



**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
Youth Justice Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10 2026
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Announcements

Co-Chair Romero convened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Staff then provided instructions to committee members for participation and for public comment and took roll. The following members were present: Co-Chair Brooke Harris, Co-Chair Katherine Lucero, Co-Chair Melissa Romero, Dr. Carly Dierkhising, Virginia Corrigan, Frankie Guzman, Danielle Lowe, Chief Jennifer Branning, Hon. Sharonda Bradford, Hon. Tilisha Martin, Tyee Griffith and Chief Rachelle Gayton.

The following members were not present: Kasey Halcon, Rosalinda Vint, Mercedes Perez and Elizabeth Calvin.

Action Item: Approve March 11, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Co-Chair Harris moved to approve the March 2026 meeting minutes and Co-Chair Lucero seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Co-Chair Updates

Co-Chair Lucero shared updates on behalf of OYCR, noting first that probation departments have been active over the last few months convening their Juvenile Justice Coordinating Councils in order to present the plans to the JJCC for approval. She also shared that [OYCR's Youth Justice Summit](#) is taking place from October 5-7. OYCR is anticipating over 400 people in attendance and received 35 proposals for workshops and presentations. The summit will include 4 tracks: health; equity; education and vocational opportunities; and youth leadership and youth voices. She finally highlighted several upcoming publications and reports OYCR is working on, including briefs on credible messengers and healing in the youth justice field; a compendium of stories that informed the Please Don't Give Up on Us report released last year; and the AB 2176 report.

Data Priority Area Discussion

Member Dr. Carly Dierkhising shared a brief presentation on collecting data based on logic models based on core program components and desired short and long term outcomes. She explained how one deliverable the committee might pursue in this area would be to create an assessment framework that captures intended outcomes for youth in SYTFs that is informed by a logic model as well as data and input from youth justice stakeholders including youth, attorneys, and SYTF/Program providers.

Members discussed the logic model and assessment framework example Dr. Dierkhising provided, as well as some key considerations around what is known and not known about SYTF outcomes. Key takeaways from the discussion:

- Members noted various challenges and complexities associated with collecting data from youth in facilities that would impact any effort to learn more about SYTF outcomes
- The importance of maintaining county-level autonomy and ownership around collecting and using SYTF-related data, while considering what would be the most useful resource the committee could pursue to help improve outcomes statewide for SYTF youth
- Before collecting new data in this area, there was general agreement from members that it was important to focus on gathering SYTF-related outcome data from existing sources- especially JJRBG plans
- Depending on the availability of existing data, there was interest in potentially using surveys to gather input on what is currently happening to determine what success looks like for youth in facilities, from various stakeholders with particular interest in gathering input from attorneys (whose input is likely not included in existing sources) to get a sense of the kinds of programming in facilities they feel are successful, given their unique vantage point and role; and from youth with lived experience
- Members expressed interest in learning more about what evaluation efforts are already underway (including research partnerships in Butte county, other jurisdictions)
- There was particular interest in focusing on input from youth/ youth advisory councils and attorneys (when ready to collect additional data)

At the conclusion of the member discussion, the next steps that emerged were as follows:

- The OYCR Data and Research team would provide a presentation at a subsequent YJC meeting on information available in JJRBG reports, focusing on any commonalities/shared elements in what counties are doing in SYTF to help define components for a framework and highlighting existing evaluation efforts already underway in counties involving secure track data and university research partnerships.
- Pursue the possibility of a presentation at a subsequent meeting to share more information about a research effort currently underway in San Fransico involving interviews with youth in secure facilities.

Diversion in the Field Presentation

YJC Co-Chair and Butte County Probation Chief Melissa Romero gave a brief presentation on Butte County's Diversion program that has been in place in Butte County for over 30 years. She highlighted the collaboration between community and system stakeholders that resulted in a shared mission for the county's diversion work, with an emphasis on evidence-based restorative justice practices. She described the referral process from local law enforcement to probation, where every young person is first screened to determine if diversion is an appropriate option. Butte County Probation works in partnership with the Butte County Boys and Girls Club to then get diversion in place as quickly as possible and the probation referral is closed and sealed. Chief Romero described the components of the diversion model that is used, relying on restorative practices and also shared data on re-referral rates and a breakdown of the types of cases most commonly referred for diversion programming.

Diversion Deliverable Discussion

Co-Chair Harris and Member Frankie Guzman, Managing Director, Youth Justice & Equity, National Center for Youth Law, facilitated a discussion with members about the work the committee wanted to pursue to produce a diversion-related deliverable for the field. Co-Chair Harris reminded members of the ideas coming out of the previous meeting's discussion as a starting point for the conversation. The committee previously agreed to pursue:

- Convening a diversion practice panel to include law enforcement leaders, community leaders, other administrators and stakeholders to discuss how, when, and why it works in practice (think of like an education summit)
- Developing a diversion white paper or guide to include evidence supporting diversion, how diversion programs operate, implementation guidance, data and evaluation frameworks, funding strategies, and the like.

Co-Chair Harris noted that regarding the proposed diversion panel, she and the other Co-Chairs wanted to suggest that the committee consider having a panel of diversion experts present twice: first virtually at the next YJC meeting in September and then in-person at the Youth Justice Summit in October. There was general agreement that this approach made sense to committee members, offering an opportunity for members to ask initial questions and consider the breadth of the topic at the September meeting and then to reach a broader audience at the Summit in October with a refined set of panelist questions and focus areas.

Members went on to discuss the potential composition of the panel, as well as the scope of what the panelists should be focused on in their remarks. Some key takeaways from the discussion were as follows:

- Members discussed whether the focus of the panel and subsequent deliverable should be only on “pre-arrest” diversion or if it should be broader. The consensus was to focus on more of a spectrum of diversion efforts, occurring as early as possible in the process but highlighting different approaches and opportunities to create offramps
- Some key considerations to inform the panel's focus included: Highlighting the evidence base that diversion is most effective as soon as possible; the work of connecting kids and families and services; how diversion can support equity, access and avoiding net widening; and the reality that strong partnerships with law enforcement agencies and community organizations are essential to implement meaningful diversion practice.
- Suggestions about potential members of the panel included: Elizabeth Kaufman, Centinela Youth Services, including a young person who has experienced diversion, and service providers
- Other references/sources of info and expertise shared in the chat:
<https://courts.ca.gov/programs-initiatives/families-and-children/juvenile-law/keeping-kids-school-and-out-court>, NOAB program in Oakland: <https://nicjr.org/NOAB>
CARC in SF <https://www.cycsf.org/program/carc/>
- Members who expressed interest in helping organize the panel: Judge Martin, Member Lowe, Member Becton.

At the conclusion of the member discussion, the next steps that emerged were as follows:

- Co-Chair Harris, with support from Darya Larizadeh from National Center for Youth Law, would reach out to potential panel members with support from YJC members who expressed interest in helping to inform the panel composition and topics

- Selected panel members would present at the September 9 YJC meeting and October Youth Justice Summit (pending logistics and confirmation of time/date)

Public Comment

Co-Chair Romero then opened the floor for public comment. Amy Price from the Zellerbach Foundation in San Francisco shared that the Foundation has been involved in some of the diversion work mentioned by members during the meeting (including the Keeping Kids in School and Out of Court initiative). She underscored a point made by Member Guzman that it is important to ensure that the expansion of diversion does not also lead to net widening. She also noted that Alameda County is implementing a new pilot program that will be a diversion program based sort of on the NOAB model (Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board) that National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) has been implementing for some years, but with a very deep cultural rooting specifically focused on African American boys, which comprise the vast majority of young people in the system in Alameda County.

Adjourn

Co-Chair Romero thanked the members and staff, reminding participants that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday, September 9, 2026. The meeting was adjourned.