

From: Nancy Juarez
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 4:52 PM
To: BSCC Public Comment

Subject: Request to add LA Youth Justice Reimagined to agenda 2/15

Hello Allison & Adam,

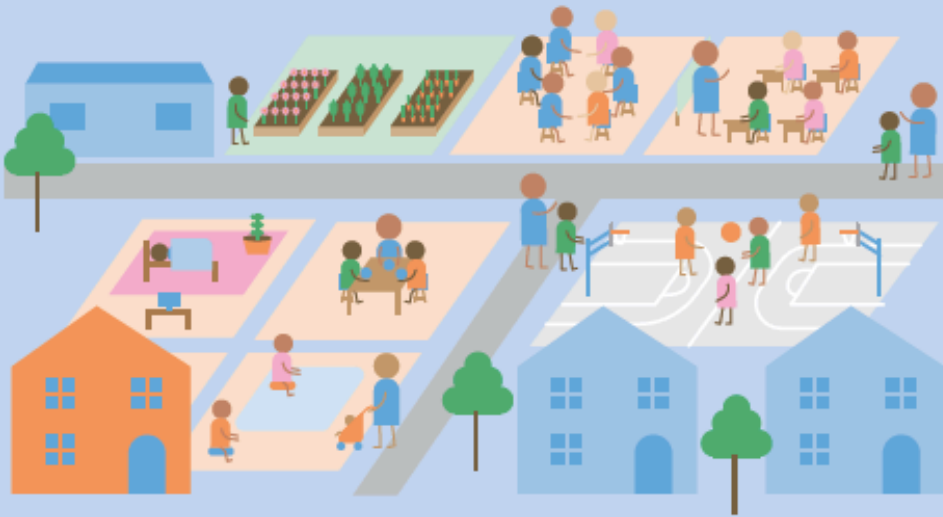
I hope you both are well! I have attached the LA Youth Justice Reimagined executive summary to my email. I would appreciate if this item could be added to the 2/15 agenda, or at the very least sent to the BSCC board members. Many will reference YJR in their public comments, adding it to the agenda may avoid confusion. For more context, LA county BoS and LA city council have passed various motions on YJR and it is what created the county Department of Youth Development, which funds the credible messenger program that works with LA SYTF.

Thank you!

Nancy

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Los Angeles County: Youth Justice Reimagined



Recommendations of the Los Angeles County Youth Justice Work Group

W. Haywood Burns Institute
October 2020



Executive Summary

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors tasked the Office of Diversion and Reentry's Division of Youth Diversion and Development (YDD) and the Chief Executive Office with establishing the Youth Justice Work Group (YJWG) to "explore the transitioning of the Los Angeles County's juvenile justice system out of the Probation Department into another agency, with the goal of creating a rehabilitative, health-focused and care-first system."

The Chief Executive's Office hired the W. Haywood Burns Institute (BI) to lead the consultant team. Nationally recognized for expertise in convening and engaging community and system stakeholders to address structural racism within the administration of justice, BI contracted five experienced consultants from Los Angeles: Patricia Soung, Dr. Danielle Dupuy, Isaac Bryan, Kent Mendoza and Anthony Robles. Together, the team launched the YJWG whose approximately 150 members included youth, community, justice partners and government stakeholders.

Community voices, particularly youth with first-hand experience with the justice system, were intentionally centered as equal members throughout the process. These youth sat at tables with and worked alongside decision-makers involved in their cases. This level of community and youth engagement was possible due to the support of several private foundations that, notably, increased support such that YJWG members could continue participating virtually in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The nation is watching Los Angeles County with great anticipation and for good reason. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has set an ambitious and strategic agenda for youth justice focusing on health and equity, and with each step the County itself is engaging in a transformation. In particular, the YJWG is building upon the historic achievements of the Office of Diversion and Reentry, YDD, the Probation Reform and Implementation Team, the Probation Governance Study, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council, Office of Violence Prevention, Office of Child Protection, Youth Commission, Probation Oversight Commission, Alternatives to Incarceration Initiative, the Anti-Racism Initiative, the Dual Status Workgroup, and projects to repurpose now-closed camps. All of these bodies have affirmed the need for investing in equitable, effective youth and community development alternatives to punishment approaches and systems.

The YJWG's goal was to design a restorative, health-focused, care-first youth justice system that would be "meaningfully different in operations and outcomes from the current system." Informed by local, national and international evidence, the YJWG developed recommendations that reflect the following key considerations:

1. Equitable reduction in the size and scope of the youth justice system can improve both youth outcomes and public safety.
2. Resources dedicated to youth incarceration and supervision should be reallocated based on analyses of current data and should reflect values of healing, restorative justice (RJ) and Youth Development as functions of Juvenile Probation fully transition to a new structure over time.
3. Continuation of diverse collaborative planning for implementation and further research and work in key areas is needed.
4. An initial investment in youth-specific infrastructure is required in order to build capacity to implement a new healing-centered system in phases over the next five years.
5. With continued focus on equity, this phased transition can effectively improve staff wellbeing, including a plan to support Juvenile Probation staff transition that mitigates workforce disruption.

The YJWG proposes the next step in this legacy of transformation in Los Angeles County: Youth Justice Reimagined (YJR), a comprehensive approach to transform and improve the operation and outcomes of Los Angeles County's youth justice system that prioritizes equity and accountability, recognizes the need for healing-informed responses along the continuum of youth justice system involvement, and provides coordination to further expand Youth Development across the County.

YJR includes the following core values and foundational components:

Core Values

1. Racial and Ethnic Equity
2. Centering Community
3. Youth Development
4. Public Safety Achieved Through Wellbeing
5. Wellbeing Achieved by Addressing Social Determinants of Health
6. Restorative Justice (RJ) and Transformative Justice (TJ)
7. Transparency and Accountability
8. Evidence-Informed Design
9. Power-Sharing, Coordination and Collaboration

Foundational Components

1. Provide truly improved coordination for youth and partners and build capacity for effective responses across youth-serving systems.
2. Resource and cultivate a Countywide Youth Development Network (YDN), including Youth and Community Centers (YCCs) connected to 24-hour crisis response.
3. Expand the Youth Development and Diversion model, investing in the increase of Youth Development opportunities in communities and diversion eligibility and available restorative responses in lieu of justice system involvement, with a commitment to continued protections against net-widening.
4. Support community-driven input in decision-making along the youth justice continuum with Youth Empowerment and Support (YES) Teams.
5. Establish Safe and Secure Healing Centers: small, community-based therapeutic housing, with a range of security, to serve as alternatives to juvenile halls and camps as comprehensive reentry services for youth removed from home for their safety or the safety of others.
6. Enhance and resource a workforce anchored in Youth Development that provides culturally rooted support and care coordination, including healing-centered support for schools and other youth-serving systems.
7. Adopt transparency and accountability mechanisms involving youth and community in program, policy and budgetary decision-making.

The YJWG carefully explored the feasibility of transitioning the youth justice system out of the Probation Department and into another agency. As a result of working sessions with the YJWG, the consultant team assessed the opportunities and challenges involved in several different potential structures. These included keeping functions in the Probation Department, moving transformed functions into existing structures in the Department of Health Services or other health-focused agency, establishing a new Commission or other non-Departmental structure, or establishing new infrastructure at the level of a County Department.

In the end, the consultant team determined that to truly transform operations and outcomes for justice-involved youth would require a phased transitioning away from the Juvenile Probation structure. An investment in a youth-specific Department-level infrastructure that can build upon the successes and address limitations of YDD is essential to equitably right-size the youth justice system. This conclusion was based on lessons from prior reform efforts; analyses of limited available data; and dialogue with local, national and international experts.

The YJWG proposes a phased approach to implementation with the critical first step involving the creation and funding of the Department of Youth Development (DYD) that is capable of building on the success of efforts like YDD and Alternatives to Incarceration Work Group while continuing to facilitate collaborative planning focused on implementation details that were not finalized this year. In order to reflect the values and goals outlined in this report, DYD will rely on innovative, high-level leadership; restorative, healing-centered, and development-oriented organizational culture; the autonomy and authority to provide Countywide leadership for equitable funding and capacity-building structures; and strong transparency and accountability mechanisms.

DYD will be the vehicle for YJR, specifically designed to build capacity for transformed responses to youth across County systems. This includes further developing the vast YDN needed for an equitable reduction in the size and scope of the population of justice-involved youth. The Department will also be able to provide the critical functions of ongoing collaborative planning and training, multidisciplinary decision-making support and coordination through YES Teams, implementation of Safe and Secure Healing Centers and Countywide capacity-building for community-rooted supports, reentry and restorative practices to improve public safety, promote public health and repair harm.

YJR seeks to improve community safety by supporting the growth and wellbeing of youth and dismantling the structural racism entrenched in the administration of justice by building structural solutions. The approach reflects design concepts that replace the current functions of Juvenile Probation. These design concepts begin with an investment in Youth Development and an expansion of diversion. When circumstances require youth to be processed through the legal system, YES Teams collaborate in decision-making along the continuum. If a secure placement is required, it will be a small home-like residence with healing and restorative practices embedded into its structure and operations and a focus on supported reentry whenever possible. A County-run secure facility will be a last resort for youth who require the utmost security for their own safety and the safety of those around them.

Based on the cost needed to fully expand youth diversion and development, provide initial staff to support expansion and early transition planning, and support consultants to facilitate ongoing planning, Phase 1 proposes a budget of approximately \$75 million. Preliminary analyses of Probation's budget and other potential funding sources indicate that these funds could come from the Probation Department's unrealized cost savings but recognize that the Chief Executive Office will need to conduct additional analyses to determine exact funding sources for Phase 1 and future phases.

The proposed YJR takes into consideration impacts on the current workforce. No layoffs are being proposed. These recommendations consider the need for additional analyses to address key labor, legal and legislative issues. Specifically, the County will need a detailed legal analysis that outlines local ordinance and state legislative changes to produce a legal roadmap for the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report. The County should also explore whether additional measures are needed to protect youth rights under a new system, including through comprehensive accountability mechanisms.

Certainly, many details of YJR will require more planning, analyses and thoughtful deliberation. It will require dedicated staff and capacity to engage the full range of stakeholders involved in the YJWG and other key groups (including additional youth leadership, representatives from schools and other youth-serving systems, justice partners and victims who have been harmed by violence or crime). This report recommends that first YDD and then the new Department of Youth Development continue to facilitate collaborative planning and oversight in the coming years to implement the key components of this work in three phases:

Summary of Recommendations for Phase 1: Establishing Infrastructure and Initial Administrative, Program and Planning Capacity to Bring YJR to Life (18 months)

1. Reallocate at least \$75 million of Probation funds to establish DYD with initial leadership positions, administer contracts and grants to YDN providers as well as provide transition resources for Probation staff.
2. Expand YDD's pre-arrest diversion network Countywide, including school referrals, with the goal of transitioning YDD into DYD as soon as possible.
3. First YDD and then DYD continue facilitating collaborative planning for the implementation of an improved alternatives to the Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Safe and Secure Healing Centers and 24-hour Youth and Community Centers (YCCs).
4. First YDD and then DYD develop a Youth Development Learning Collaborative (YDLC) to facilitate shared learning and capacity-building for Youth Development among youth-serving agencies in collaboration with youth leadership; community stakeholders; representatives from schools, child welfare and other youth-serving systems; and justice partners.
5. Begin collaborative planning to enhance and expand reentry support for youth in juvenile halls and camps, working with Probation to increase access to CBOs.

Summary of Recommendations for Phase 2: Transitioning Transformed Functions to YJR and Capacity-building (18 months)

1. Reallocate additional Probation funds to DYD for continued development of the YDN, additional contracts and grants to providers as well as continued support for workforce training and transition planning for Probation staff.
2. Establish an initial cohort of 24-hour YCCs, launching pre- and post-adjudication YES Teams at each center and building capacity for youth services and restorative practices.
3. Transfer facilities to DYD and expand the Safe and Secure Healing Centers model.

4. Coordinate a comprehensive continuum of reentry services for youth exiting detention and incarceration.

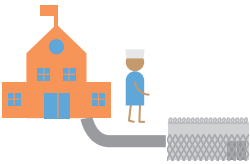



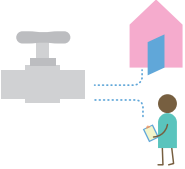
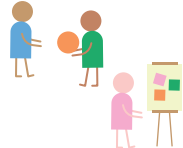

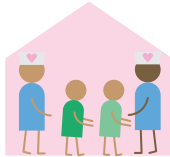

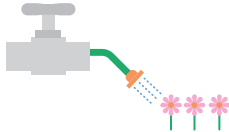
Summary of Recommendations for Phase 3: Full Transition to YJR (18 months)

1. Reallocate additional Probation funds to the DYD for continued development of the YDN, including additional resources to providers and training and transition support for Probation staff.
2. Advance Countywide Youth Development Priorities informed by YDLC.
3. Continue expanding the 24-hour network crisis response connected to YCCs.
4. Fully fund restorative alternatives to supervision and integrate YES Team input at all key decision points.
5. Close remaining halls and camps as Safe and Secure Healing Centers expand.

This report proposes that the Division of Youth Diversion and Development and the Chief Executive Office oversee initial transition planning in collaboration with the YJWG. The YJWG should continue to be engaged at least through Phase 1 of implementation to ensure steps are taken in alignment with the intent of the collaborative. This should include more detailed planning in smaller groups focused on specific topics such as data and information sharing, reentry services, partnerships with schools and other systems, Youth Empowerment and Support Teams, and Safe and Secure Healing Centers.

YJR embodies the best practices of community-based prevention and interventions while boldly moving to an innovative approach to youth justice. This design rejects the framework of custody, suppression and control. Instead, YJR relies on implementing large-scale, multifaceted interventions linked to trusted relationships rooted in cultural and community resources.

Youth Justice Reimagined

	Juvenile Probation serves important functions	Here's how Youth Justice Reimagined will transform and improve them
In-School Services	 <p>In some schools, school-based probation officers conduct supervision and provide referrals to resources for probation-involved youth, but there was a connection to the prison pipeline.</p>	 <p>Schools are supported by dedicated youth development workers who can respond to conflict, make sure harm is repaired and mentor youth to help them grow.</p>
Figuring out what happened and deciding what to do	 <p>Conducts assessment and investigation, providing Pre-Plea reports and recommendations to the Juvenile Court.</p>	 <p>Collaborative YES Team works to figure out what happened, find the best options for youth and advocate for them in the system.</p>
Services in the community	 <p>In the community, probation officers conduct field supervision and provide referrals to resources for probation-involved youth.</p>	 <p>24-hour Youth and Community Centers with youth programming, restorative processes and YES Teams connecting youth to additional community-rooted supports.</p>
Secure Housing	 <p>Operates secure juvenile halls and camp facilities where youth who cannot return home are detained or incarcerated.</p>	 <p>Safe and Secure Healing Centers create spaces for youth to receive trauma-responsive services in small, residential, home-like centers close to their families.</p>
Distributing Resources	 <p>Probation receives and administers Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act funding, including funds for capacity-building, youth development, and prevention programs.</p>	 <p>Data-driven and transparent funding mechanisms direct resources to community-based services that help youth thrive and reduce justice system involvement.</p>