

# JJAB MEETING

*JJAB Chairperson: David Finke*

*Vice Chairperson: Kristy Flippins-Bartlett*

OCTOBER 10, 2025, 1PM – 4PM EST

OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION, LOUISVILLE, KY



JUNE 2025 Meeting Summary

**Date | time** FRI, OCTOBER 10, 2025, | 1 pm - 4 pm | **Meeting Location** OFFICE OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION, LOUISVILLE, KY

**Meeting called to order by** Dr. David Finke at 1:10 pm

## WELCOME & MEMBER ROLL CALL – 1:15PM

**Board Members in person:** Dr. David Finke, Ashely Clark, Christina Weeter, Kristy Flippins-Bartlett, Dr George Moorman, Laura Karem

**Board Members online:** Dr. Deonte Hollowell, Brionna Readus, Derwin Webb, Elzie Burgher, Henry Clark, Jansen Hammock, Stephanie Spires, Sydney Scaggs, Tiffany Mullis

**DJJ Staff present:** Tara Kelly, Carly Gill, Linda Thomason,

**Guest Present:** Danielle Farhat, Ashley Webb, Audie Wood, Victoria Geller

## OLD BUSINESS:

- **Approval of August's minutes:** Harry Clark moved to accept the minutes with corrections noting Ashley Clark and Christina's attendance. Seconded by Ashley Clark. Motion passed.

## NEW BUSINESS:

- **Empowering Education** – Formerly known as Life Literacy, the program has been rebranded to Empowering Education to better reflect its mission and vision. Over the past three years, the program has served 200 students, including 80 students in the most recent grant cycle.

The program delivers a holistic financial literacy curriculum that integrates career readiness, mental health awareness, and essential life skills. Its three primary goals are:

- Addressing the root causes of criminal behavior, particularly poverty
- Meeting students at their individual level of need
- Teaching self-sufficiency and long-term resilience

Through partnership with Trace of Hope, \$8,000 in grants have been awarded to eight Kentucky students. Additional supports include coverage of college application fees and connections to mental health care resources.

The program's impact is significant: by diverting 200 students from incarceration, it has saved Kentucky taxpayers an estimated \$17 million.

Program delivery is structured around small cohorts of up to 20 students, with 8-week online courses designed to emphasize future goals rather than past mistakes.

- **New Member Nominees** – Local juvenile delinquency prevention councils, established under Kentucky statute (KRS), currently have an unclear function and level of activity. At present, there are no active representatives serving on these councils, and the position remains vacant across all counties, including Jefferson County.

During the meeting, two nominations were presented to fill vacant roles:

- **Rae Cowan** was submitted to replace Eric Hawkins.
- **Rihanna Palmer** was proposed as a youth member to replace Breonna Kelly.
- **Dwayne Depp** was proposed as a Youth Advocate to replace Yolanda Johnson expired term.

**Rihanna Palmer**, age 24, brings direct experience in child welfare, juvenile justice, peer support, and advocacy. She resides in Winchester, Kentucky, and her background positions her as a strong candidate for youth representation on the council.

**DanRae Cowan**, age 25, has been active with the board specifically with SEJAY and Emerging Leaders. Due to some administrative issues, his appointment has been delayed. Elzie Burgher has confirmed that it has been sent to the Governor's Office.

**Dwayne Depp**, age 26, was a DJJ youth worker with the Fayette Co Detention Center. He has a dedicated mentor to troubled youth and will bring his experience and passion to the board.

Motion by Dr. Hollowell to accept proposed board candidates, seconded by Jansen Hammock — passed.

#### **DJJ UPDATED:**

- **R/ED Update:** The DJJ Team and several members of the board will attend the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) Youth Justice in Action Conference in Minneapolis, MN, October 14–16, 2025. Tara Kelly served on the planning committee for this national convening, and it is an honor for Kentucky that she was invited to participate in this leadership role.
- **Compliance Report:** Kentucky has resolved an initial issue with the submission of its compliance audit response to OJJDP and is now awaiting feedback. Recent audits found no areas of non-compliance, and additional information has been provided to OJJDP for review.  
In response to a leadership request, Kentucky has compiled compliance data from 2022–2024 to help inform a potential legislative fix addressing the “contempt of court” loophole. This loophole has allowed some judges to detain non-offenders and status offenders in ways that conflict with the federal jail removal mandate. By reviewing this data, state leaders aim to strengthen alignment with federal standards and ensure that Kentucky’s practices better protect youth while supporting judicial consistency. Linda will compile and send updated detention violation and compliance data to the board before the next meeting.
- **Juvenile Justice Specialist:** In the midst of the ongoing government shutdown, there has been no official word on the release of the **2025 Title II Formula Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)** or the opening of the application process. While the funding has already been budgeted—at the same level as the previous year—the federal government continues to refine the NOFO language to ensure it reflects the current administration’s priorities and executive orders. At the state level, Kentucky has continued to move forward with its own funding management. The Commonwealth has received an **extension for FFY21 funds**, ensuring those resources remain available for use. The **FFY22 funds have been finalized and will be released shortly**, with award letters scheduled to go out on Monday. These awards will cover the grant period from **October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026**, and will be retroactive, allowing sub awardees to request reimbursement for October expenditures. Meanwhile, **FFY23 and FFY24 funds remain pending** and have not yet been awarded. Kentucky’s Title II program remains prepared to act quickly once federal guidance is issued, ensuring continuity of services and support for youth programming across the state.

## COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Executive:** Metro Louisville has appointed **Dr. Maria Luebman** as the city's first **Executive Director of Behavioral Health**. In this newly created role, Dr. Luebman will lead the development of a **strategic plan for behavioral health** across Louisville and Jefferson County. Early meetings have focused on identifying her key strategic initiatives, with particular attention to **youth reentry following the reopening of Jefferson Regional Juvenile Detention Center**. Dr. Luebman is beginning conversations with **ED Burgher** to explore reentry strategies and may engage with members of the **Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC)** and other stakeholders to gather input, concerns, and ideas. She has expressed strong interest in sharing information broadly and building collaborative dialogue as she shapes her initiatives.

On the Friday of Labor Day Weekend in September, testimony was provided before the **Juvenile Justice Oversight Commission (JJOC)**. While the specific questions were not clear in advance, the focus of the testimony was to provide the Commission with a better understanding of the role and work of the **Juvenile Justice Advisory Board (JJAB)**.

Several important issues emerged during the discussion:

- **Awareness and Representation:** Commissioner Dr. Katie Marks (DBHDID) expressed surprise at the existence of the JJAB and noted the lack of DBHDID representation on the board. This raises a valuable point for consideration and potential follow-up.
- **Community Engagement:** Committee Chair Senator Strong asked what support the JJAB needs from legislators to better engage communities. In response, the importance of reaching across the Commonwealth and holding meetings at different sites was emphasized.
- **Next Steps:** Engaging senators and representatives as the board expands its outreach into local communities would strengthen visibility, collaboration, and impact.

This testimony highlighted both opportunities for improved representation and the need for stronger partnerships with legislative leaders to advance community engagement efforts statewide.

JJAB members joined the Bellarmine honor psychology class for their annual research project partnership. Students received background on JJAB's role and potential project options, and have requested a follow-up session to continue the collaboration.

- **Grants:** FFY22 subawards recommendations have been approved by the Justice Cabinet. Those award letters will be going out on Monday with a training conducted by Carly Gill on Monday Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.
- **SEJAY:** In September, SEJAY partnered with PAVE to host two Listening Sessions at Dare to Care, focused on Senate Bill 20 and House Bill 5. Outcomes included exploring a parent-focused support initiative with PAID and hearing advocacy requests from youth in Adair County. A training for board members on conducting listening sessions will be led by Dr. Hollowell at Spaulding this Saturday from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- **Capacity Building:** No update at this time. Dr Finke has asked Judge Webb to join this committee.
- **Emerging Leaders:** The **Emerging Leaders** group will visit **Morehead Youth Development Center (YDC)** on **November 10th**. Planning is underway for a **youth voice learning circle**, expected to run for five to six months. Tamar Israel, Dr. Cicley Cottrell, and Kristy Flippins-Bartlett are coordinating this effort, with Dr. Cottrell bringing her extensive experience in implementing learning circles and restorative practice models. She is also exploring ways to involve her students who may be interested in participating at the facility. The proposal will be submitted to **DJJ ED Burgher** for approval. This initiative emerged from the last Emerging Leaders meeting, during which Morehead youth joined the call to share concerns about their treatment and educational experiences. Kristy relayed these concerns to ED Burgher, who is now actively addressing them and has plans in place to resolve the issues raised. This ensures that when the

learning circles begin, the focus will be on youth voice and restorative practices rather than grievance processing.

**YOUTH VOICE: -**

**PUBLIC FORUM-**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Determine a possible site for the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Any suggestions please let Carly know.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

**NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 10, 2025 @1PM TBA**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Dr Hollowell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jansen Hammock. Meeting adjourned.