

Governor’s Juvenile Justice Commission

Ethnic and Racial Disparities Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 17, 2025, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Subcommittee Chair: Commissioner Edjron Pearson

Subcommittee Members Present:	Commissioner Edjron Pearson, Commissioner Dorinthia Robinson, Wendy Volz Daniels, Kimberly Jenkins, Aaron Schutz, Commissioner Emily Zernick, Commissioner Trevor Strickler, Commissioner Ella Bostwick, Melissa Graham, Commissioner Muskadee Montano
Subcommittee Members Not Present:	Brandon Gross, Commissioner Charles Greer, Commissioner Charles Tubbs
Public Members Present:	Alder Sabrina Madison
Wisconsin DOJ Staff:	Matt Allord, Jessica Reindl, Lara Kenny

Convene

The Ethnic and Racial Disparities (ERD) Subcommittee convened at 10:04 AM.

Chair’s Welcome and Roll Call

Chair Edjron Pearson welcomed members to the meeting.

Quorum was present.

DOJ Updates

Grants – Matt Allord reported that there are currently no DOJ youth justice grants posted for application. It is anticipated several will be available in early 2026. Allord gave updates on Title II formula grant funding, highlighting that no Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has been released, this is thought to be the latest that funding was ever withheld. Allord highlighted changes and priorities at the federal level that may be connected to this delay. Allord noted that DOJ staff have been in regular communication with other states and coalitions, there is a target date of release of a NOFO by the end of 2025 and Title II funding is categorized as “no year” funding, meaning it can be obligated and awarded after the close of the federal fiscal year on 9/30/25. Allord also highlighted some of the priority areas listed in other funding announcements under this federal administration, DOJ is anticipating that Title II funding will likely contain the same priorities and unallowable costs.

Compliance – Matt Allord reported that all data from 2023-2024 federal fiscal year has been submitted to OJJDP and is awaiting their acceptance. No core requirements exceeded the thresholds set by OJJDP. The compliance report for this data period is posted on the GJJC website and was previously distributed. Matt Allord and Jess Reindl will be starting audits for the 2024-2025 reporting period on 10/1/25. Most of these audits have been scheduled, they will continue through the winter and include about 50 on-site audits and 10-15 record reviews. OJJDP has stated that the completion window for collecting data will be moved up to the end of February, so WI DOJ staff are adhering to that target date.

Legislation – Allord used a PowerPoint to report of the Governor’s State Budget and legislation.

Chair Pearson asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the June 18, 2025, meeting.

Motion to Approve June 18 2025, ERD Subcommittee Minutes

Motion was made by Kimberly Jenkins and seconded by Aaron Schutz to approve the June 18, 2025, ERD Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

Business

Bad River Band of The Lake Superior Chippewa

Baag’adowewin Native Lacrosse Program

Joy Schelble Food Sovereignty and Youth Development Educator UW Madison Extension

RJ Smith

Schelble and Smith introduced themselves and their roles with the Baag’adowewin Native Lacrosse program. Schelble explained Baag’adowewin was played by Native American elders, however; this game was lost among generations. For nearly 60 years this game has not been played. Schelble explained prior to the start of a Baag’adowewin game, players provide gifts and offerings as a way to take care of and support their community members. Participants will declare what and/or who they are playing for. Schelble reported for many youth, this game is a way to regulate emotions.

Through Title II grant funding, this program was created to respond to truancy and behavioral health and mental health concerns observed in school. Through this program, Native American youth can engage in two after school Baag’adowewin games every week. This program has provided the public school district a sense of Ojibwe culture importance and has proven to decrease truancy rates while increasing Native American student graduation rates. This program has positively responded to behavior and mental health concerns experienced in school, and substance use among Native American youth. Schelble reported a Tribal Court Judge stated the Baag’adowewin program was the best modality to battle the fentanyl epidemic. Schelble highlighted this program is not evidence based, rather an example of program-based evidence.

Jess Reindl shared a video created by the Bad River Band that reviewed Baag'adowewin history, shared perspective from Native American youth involved in the program and detailed the positive outcomes for both youth and their families in their community.

Smith shared his experience playing Baag'adowewin and his personal insight on the beneficial aspects of this program.

Member Wendy Volz Daniels asked if Baag'adowewin games are played in the metro-Milwaukee area and for resources for tribal youth in this area to become involved. Smith provided resources for Native American youth in metropolitan areas.

Commissioner Pearson acknowledged this program is evidence based, as they have years of data proving engagement in this program has positively impacted truancy and graduation rates for Native American youth. Commissioner Pearson inquired about connections between the Baag'adowewin program, law enforcement, and school district in their community. Schelble advised Bad River Band behavioral health specialists, and the public-school districts are connected with this program. There is some engagement with Tribal law enforcement officers. Schelble shared law enforcement officers engaged in one game with youth, which appeared to positively impact the relationships between Native American youth and law enforcement in their community. Schelble added staff with Ashland County Drug Court contacted the program to request Drug Court participants engage in Baag'adowewin. As a result, additional games are now open county wide for participation.

R/ED Connected Grants

Allord shared a PowerPoint presentation reviewing Title II Subgrant awardees with R/ED related grants and discussed WI DOJ grants process while describing the variety of Title II funded programs.

R/ED Factsheet Updates

Reindl presented the Diversion and Petition R/ED Factsheets that were created in 2024, highlighting recent updates to both documents. Reindl advised data on both factsheets were updated to reflect 2024 R/ED data.

Member Aaron Schutz asked a question regarding the racial categories for the contact points on the diversion factsheet, pointing out the Hispanic racial category was missing from arrest data. Reindl explained arrest data only includes the racial categories of White, Black, Asian, and Native American as the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) does not disaggregate data by ethnicity. Therefore, for arrest, the racial categories include youth of all ethnicities. Schutz recommended including a data note. Reindl stated she would update the factsheet to include this information.

Motion to Approve Updates to the Juvenile Diversion and Petition Factsheets

Motion was made by Subcommittee member Wendy Volz Daniels and seconded by Subcommittee member Aaron Schutz.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

R/ED Reference Material Discussion

Reindl revisited the R/ED reference materials, including a link to a recording of the 2024 Re-Imagining Justice Conference where Keynote Speaker Dr. Shawn Ginwright discusses his book *The 4 Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves*, and an Annie E. Casey Foundation Case Study- *It's Time to Talk: How to Start Conversations About Racial Inequities*, that were submitted to Subcommittee members.

Reindl encouraged Subcommittee members to keep her informed of any reference materials they would like to discuss during 2026 Subcommittee meetings.

YJAM discussion

Reindl reported October is Youth Justice in Action Month (YJAM). Reindl reviewed resource items from the Coalition of Juvenile Justice with Subcommittee members on ways to involve their local communities with YJAM.

2025 Presentations and Outreach

Reindl reported DOJ staff are preparing to present at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) annual conference on Friday October 31st. DOJ staff will share a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the JJDP, Core requirements, WI disparity data, and introduce deflection and diversion as promising strategies to improve disparities. Staff from Jefferson County Human Services, current Title II subgrant recipients, will join DOJ staff for the presentation and share their county's truancy deflection program.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Announcements

Commissioner Trevor Strickler announced he recently complete a cohort in the Dane County Jail working with clients, aged 18-24, to prepare for successful release to the community.

2025 GJJC Quarterly Meeting Dates: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

- November 11, 2025 (virtual)

Adjourn

Commissioner Pearson adjourned the meeting. Quorum was not present to motion adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56.