

Governor’s Juvenile Justice Commission

Ethnic and Racial Disparities Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Subcommittee Chair: Commissioner Edjron Pearson

Subcommittee Members Present:	Commissioner Edjron Pearson, Wendy Volz Daniels, Kimberly Jenkins, Aaron Schutz, Commissioner Emily Velazquez, Commissioner Trevor Strickler, Commissioner Ella Bostwick, Melissa Graham, Commissioner Muskadee Montano, Commissioner Charles Tubbs
Subcommittee Members Not Present:	Commissioner Charles Greer, Commissioner Dorinthia Robinson, Commissioner Maurice Newton, Jr.
Wisconsin DOJ Staff:	Jessica Reindl, Lara Kenny, Sabrina Gentile, Kiley Komro, Brad Rollo

Convene

The Ethnic and Racial Disparities (ERD) Subcommittee convened at 10:02 AM.

Chair’s Welcome and Roll Call

Chair Edjron Pearson welcomed members to the meeting. The Subcommittee introduced themselves. Quorum was present.

DOJ Updates

Grants – Komro reported there at two grants open for applications through January 30, 2026. Youth Justice System Improvement grant and Positive Youth Development Program.

The Positive Youth Development Program will provide up to three awards with a maximum of \$67,434 per award for a project period from 4/1/2026-6/30/2027. This funding will support local positive youth development programs that support delinquent or at-risk youth. Program designs should reflect the needs and strengths of the community. Eligible programs could include mentoring; mental health services; family strengthening or wraparound programs; after-school programs that provide educational, recreational, or employment activities; or other programs that provide positive youth development opportunities for youth at-risk of entering the juvenile justice system and for delinquent youth.

The Youth Justice System Improvement Program will provide up to three awards between \$19,000-\$28,645 per award for a project period from 4/1/2026-9/30/2026. Funding is available

to support programs and initiatives that improve objective decision making procedures for youth-serving staff to respond to youth behavior and offending, train staff in best practices including understanding adolescent brain development, communication, and restorative practices, develop or expand alternative responses to youth behaviors that divert or deflect them from formal involvement in the youth justice system such as restorative practices, alternatives to suspension, and diversion to community-based services, or provide opportunities that bring together youth justice professionals and youth for activities or programming that break stigmas, address miscommunications, build empathy, support community cohesion, and facilitate mentorship.

Compliance – Jessica Reindl reported all Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) audits have been completed. DOJ staff are working on analyzing the audit data. WI DOJ has not yet received the 2025 Compliance Determination letter from The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). OJJDP has not yet opened the compliance monitoring tool (CMT) to submit compliance data. Reindl reported Wisconsin will likely be in compliance with JJDP, once the CMT opens and data is submitted.

Staff- Reindl reported Jeff Sauer resigned from the Limited Term Employee Compliance Monitor position.

Legislative – Sabrina Gentile reported on the following bills (AB/Assembly Bill) (SB/Senate Bill)

- AB114/SB109 – clinician initiation of emergency detention of a minor and providing a penalty – Assembly and Senate hearing was held.
- AB115/SB110 – authorizing youth behavioral health program under the Medical Assistance program – no action/no hearing on the bills.
- AB116/SB111 – transportation of minors for emergency detention – SB111 passed Sen on June 18, 2025 with 18-14 vote is now waiting for Assembly action.
- AB112/SB107 – consent to mental health treatment by minors who are age 14 or older – A&S public hearing held – Assembly and Senate hearing was held.
- AB79/SB73 – to eliminate prosecution or adjudication of minors for committing an act of prostitution – no action/no hearing on the bills.
- AB773/SB 755, treatment of a pregnant or postpartum person in prison or jail, has been introduced. This bill applies to all Department of Corrections detention facilities, Secure Residential Care Centers for Children and Youth (SRCCCY), county juvenile detention centers and jails. The bill limits the use of physical restraints on pregnant and certain postpartum people in custody. The legislation is the current practice in the facilities. This bill would put this practice into statute. Limiting the use of restraints is currently one of the 33 requirements in the JJDP. No action/no hearing on the bills
- AB860/SB847, written resource guides informing inmates and juveniles in custody of their rights and making an appropriation. Adult resource guides are updated annually. This bill provides the same requirements for juveniles in custody, except that DOC is responsible for maintaining the written resource guide relating to juveniles, posting and

distributing the resource guide for type 1 juvenile detention facilities, and ensuring that any juvenile detention facility, secured residential care center for children and youth, or juvenile portion of the county jail approved by DOC has a plan to distribute the resource guide. No action/no hearing on the bills

Gentile reported Raise the Age and Juvenile Life without Parole legislation has not been introduced as a bill.

Gentile reported on the 2026 Legislative Session Calendar.

- The last floorperiod is February 10 – 19.
- The Assembly expects to be in session one day a week until end of session.
- Governor Evers' State of State address is Tuesday, February 17.
- The last general – business floorperiod is March 17 – 19.
- Wisconsin Eye operations have been suspended due to lack of funding so legislative hearings and session are not being streamed.
- Sen LeMahieu reported the WI LTSB will stream the Senate session on Jan 21.

Gentile reported the 2026 Election dates.

- February 17 is the Spring Primary.
- April 7 is the Spring General.
- April 15 is the first day candidates can circulate nomination papers for the Fall Election.
- June 1 is the deadline to file nomination papers for the Fall Election.
- August 11 is the Fall Primary.
- November 3 is the Fall General.

Chair Pearson asked for a motion to approve the minutes for the September 17, 2025, meeting.

Motion to Approve September 17, 2025, ERD Subcommittee Minutes

Motion was made by Charles Tubbs and seconded by Kim Jenkins to approve the September 17, 2025, ERD Subcommittee Meeting Minutes.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

National Association of Social Workers Conference

School Attendance Improvement Program – Jefferson County Human Services

Ashley Timmerman

Ashley Timmerman introduced herself as a Social Worker with Jefferson County Human Services and her role with the School Attendance Improvement Program (SAIP). Timmerman shared a PowerPoint reviewing the SAIP truancy deflection program funded by a Title II subgrant. Timmerman explained her interest in Jefferson County truancy rates, specifically looking into the root cause for youth not attending school. SAIP utilizes the Washington Assessment of the Risks and Needs of Student (WARNS) assessment to assist in identifying the cause of truancy. Timmerman explained that the WARNS instrument has six needs scales; each

scale has between 5 and 9 questions with 40 assessment questions in total. The six risk scales include Aggression-Defiance, Depression-Anxiety, Substance Abuse, Peer Deviance, Family Environment, and School Engagement. Jefferson County Human Services utilized Title II funding to purchase tablets for students to complete the assessment questions on their own. Once all questions are answered, the student is assigned either a low, moderate, or high-risk level. Interventions are tier based. Tier 1 involves school-based interventions for youth assessed as low risk. Tier 2, for youth assessed as moderate- high risk involves a SAIP referral, WARNS, and involvement in the Check and Connect program. Tier 3 interventions, for youth assessed as high risk involve SAIP referral, WARNS, and Family Functioning Case Management (FFCM). Timmermann reviewed the Check Connect program which includes weekly check-ins with youth. For full efficacy, youth are recommended to participate in Check and Connect for two full years. SAIP was initially utilized in Jefferson County High Schools; however, it was determined to roll out this program in Middle Schools as well. Timmerman shared since the start of this program in 2020; truancy referral rates have decreased in the county.

Commissioner Ella Bostwick inquired about data collection and any difficulties they experienced. Timmerman shared the difficulties she and her team experienced and the steps taken to overcome these difficulties.

Commissioner Edjron Peason inquired if a youth can move from one tier to another, depending on the appropriate interventions. Timmerman confirmed youth can move tiers.

Subcommittee member Aaron Schutz inquired about the WARNS instrument. Timmerman shared a copy of a completed WARNS assessment showing the questions students answer. She provided examples of how she will follow-up with youth based on their responses.

Discussion/Review of R/ED Plan Goals

Reindl reviewed the R/ED data collection process and creation of the R/ED plan. Reindl reviewed the 2025 R/ED Plan goals and action items, highlighting goals that were achieved, those where progress was made, and the required action steps to achieve unmet goals.

Title II R/ED Plan Preparation

Reindl reported DOJ staff is preparing the 2026 R/ED plan. Data request emails were sent to the county and state agencies WI DOJ collaborates with to receive contact point data. WI DOJ requested to receive the data for all contact points by Friday January 30, 2026. Once all data is received, Reindl will begin data analysis to determine disparities.

R/ED Reference Material Discussion

Reindl shared two reference materials for discussion: a Diversion report from the Sentencing Project and a document on Equity vs. Equality from the Annie E. Casey

Foundation. Subcommittee members engaged in productive conversation about both documents.

2026 Presentation and Outreach

Reindl reported WI DOJ intends to present R/ED data and promising strategies to reduce disparities at trainings and conferences throughout 2026. Reindl advised WI DOJ has a list of potential presentation opportunities and requested subcommittee members share additional opportunities.

Commissioner Muskadee Montano encouraged creating a connection with Law Enforcement and Corrections where R/ED data can be presented.

Subcommittee members encouraged looking into the School Resource Officer Training Conference, Correctional Education Association of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin School Safety Coordinators Association.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Announcements

Chair Pearson reported the Dane County Judges have rotated their responsibilities and Judge Nia Trammell is now the Dane County Juvenile Court Presiding Judge replacing Judge Everett Mitchell.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Muskadee Montano and seconded by Kim Jenkins to adjourn the meeting.

The motion passed on a voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30.

2026 ERD Subcommittee Meeting Dates: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

- March 18, 2026 (virtual)
- April 15, 2026 (virtual)
- June 17, 2026 (virtual)
- September 16, 2026 (virtual)
- October 21, 2026 (virtual)

2026 GJJC Quarterly Meeting Dates: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

- February 10, 2026 (virtual)
- May 12, 2026

- August 18, 2026
- November 10, 2026