

Framing of James Bell's Research to Practice Listening Sessions Model For SACJJDP/JJSC Use of Force Workgroup 2016

The State Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (SACJJDP), California's State Advisory Group (SAG) serves as a standing committee of the BSCC. The SACJJDP is tasked with participating in the development and review of the State's Three-Year juvenile justice plan, reviewing grant applications, providing recommendations regarding the State's compliance with the four core protections of the JJDP, and reviewing the progress of projects funded under the State's Three-Year juvenile justice plan.

SACJJDP has been prominent in its efforts to transform juvenile justice toward:

- Reduced reliance on juvenile confinement;
- Increased use of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP), strategies, and interventions; and
- Reducing racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality (R.E.D.) within the juvenile justice system.

Toward that end, SACJJDP established a workgroup to look at the most effective way to enhance the understanding of county use of force practices. In order to make this a collaborative effort, the Use of Force (UOF) Workgroup includes three SACJJDP members and four Juvenile Justice Standing Committee (JJSC) members.

The Use of Force workgroup held their initial meeting on May 13, 2016 and discussed the possibility of using a Research to Practice Listening Sessions Model. The Use of Force Workgroup requested staff to delineate the framework of the Listening Sessions model previously used by James Bell of the W. Haywood Burns Institute around eliminating disparities in school discipline for consideration by the UOF Workgroup.

Why Listening Sessions: The stakeholder input from these Listening Sessions could provide crucial information meant to guide efforts focused on procedural justice, building public will, decision-making, and future partnerships around public safety goals. Using the Listening sessions model, the Work Plan foundation could be aligned with the pillars of Procedural Justice: *Fairness, Impartiality, Giving Voice; and Transparency*, further supporting the broad goal of enhancing the understanding of county use of force practices with a by-product of improved trust with the constituency.

Listening Sessions Model could be based on four themes:

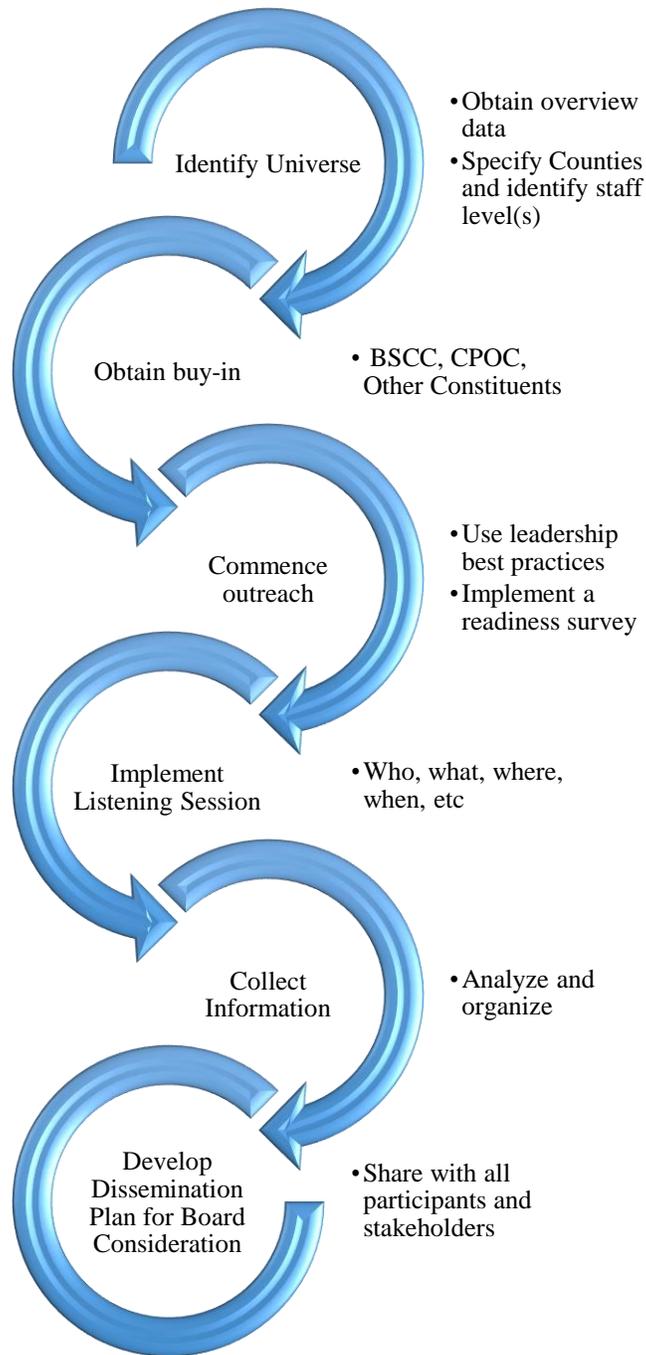
1. Honesty: Acknowledge that we don't have the answers but that we will get the best input possible from the community's diverse stakeholders.
2. Outreach: Ensure key stakeholders are engaged. Carefully planned outreach, including representatives from groups that connect people with specific areas of expertise.
3. Data Collection: Maintain consistent questioning among all groups. Take care to ensure that each group is being asked the same basic questions. Unless comparable conversations occur, it is impossible to compare and contrast the priorities of different stakeholders.
4. Follow-up: Communicate and clarify next steps with all participants. Build thoughtful and comprehensive follow-up into all listening activities to ensure specific, coordinated steps, goals and activities and keep trust strong. It is worse to ask the stakeholder's opinion and do nothing than to never ask at all.

Purpose of "listening sessions" would be to:

1. Understand the story behind some of the numbers we see in the hard data.
2. Learn about stakeholder thoughts/perceptions and desires regarding public safety and use of force.
3. Build public trust in the process and results of public safety and use of force.
4. Lay the groundwork for identifying specific goals and actions for public safety and use of force.

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Potential Work Plan:



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Goal: Develop and Support Policy Reform to Eliminate Disparities in School Discipline

Step 1: Obtained Background Information to Help Frame Discussion

- National Best Practices Literature and Readily Available Statistics
- Consulted Experts Across Multiple Disciplines

Step 2: Obtained Support from Atlantic Philanthropies and the Open Society Foundation

- Considered best persons to present idea and request

Step 3: Collected Available Data on Types and Frequencies of Discipline Disparities

- Race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language of origin, disability, etc.
- Suspensions, Expulsions, Referrals to Juvenile Justice System

Step 4: Determined Criteria for Selecting Listening Session Participants

- Considered Geography, Size, Known Disparities, Working Relationships

Step 5: Strategic Outreach and Scheduling

- Structured Meetings with Whom, How Many, Using What Technology

Step 6: Listening Sessions – JUST LISTEN – You don't know the answers yet

- Identified Perceived Context for Use of Discipline (beliefs)
- Details – What led up to Discipline? How Used? Effects? Ideas on Alternatives?
- Separated Interviews by Category and Job Title/Level
 - Youth Voice
 - Family/Caregiver Voice
 - Community Voice
 - Educators Voice
 - Juvenile Justice Practitioners Voice

Step 7: Analyzed Information & Data in light of Best Practices & Identified Alternatives

Result: Whitepaper - Practical, Evidence-Based Recommendations for Reducing Disparities in School Discipline based on Principles of Conflict Prevention and Intervention