

JJAB MEETING

JJAB Chairperson: David Finke

Vice Chairperson: Kristy Flippins-Bartlett

DECEMBER 19, 2025, 1PM – 4PM EST

MOREHEAD CONVENTION CENTER, MOREHEAD, KY



DECEMBER 2025 Meeting Summary

Date | time FRI, December 19, 2025, | 1 pm - 4 pm | **Meeting Location** MOREHEAD CONVENTION CENTER, MOREHEAD, KY

Meeting called to order by David Finke at 1:20 pm

WELCOME & MEMBER ROLL CALL – 1:20PM

Board Members in person: David Finke, Judge Harry Clark, Laura Karem

Board Members online: Deonte Hollowell, Donna Simmons, Jansen Hammock, Kristy Flippins-Bartlett, Sydney Scaggs, Tiffany Mullis, Ashley Clark, Christina Wheater, George Moorman

DJJ Staff present: Tara Kelly, Carly Gill, Melina Hampton & Benjamin Turner

Guest Present: Amy Snow, Brock Landwehr, Raven Kelly, Melissa Milchman, Shelly Mann, Mary Myles, Sarah Stacy

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Approval of October's minutes:** Harry Clark moved to accept the minutes with corrections noting from Christina's email. Seconded by Laura Karem. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Interstate Compact-** Ben Turner and Melinda Hampton presented on behalf of Amy Welch, Kentucky's ICJ Commissioner and Compact Administrator, providing an overview of the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ). They explained that ICJ establishes the laws and procedures governing juveniles who cross state lines and applies in cases involving probation or parole relocations, non-delinquent runaways, escapes or absconding, accused delinquents who flee, and youth needing institutional or specialized services in another state. In Kentucky, the ICJ office is housed within the Department of Juvenile Justice, though other states may place ICJ within Child Protective Services or Youth Services.

The presenters emphasized that ICJ carries the full force of federal law and is binding on all state and local agencies, including courts, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation and parole authorities, and law enforcement. Established in 1955 and ratified nationwide by 1986, the compact—strengthened by the 1965 Crime Control Act—remains the only lawful mechanism for transferring juvenile supervision across state lines and returning runaways. ICJ governs supervision transfers, returns, travel permits, compliance, case closures, dispute resolution, and airport surveillance during youth travel.

They also described how ICJ cases are monitored through a national database that provides real-time notifications when youth are picked up or when transfers and returns are initiated. Many cases are time-sensitive and require close coordination between states. Kentucky participates in annual rule-review processes, business meetings, and committee work related to ICJ rules, forms, and statutory updates.

ICJ staff collaborate regularly with detention centers, the Administrative Office of the Courts, Court Designated Workers, DCBS, law enforcement, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and families who may need assistance navigating the process. Kentucky's location, bordering seven states and intersected by major interstate highways—contributes to its consistently high ICJ activity.

For FY 2024–2025, Kentucky had 74–75 youth returned to the Commonwealth (4th highest nationally) and 53 youth returned from Kentucky to their home states (8th highest). Youth under supervision must have travel permits; Kentucky issued 159 permits and received 135. The state also managed 47 outgoing transfer cases and 54 incoming transfers, making Kentucky one of the busiest ICJ states despite its smaller population.

- **Wanda Joyce Robinson Foundation**- Amy Snow, co-founder and executive director of the Wanda Joyce Robinson Foundation, and Raven Kelly, who leads the Foundation's middle and high school outreach programs, presented an overview of how Title II funding strengthened their youth engagement, prevention, and intervention efforts. When the project began, the organization had no full-time staff dedicated to middle or high school outreach. Title II funding provided the infrastructure to launch consistent programming, including a twice-weekly middle school after-school program and support for school-based CRUSH groups serving more than 100 students impacted by incarceration.

In the second year, the Foundation expanded to two full-time positions: Raven continued full-time as the high school coordinator, providing micro-level support to youth and families, attending juvenile court, and participating in the community "situation table" for crisis-prevention interventions. The second position shifted to a youth development role within the newly formed Boys & Girls Club of Frankfort, supporting after-school programming for elementary and middle school students. Title II funding was described as critical to the Foundation's growth and its ability to deliver prevention and intervention services in Franklin County.

Raven shared a year-in-review of the high school program, highlighting system-level coordination and youth-level outcomes. The funded role focused on relationship building, targeted intervention, family coordination, and cross-system collaboration. In 2025, monthly outreach averaged 25 youth, and approximately 40 high school students participated in CRUSH (Kids Rising Up Through Support and Healing), a curriculum-based group supporting youth affected by incarceration. Two additional collaborative groups were launched: OMAC (Operation Making a Change) and a weekly open group chat for youth impacted by substance misuse.

Programming emphasized consistent engagement through workshops on communication, trust-building activities, ropes-course experiences, guest speakers, self-reflection exercises, goal setting, financial literacy, harm reduction, and therapeutic activities such as "burying the old and growing the new." The approach ensured issues were addressed proactively rather than reactively.

OMAC was newly implemented at the high school level with support from Franklin County juvenile judges. Since its launch in June, none of the 37 youth who completed the program received new charges, reflecting reduced recidivism. Raven described intentionally bridging youth across programs based on individual needs, noting that success often looked like consistent attendance, increased confidence, and readiness to participate in higher-support environments.

The presenters shared examples of youth leadership and resilience, including students participating in community meetings, youth-led prevention initiatives through ZeroV's Youth Advocacy Council, and a collaborative suicide-prevention mural project with Yes Arts. A detailed success story highlighted a

student who, after entering OMAC, improved his I-READY scores by 35 points, raised failing grades to passing, improved attendance, and began recovering credits toward graduation.

Overall, the Foundation emphasized that Title II funding significantly expanded their capacity, deepened cross-system collaboration, and created meaningful pathways for youth growth, stability, and leadership.

- **2026 Meeting Schedule-** Motion by Harry Clark second by Laura Karem motion carries

DJJ UPDATED:

- **R/ED Update:** The committee was informed that Georgetown University, on behalf of OJJDP, notified staff in mid-November that the RED Plan may be due in February. This potential shift would directly affect the planned SEJAY retreat dates. OJJDP strongly recommended beginning preparations for the three-year update immediately by requesting necessary data before February. That data-gathering process has already begun.
- **Compliance Report:** Staff noted that the Department of Juvenile Justice’s response to the recent OJJDP audit findings was included in the pre-reads. OJJDP has accepted the response and confirmed that Kentucky is compliant with the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA).

To address the significant monitoring burden—nearly 300 facilities that must be visited within a three-year cycle, with a 95–98% visit requirement—DJJ proposed partnering with the Department of Corrections (DOC). DOC already conducts routine facility visits, and DJJ is exploring whether a small set of additional JJRA-related questions can be incorporated into DOC’s existing process. This approach would allow DJJ to continue collecting required data while reducing the travel and workload demands on staff. OJJDP has approved this as an acceptable option moving forward.

Staff also shared that, in response to prior board interest, a consolidated dashboard has been created to track violations from FY 2022 through FY 2025, making the information easier to access and review.

- **Juvenile Justice Specialist:** Staff reported that OJJDP Performance Reports for FFY 2020–2024 have been submitted, and sub-award performance reports for 2020 and 2021, along with annual reporting for active awards, were included in the pre-reads. Two JJAB members—Amy Milken and Stephanie Barrows—submitted resignations, leaving required board roles vacant; members were encouraged to recommend potential candidates.

An update was provided on the proposed Youth Safety Pathways Initiative from the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) and the National Network for Youth (NN4Y). Kentucky is being considered as a priority state for this effort, which aligns with Title II and SAG Committee priorities. The initiative aims to reduce unnecessary youth justice involvement, expand community-based crisis responses, strengthen advocacy ecosystems, and address policies that disproportionately impact marginalized youth. Melissa Milchman attended the meeting to answer questions about the opportunity.

Melissa Milchman provided an overview of the Youth Pathways to Safety Initiative, explaining that it builds on a decade-long cross-system partnership known as Collaborating for Change. This work is supported by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) and the National Network for Youth, which includes roughly 300 youth-homelessness prevention partners nationwide, including several in Kentucky. These partners monitor trends such as increased criminalization of status offenses, survival behaviors, housing instability, and family conflict—factors that may be contributing to Kentucky’s non-offender holds.

Melissa emphasized that CJJ’s role is to support state advisory groups and justice agencies in building strong continuums of care and maintaining high standards for youth who come into contact with the

system. The initiative seeks to determine whether the SAG would be interested in participating in a peer-to-peer, cross-sector collaboration involving youth-homelessness providers, child welfare, education partners, and juvenile justice stakeholders. The goal is to equip providers and community organizations with tools to counter harmful narratives about youth, review policies and practices that may be funneling young people toward detention and prevent unnecessary criminalization.

She added that she can keep Carly, Tara, and partners informed to ensure both logistical and infrastructural support, as well as SAG engagement. At this stage, there is no action required from SAG. CJJ is currently meeting with two foundation partners—the Navigation Fund and The Just Trust—to discuss the structure of the partnership from their side. Melissa noted that this work mirrors what SAGs do at the state level, but from a national perspective, with an emphasis on aligning partners and ensuring SAGs remain connected to shared priorities.

Looking ahead, she anticipates that beginning in the new year, there may be periodic cross-sector meetings—potentially biannual or bimonthly—to support collaborative policy development and action planning as the initiative progresses.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- **Executive:** Committee reviewed ongoing attendance issues and sent follow-up emails to members as needed. A follow-up will also be made with BU regarding the presentations that will be shared with the JJAB. A common theme highlighted in the presentation was the importance of clearly articulating the “why” when drafting and passing legislation, ensuring that purpose and intent are centered throughout the process.
- **Grants:** Staff reported that the FFY 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is finalized and will be ready for a vote at the upcoming meeting.
- **SEJAY:** The December Adair County Listening Session was canceled due to weather. SEJAY is partnering with DCBS to host a rescheduled listening session in February, with a flyer to be distributed after next week. Planning is underway for a full slate of 16 Listening Sessions in 2026.
- **Capacity Building:** No report
- **Emerging Leaders:** Dr. Cottrell, Tamar, Tara, and Carly visited Morehead YDC to facilitate a restorative circle with the girls’ unit. The session had strong participation, and youth responded positively to the questions and activities Dr. Cottrell led. While some of the stories shared were difficult, the circle was described as both uplifting and productive, with youth using their voices, engaging deeply, and expressing a desire for the team to return. The focus remained on personal reflection rather than grievances, and the rapport built during the session was noted as especially meaningful. A follow-up restorative circle is planned, with the date to be determined.

Looking ahead to 2026, the Emerging Leaders Committee is preparing for youth to take a more central leadership role. Youth will begin running committee meetings, with adult leadership stepping back to support their development. This shift aligns with national models where youth lead Emerging Leaders groups and often achieve stronger outcomes. As new youth join, the committee will assess their interest in stepping into these leadership roles.

The committee also received approval to move forward with the holiday box project. Board members Jansen and Brianna, along with staff, will assist in packing 50 holiday boxes next Saturday. Carly has sent invitations to board members who wish to participate. Boxes will be delivered by Dr. Hollowell and Tara, who already have established rapport with Fayette County youth and will handle distribution.

YOUTH VOICE: -

PUBLIC FORUM-

ACTION ITEMS:

- Determine a possible site for the February meeting. Any suggestions please let Carly know.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 20, 2025 @1PM TBA

ADJOURNMENT:

Laura Karem made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Harry Clark. Meeting adjourned @ 3:30p