MEETING

January 9, 2026
Office of Juvenile Affairs
MC Connor Building
2501 North Lincoln Blvd, Ste 500
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

I. Call to Order & Roll Call

Mr. Les Thomas, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

Present: Dr. Jaime Burns, Marquess Dennis, Rep. Emily Gise, David Grewe, Maureen Guerrero, Pray'eon Jackson, Dr. Greg Parks, Jamie Sherman, Jessica Teszlewicz, Les Thomas and Brian Wahnee. Demetrius Bell arrived at 10:12 a.m.

Absent: James Edwards, Chad Gragg, Erin Jones-Slatev, and Jake Roberts

II. Approval of Minutes

Representative Emily Gise made the motion to approve the November 14, 2025, minutes and the second was made by David Grewe. Dr. Jaime Burns, Marquess Dennis, Rep. Emily Gise, David Grewe, Pray'eon Jackson, Dr. Greg Parks, Jamie Sherman, Jessica Teszlewicz and Les Thomas voted yes. Maureen Guerrero and Brian Wahnee abstained. The motion carried.

III. Old Business

1. Discussion on the Tribal Gathering

Presenter: Juvenile Justice (JJ) Specialist Alison Humphrey

Ms. Alison Humphrey updated the SAG on the Tribal Gathering. Six tribes were represented. The MacArthur High School JROTC Color Guard presented in the morning and stayed for the whole day. After Lunch, the Comanche Dance Group performed. They got the entire group dancing and there are pictures of James Millington, Pray'eon Jackson, Hezekiah Davis, and Randy Sheppard dancing.

After the dancing, the afternoon session was very productive with more interaction. The group was very interested in the Science of HOPE and our key process. Ms. Humphrey thanked the SAG for their votes to make the Tribal Gathering a success.

2. Request for Proposal (RFP) & FLUXX Updates

Presenter: JJ Specialist Jennifer Francis

FLUXX is now live. It will be much easier for Title II committee members compared to the old process. All SAG members, not just Title II subcommittee members, need to register to FLUXX and get set up as there could be times they might be needed to score RFPs. An email with a link will be sent out. Once the link is clicked, there will be a few questions to be answered and then Ms. Amy Wright can assign access. Once set up, the process for reviewing and scoring is very streamlined.

A live link is on OJA's SAG page that can be shared. It will take users directly to the RFP segment which has instructions. SAG members can share it in texts to interested parties or share on social media.

IV. New Business

1. Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ): Youth Safety Pathway Initiative

Presenter: Melissa Milchman, Esq., Executive Director CJJ

Melissa Milchman, the Executive Director for the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ), spoke to the SAG about the Youth Safety Pathway Initiative (YSPI). It is a joint effort by the CJJ and the National Network for Youth (NN4Y). It is currently being proposed for funding consideration by some national social and youth justice foundations to support.

This initiative aims to reduce unnecessary justice system involvement among minors and expand community-driven alternatives that promote safety, stability, and well-being—particularly considering the Supreme Court's *City of Grants Pass v. Johnson* decision. Post-Grants Pass, many communities have adopted punitive ordinances that criminalize behaviors linked to housing instability, putting minors at greater risk of arrest or citation—even when no crime has been committed. These policies strain law enforcement and juvenile courts while failing to address root causes.

NN4Y and CJJ are seeking to identify one or two priority states to partner with, and Oklahoma was at the top of our list to explore, as we thought this work might align with some of your existing Title II or SAG Committee interests. The initiative will aim to:

- Shrink the footprint of the youth justice system where harmful policies are driving up arrests and court involvement.
- Expand community-based, non-police responses for minors in crisis.
- Equip advocacy ecosystems, directly impacted youth and families, and providers to push back against punitive measures.

Leveraging CJJ's leadership in juvenile justice reform and NN4Y's decades of work preventing youth homelessness criminalization, we aim to strengthen local ecosystems and dismantle policies that disproportionately harm Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and rural youth.

The time commitment for participating in the one-year initiative would be a meeting once a month for approximately two hours.

Committee Members for the newly created YSPI subcommittee will be Emily Burns, Brian Wahnee, Jamie Sherman Pray'eon Jackson, Jessica Teszlewicz, Demetrius Bell and David Grewe. David Grewe will serve as the SAG member lead while Alison Humphrey and Joshua Holder will serve as OJA staff leads.

A motion was made by David Grewe for the SAG to participate in CJJ's Youth Safety Pathway Initiative. Jamie Sherman made the second. All present voted yes. The motion carried.

2. Discussion and possible action on CJJ \$6,000 annual membership renewal
Presenter: Chair Les Thomas, Sr.

A handout of the benefits for CJJ membership was passed out to the SAG. Chair, Mr. Les Thomas, gave an account of attending last year's conference and how much it helped him stepping into his role.

Some of the benefits include getting a discount to attend conferences, SAG support with required training, and webinars for staff where they can see national directions for Juvenile Justice. OJA staff can use the webinars to fulfill required training hours.

In addition, it allows our SAG to network with other states and build relationships. Support is given by CJJ for grant management, role-specific training such as R/ED Coordinator, Juvenile Justice Specialists, Compliance Monitor, SAG Chair/Member and Youth SAG members.

Mr. Randy Sheppard gave an update on the Youth Justice in Action conference. It was more youth lead with many breakout sessions. It was great to watch the youth lead and be given a voice.

The motion to approve the \$6000 annual membership renewal for CJJ was made by David Grewe. The second was made by Dr. Greg Parks. All present voted yes and the motion carried.

V. Reports

1. Finance
Presenter: Kimberlee Gray

Ms. Kimberlee Gray provided the monthly financial report as of December 31, 2025. Several handouts were given to the SAG.

2. Title II / Grants
Presenter: Jennifer Francis

The update on Title II Grants was given by Ms. Jennifer Francis. She provided a handout with committee assignments with information that includes committee, staff lead,

member lead, committee members with their contact information. The Staff Lead will be the primary lead, but a Member lead is needed as well.

Marquess Dennis will be Member Lead for the Three-Year Plan committee, Jamie Sherman for the Social Media committee, Jessica Teszlewicz on Title II, and Brian Wahnee for the Tribal.

Ms. Francis then gave an update on the Title II grants. 22 grants were given out last year with a conservative estimate of 5 to 6 thousand families served. The team has visited the majority of the 22 subgrantees. Only 8 are left to be visited and they are primarily in the Tulsa area or Southern Oklahoma. She asked if any SAG member would like to attend, to please reach out to her.

A Tribal RFP is currently open and posted on the website. A webinar was hosted and 8 people attended with 5 nations represented. The group was excited about the RFP and asked a lot of questions. There is \$350,000 available to be awarded.

3. Youth Emerging Leaders (YEL) **Presenter: Pray'eon Jackson**

Mr. Pray'eon Jackson and Mr. Hezekiah Davis presented the report for Youth Emerging Leaders (YEL). An update was given on the Christmas Initiative. YEL visited all the youth in placement to give them Christmas Cards and to take their pictures. The pictures were then sent to their families. At COJC, the youth wore "ugly sweaters" for their pictures. YEL also arranged for families in need to have Christmas presents for siblings of youth in custody. with an Angel Tree.

4. Compliance & R/ED **Presenter: Joshua Holder**

The Compliance and R/ED report was given by Mr. Joshua Holder. The compliance is at 100% for all facilities personally vetted by him. As of December 31, 2025, there have been 471 physical confirmations of State Facilities Compliance which represents 88.2% of the total facilities. The anticipated completion date is August 18, 2026.

Mr. Holder informed the SAG that preparations have been made for his impending absence. All facilities that are in the medium to high severity levels have been contacted with updated instructions on what do should there be the necessity to hold a juvenile secured. Furthermore, all facilities scheduled for a mandated inspection will be visited prior to the absence. This will ensure that Oklahoma remains compliant through May 21, 2026.

As a subset of R/ED, the State Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative will begin accruing quarterly data from the participating agencies to begin review in early February. This process will greatly inform how the Initiative moves forward in its operations based on the impact seen for the individual counties. The Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative was created with the purpose of getting resources that are typically utilized post-arrest to juveniles when they are at a level of zero offense or status offense as a subset of our state

and federal mandate for jail removal, deinstitutionalization, and addressing racial and ethnic disparities (R/ED).

As of the end of the year, our initiative includes the following confirmed participants: all law agencies located in Muskogee, Kay, Murray, Harper, Caddo, Tillman and Pontotoc counties; 4 district judges; 11 youth service agencies; the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse; and the Trafficking Advisement Group. Mr. Holder asked the SAG to reach out to him if there are any individuals or agencies that would be interested in taking part of this initiative.

A collaboration with training specialists based out of Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center (COJC) is going to be involved in the first draft of the module that will be utilized for your state agency presentations. In conjunction with the final draft development, several methods of dissemination are currently being discussed from an operational standpoint.

An update was given on the collaboration between OJA and the Trafficking Advisement Group (TAG). TAG and the Human Trafficking Response Unit will facilitate specialized training for all our Juvenile Handling Agencies; particularly Law Enforcement, Detention Centers, Shelters and any Juvenile focused facility whether state-ran or NGO. This training will include information from our R/ED modules, along with our Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative resources and information. This will allow us to participate in the fight against child trafficking while also giving us the manpower utilized by these outside agencies to distribute our information. The first training event will take place at the Canadian County Juvenile Justice Center on March 4th.

We are still waiting for confirmation to the 2026 Human Trafficking Taskforce, and the submission has been made on our behalf for Oklahoma Coalition Against Trafficking (OCAT), both of which will extend our reach and put us into contact with further interested groups. As January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month, the HT Community Awareness & Engagement Workgroup has issued an open call out to OJA and its affiliates for any event that we may have that might benefit from their presence. They will set up informational centers, give presentations, etc.

5. Family Advisory Council

Presenter: Emily Burns

Ms. Emily Burns updated the SAG on the Family Advisory Council. They are discussing having meetings more often so they can work on revising documents for OJA. They have started their podcast, and the first edit was done last week. Each podcast will have 5 questions to help the families go through this process for the first time. It is meant to give them guidance as well as an insight to their child being in detention.

The questions for recent podcast are: 1. What should the family understand about their role with their child in detention? 2. Who do we recommend the family to communicate with? 3. What was the first thing you wanted to know about the facility and daily life? 4. How has family life changed? 5. What advice would you give to families at the beginning of this process and help them hold onto hope?

Some items we are discussing at include “what does aftercare look like?” One option would be having a QR code on a pamphlet with links for information sites or even a hyperlink that could be texted to families. The OJA Review Board for the podcasts have asked if they could use them for training. It would help workers have a better understanding of what families are going through.

6. Social Media/Outreach

Presenter: Jennifer Francis

SAG now has an Instagram account under oja.sag. A visit was made to Shawnee Youth and Family. Videos and pictures will be posted to Instagram. Next week, Pivot will be the focus. The committee will be visiting one grantee per week.

SAG now has its own dedicated slide deck. The SAG logo has been added next to the OJA logo and can be used when a slideshow is used at conferences and other meetings.

VI. Announcements and Comments

Emily Burns was accepted to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and will get a bachelor’s degree.

Demetrius Bell has started his own company. He also invited any SAG members to reach out to him if they would like to participate in the MLK Parade on January 19th. This is the 3rd largest parade in the county.

VII. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.