

**Juvenile Court Improvement Program Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes – June 11, 2018**

Juvenile & Family Court Programs Division – Oregon Room  
1133 Chemeketa Street NE, Salem, OR 97301  
1:30 – 4:00 PM

<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>			
	Hon. Stephen Forte, Chair, Deschutes County Circuit Court	√	Hon. Lindsay Partridge, Vice Chair, Marion County Circuit Court
√	Hon. Don Costello, Chief Judge, Coquille Indian Tribe		Hon. Amy Holmes Hehn, Multnomah County Circuit Court
√	Hon. Norm Hill, Polk County Circuit Court	√	Hon. Karen Ostrye, Hood River County Circuit Court
	Lacey Andresen, Permanency Program Manager, DHS	√	Mandy Augsburger, President, Marion Polk Foster Parent Association, Foster Parent
√	Mark Hardin	√	Lauren Kemp, Multnomah County DA's Office
	Darin Mancuso, Foster Care Ombudsman, Governor's Advocacy Office		Laurie Price, Deputy Director, Child Welfare, DHS
√	Gail Schelle, Adoptions Program Manager, DHS		Karyn Schimmels, Child Welfare Training Manager, DHS
√	Daniel Schneider, Training Specialist, Child Welfare Partnership, Center for Improvement of Child & Family Services		Nathan Schwab, Oregon Foster Youth Connection, Former Foster Youth
√	Joanne Southey, Deputy Chief Counsel, Civil Enforcement Division, DOJ		Shaney Starr, Oregon CASA Network & CASA of Marion County
√	Liz Wakefield for Amy Miller, Deputy General Counsel, Office of Public Defense Services		
<b>INTERESTED PARTIES</b>			
<b>JFCPD STAFF</b>			
√	Leola McKenzie, Director, JFCPD	√	Megan Hassen, Juvenile Law & Policy Counsel, JFCPD
√	Shary Mason, Model Court & Training Analyst, JFCPD/CRB	√	Conor Wall, Data Analyst, JFCPD
	Amy Benedum, Program Analyst	√	Kim Morgan, Management Assistant, JFCPD

**I. Welcome & Introductions – Hon. Lindsay Partridge**

## II. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting – Hon. Lindsay Partridge

**Approved**

## III. Reports:

- a. Re-Imagining Dependency Courts - Conor

The Reimagining Dependency Court's Differentiated Case Management (DCM) project began in May 2017 with the support of the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) and Casey Family Programs and is ongoing. JCIP has been working with the NCSC to evaluate the DCM project. JCIP hopes to have a preliminary process evaluation by the end of the year and to have a full outcome evaluation in the first half of 2020. At that point, cases that began during the project will have been open for 2 to 3 years and can be evaluated to see if the project is successful in reducing the length of time children are in care.

- b. Update on upcoming "Through the Eyes of a Child" and "Model Court Summit" conferences – Megan

The conference agenda is in the materials. The first 2 days are for judicial education at the Oregon Gardens and the third day will be at the Salem Conference Center for Model Court Teams and dependency system stakeholders. There are currently 46 judges registered for "Eyes" and 132 stakeholders registered for the "MCS". JCIP staff will send a reminder next week. The agenda is set. The faculty for the session on Incarcerated Parents are working to add information about what may or may not be appropriate in terms of child centered, parent/child contact, while one parent is in prison. The MCS will include sessions on visitation, permanency, and ICWA.

## IV. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI):

- a. Quarterly Statistical Reports – Conor

The statistics for the first quarter of this year were sent out with a cover sheet summary and



JCIP 2018 Q1  
Statistical Reports.p

discussed briefly.

- b. QUICWA Project – Leola

After consulting with DHS' ICWA Advisory Committee, JCIP staff removed QUICWA activities from the JCIP Strategic Plan. QUICWA, originally started by a firm in Minneapolis, includes court observations of ICWA cases, compiling reports, and working with courts and local stakeholders to improve how ICWA cases are handled in the courts. In 2012, Oregon (through

JCIP with the cooperation and collaboration of DHS and the Tribes) made some modifications to the court observation tool and implemented QUICWA in 4 Oregon counties. For the last few years we have received varying amounts of data from the volunteer court observers in the counties. The biggest challenges with the project have been the recruiting, training, and coordinating the work of volunteer court observers which is a critical piece for the success of this project, and it takes significant time/resources.

Leola attended the ICWA Advisory Committee meeting in May and shared her concerns that this project requires a significant level of effort and support, and due to the varying levels of support from JCIP, DHS and the tribes the project has not been successful. The ICWA advisory Committee discussed the priorities of JCIP, DHS, and the Tribes and heard from Dr. Paul Bellatty about the data he is collecting for child welfare. JCIP, DHS, and the Tribes decided that QUICWA should be put on hold until they know what data will be coming from Dr. Bellatty on the ICWA cases.

c. Joint DHS/JCIP Adoption Timeliness Project – Shary

JCIP & DHS have a joint project to increase the percentage of children who have a finalized adoption within one year of becoming legally free. This project was chosen because it is an area needing improvement in the CFSR and it is the responsibility of both the courts and DHS. JCIP and DHS developed three strategies for the project:

1. DHS Central Office will send notifications to workers of the steps that case workers need to take to finalize their pending adoptions
2. Caseworkers will submit documentation on the status of adoptions to the courts and CRB's, and
3. JCIP will develop training for Judges, CRB's and stakeholders.

DHS developed a tickler system to alert caseworkers. Tickler emails are going to caseworkers in some counties presently and the ticklers are being rolled out to other counties.

Conor is sending data reports to local courts on the timeliness of finalized adoptions. That data is in the meeting materials. From the data it looks as though smaller courts are most likely to have higher percentages of children having an adoption finalized within a year of a child being legally free, but there are also not as many children becoming legally free in smaller courts.

There has been difficulty with caseworkers submitting information on the status of the adoption to the courts and CRB. The original plan was for caseworkers to send screenshots of the OR-Kids Adoption Tracking Page; however, the screenshots are not user friendly or easy to understand. Shary, Conor and DHS have been working on an alternate method, and they just received news that DHS can pull a report from OR-Kids.

Gail Schelle reports that DHS has been working with their OR-Kids tech team and have developed a mockup of a form. The form has been made much simpler. As information gets updated in OR-Kids, the form will pull a list of documents needed for a child. The form will

include the date each document was received in the central office, the document status, and status date. Gail had specific questions for the JCIP Advisory Committee:

1. The documents are listed for each category in alphabetical order. However, if you have certain processes that go together (for example for adoption assistance – it will list the adoption assistance agreement before listing the adoption assistance application) – do you want it to flow logically or alphabetical? It is agreed that chronological is best.
2. For adoption finalization, DHS did not include the final judgement date. Do you want that date added? It is agreed that the date should be included.

Leola asked if the status types could be defined or possibly clarified. For example, if a document is “pending,” does that mean they are waiting for Central Office to do their work on it; or does it mean the document has been returned to the caseworker for more information? Maybe the status should be incomplete rather than pending? Gail is going to check on the pending/verified status and review. Including a key at the bottom would help to make it more self-explanatory and therefore making it more useful. JCIP staff requested an opportunity to review a mock up before it is finalized.

Shary reported that three model court teams have identified timeliness of adoption finalization as one of their goals (Coos, Deschutes & Washington). All three model court teams improved their percentages. They each reported having dedicated staff who focused on finalizing adoptions.

## V. Discussion Topics:

### a. JCIP Strategic Plan & Self-Assessment – Conor and Leola

There are three documents related to the Self-Assessment Plan (draft strategic plan, draft self-assessment and summary of the strategic plan).



JCIP Strategic Plan,  
FY2017-2021 (DRAFT)



JCIP Self  
Assessment 2018



JCIP Strategic Plan  
Summary 2018 DRAFT

The date of the Draft Self-Assessment is 2017 because we did not receive the 2018 form from the Children's Bureau until shortly before the Advisory Committee meeting. The Children's Bureau assured us that the questions would be very similar, so we put together our answers using the old form. The summary of the plan is an easier way to see the activities we are doing and committed to doing. All of the information in the summary is in the larger strategic plan.

We created the 2016 strategic plan with only 1 grant having been renewed and all 3 have now been renewed. There are a total of 26 projects that JCIP will be working on.

Leola states that Project 15 for outcome two is development and delivery of a parent/child representation project (PCRP) summit, and there will be five PCRP counties (Yamhill, Linn, Columbia, Lincoln & Coos). This PCRP Summit will bring all five counties together with their stakeholders in the child welfare system for information sharing and best practices.

The Plan is approved as is.

b. Juvenile Dependency System Efficiencies Budget Note (HB 5006) - Leola

The Legislature included a budget note in HB 5006 instructing DHS, the Public Defense Services Commission, DOJ, and OJD to work together at the local and state level on identifying and implementing strategies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the juvenile court system. Planning was done by the local courts and at the last meeting JCIP staff provided tables that showed what the top priorities were for each county. At that time the JCIP AC discussed proposing to the Chief Justice that Oregon Courts focus on three strategies. They are:

1. improved shelter hearings, consistent schedule times each day and parents have an opportunity to meet with their attorney prior to the shelter hearing;
2. develop and implement effective settlement opportunities; and
3. develop local policies that prioritize juvenile dependency matters on court dockets.

JCIP staff completed further analysis of the top three strategies of each circuit court and the three statewide strategies previously approved by the JCIP Advisory Committee. Five counties did not have any of the three proposed statewide strategies listed above, as one of their top three strategies. However, one strategy that these five counties had in common was to improve timeliness to permanency for children and to finalize adoptions within a year of a child being legally free. Since the timeliness of adoptions was identified as an area needing improvement from the recent Child & Family Services Review (CFSR) and is included in DHS' Program Improvement Plan (PIP), JCIP staff recommended that this strategy be included as a potential statewide strategy. The JCIP Advisory Committee agreed to including this as a forth statewide strategy to improve system efficiencies. The expectation would be that all counties would have a clear plan to implement one of these strategies and that they would start with their local level teams if they haven't already done so.

Judge Partridge and Joann Southey requested that we add a settlement conference discussion on the agenda for the September meeting.

c. Shoulder to Shoulder Mini Grant Request – Shary

Shary provided an overview of how mini-grant requests are handled. Shary indicated that Karen Schimmels, who couldn't be present at today's meeting, gave her approval of the request. The Shoulder to Shoulder Mini Grant Request is before the committee for approval today. The mini grant has been approved many times for the Shoulder to Shoulder Conference and JCIP is on

the conference planning committee and helps to coordinate and provide input on content for the conference. It's a large conference with 600-800 people in attendance. Attendees include caseworkers, foster parents, CRB volunteers and staff, and CASAs. The JCIP mini grant allows for scholarships for attendance to the conference. For the last two years we have only budgeted for the 3 conferences we have supported in the past (Shoulder to Shoulder, ICWA and Juvenile Law Training Academy at \$5,000 each) due to reductions in grant funding.

The JCIP Advisory Committee approved the Mini-grant request for the Shoulder to Shoulder conference.

A judge's panel has been requested for Shoulder to Shoulder to discuss their courts and then take questions from the audience. A facilitator serves as a moderator for the questions. Judge Partridge will let Shary know the judges who will participate on the panel this year.

#### **VI. Upcoming Events – All**

- New Judge Seminar (June 18-22, 2018). Megan and Judge Holmes Hehn presenting a juvenile judges 101 training.
- Tribal Court State Court Forum (Warm Springs, OR) – July 9-10, 2018. Tribal Court State Forum will be focused on protection orders, specifically tribal protection orders. Warm Springs Tribe will be sharing their process and they are hoping the Umatilla Tribe will be sharing as well.
- Through the Eyes of a Child – August 5-6, 2018
- Model Court Summit – August 7, 2018
- Shoulder to Shoulder – October 28-29, 2018
- Appellate Dependency CLE – February 7, 2019. We are in the planning stages for the appellate dependency CLE. The appellate court is very interested in learning the practical aspects of juvenile court practice.

#### **VII. Next Meeting: Monday, September 10, 2018, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.**