

Juvenile Justice Oversight Council Meeting

August 12, 2025

Present

- Judge David Knoff
- Judge Margo Northrup
- Annie Brokenleg
- Joanna Lawler
- Amie Weglin
- Karly Winter
- Dr. Tammy Meyer
- Senator Greg Blanc
- Rep. Kady Wittman
- Ryan Brunner
- Bryan Harberts
- Kristi Bunkers

Call the Meeting to Order

Judge Knoff called the meeting to order at 2pm.

Review Open Meeting Requirements

Jeff Tronvold reviewed the South Dakota Attorney General's guidance on open meeting requirements, outlining key provisions and compliance expectations for public bodies. The review covered statutory obligations, transparency standards, and procedural considerations to ensure meetings are conducted in accordance with state law.

Brookings County Truancy Program Update

Brookings County State's Attorney Dan Nelson provided an overview of the Brookings County Truancy Program, which targets truant students while placing accountability on both the child and parents. The program works to address the underlying causes of truancy—such as mental health needs or transportation barriers—through early intervention, counseling, and coordinated support from schools, behavioral health providers, and the State's Attorney's Office.

Discussion covered truancy rates by grade level, the role of alternative school programs, funding sources for transportation, and the long-term effectiveness of interventions such as parenting classes and vouchers.

UJS Update

Chuck Frieberg provided an update on recent UJS/DSS site visits focused on improving the referral process. The visits have been helpful in streamlining referrals between UJS and DSS, with noted improvements in communication between behavioral health staff and probation officers.

DOC Update

Kristi Bunkers provided the update on juvenile population data, noting 77% in-state placements and top offenses including assault, grand theft, and possession of a stolen vehicle. Discussion covered matching youth to appropriate care, expanding family services through partners like LSS, challenges recruiting FFT

providers, and the impact of DBT. Sustainability of skills learned within DOC programs and their transferability to community life was emphasized.

The update also included information on diversion incentives, with \$4.2M paid to counties since FY16, and recidivism trends, currently at 32% on the three-year measure. Members explored potential roles for faith-based organizations in programming.

DSS Update

The Division of Behavioral Health provided an overview of the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JJRI), tracing its implementation from the 2014 work group through the launch of evidence-based treatments such as Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Moral Reconation Therapy (MRT), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and Systems of Care (SOC). The update emphasized access to a broad range of treatment services for justice-involved youth and families, including assessments by clinicians and core services like FFT, MRT, ART, substance use disorder treatment, and SOC. Additional evidence-based practices are also available as needed, such as CBT, DBT, EMDR, TF-CBT, and PCIT.

Juvenile Justice Conference Planning

Annie Brokenleg reported plans to host a statewide Juvenile Justice Conference, likely in spring 2026. She noted ongoing conversations with DOC and strong interest in holding the event. Feedback is being sought on potential topics, with a running list that currently includes diversion and other relevant issues.

Discussion

There was no additional discussion.

Public comment

Brenna Koedam, the new Chief of Behavioral Health at DSS, introduced herself.

Motion to adjourn

Ms. Winter made the motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Brunner. The meeting concluded at 3:07pm.