

Racial Disparities in the Juvenile and Criminal Justice System Advisory Panel Minutes from January 9 2018 Meeting

Unapproved Minutes:

Panel members present: Christine Longmore, David Scherr, James Pepper, Lisa Minard, Monica Weaver, Shela Linton, Ken Schatz, Karen Richards, Brian Grearson, Ingrid Jonas, Karen Vastine, Bruce Wilson.

Members of the public present: Frederick Randall II, Jameson C. Davis, John Brooks, Anna Stevens, Chloe White, Katrina Battle, KiaRae Hanron, Kathy Bombard, Maria French, Gary Scott.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Housekeeping: Next meeting date and agenda items (request to accommodate Professor Seguino's schedule so she can attend (Wed evening, 1/10/18)
- Guiding principals discussion:

We want to make sure we are inviting people to these meetings and we have questions about accessibility, possibly using VTC system to (use VIT sites), or at least be at a school? We need to figure out more accessible way to meet

Christine Longmore speaks about looking at this work through a lens of systemic racism, less a lens of white supremacy.

Harvard bias tests: Christine took it, showed she preferred white people. This speaks to a serious issue around bias.

Let's also have the agencies that haven't reported on their high impact high discretion areas submit brief reports to Christine.

Data Collection, Training, Policy changes are the key issues.

We will be asking for an extension on the report in order for it to be complete.

Shela Linton: Let's make sure we all have access to all the info that gets put in to the panel.

David Scherr: we could break up into committees to tackle the report

Shela: Let's talk about this report as a group before we break up into committees.

Bruce Wilson: We need to make sure we're bringing in outside expertise. We need a community process.

- Report on data collection meeting and discussion regarding data collection aspect of legislative report:

Geoffrey Jones: attended a meeting about data collection with a group of law enforcement leaders. Police leaders disputed the interpretation of the racial disparities numbers rather strongly at the beginning of the meeting. Meeting became more collegial and ended with a recommendation to have a centralized person available to compile data from many agencies. There were recommendations to standardize the way data is collected. There was a recommendation to include data on passenger searches, and a whether any search turned up a felony or misdemeanor amount of contraband. Another way to make sure data is accurate is to check against accident data. Problem with accident data: generally there is no race data collection.

Christine: some of the reported pushback on data from police leaders seems to be from a prior stage of the argument—mostly agreement that there is a problem.

Geoffrey: the police leaders don't agree yet, they feel, in part, that it's unfair to compare different towns where they have different patrol duties.

Major Jonas: it's more complicated to understand why disparities are happening than it is to show that disparities exist. Eg, gender disparities in state police (93-7%). What is driving that? Improper practices?

Christine: part of the challenge is that no individual department and no individual person wants to be known as the person who is racist. But the reality is that disparities exist. Now we need to create a system that allows us to understand the data, what it means, and point a way towards progress.

KiaRae Hanron: there are good implicit bias tests that exist to measure these types of challenges. Some of these tests can be instituted as part of training and as part of continuing education and training for officers

Jameson Davis: issues with the data only collecting perceived race, not attempt to capture actual race. Officer perception decides it. Can we have more of a reporting system?

Major Jonas: there was a decision at the beginning not to ask race.

Karen Richards: part of the reason for collecting the data on perceived race is because we want to know what the officer thought, because that's what we're trying to understand: did officer perceptions about race influence their decision making.

Frederick Randall: I agree that we need to collect the actual real race, not only the perceived race. Asking an individual how they identify is important.

Mark Hughes: Law enforcement is actually leaps and bounds ahead of the rest of the criminal justice system in terms of data collection. State police are well ahead of many law enforcement. We have enough data from law enforcement. We know what's going on in every area of the system. Let's get to working on data collection in other areas.

- Public complaint process discussion:

Christine: let's turn to public complaint process. One idea I've had is using the CJC network to do intakes on these implicit bias complaints. Part of the idea is using a restorative justice process where appropriate. A number of the complaints are essentially discourteous service reports. Getting the officer and the complainant in the room together was valuable and educational. This wouldn't cover things that might go to OPR.

Shela: it should be a separate entity that receives complaints. Centralizing complaints might be useful. Being outside the agency is important. Ombudsman position could be important. Having a dedicated advocate to work on behalf of complainants could be really important to those who are making complaints. Secrecy around titles and positions is a problem. There needs to be a complaint process that is transparent and open to the public. It shouldn't stay internal. The agencies shouldn't be able to hold the information behind closed doors.

Lisa Menard: a lot of complaints do get published externally, such as with the Human Rights Commission.

Christine: location of complaint-receiving entity is really important; not being in a police department helps people come forward.

Mark: I would support using HRC as a place to house complaints.

Anna Stevens: it's important to remember that we aren't even seeing the complaints from Camp Hill Prison in PA because of the way the contract works.

Tabitha Pohl-Moore: no CJC in all of Rutland County. So we'll need personnel and a place to handle that.

Shela: we need people of color to be on staff at these places to make sure we're being heard.

- Subcommittees assignments (chairs underlined):

Public Complaint Process: Christine, Shela, Karen, Gearson Ken, Anna, Shela, James Pepper, Frederick

Racial Profiling Law: Tabitha, Bruce, David, Ingrid, KiaRae, John, Katrina, Chloe, Maria

Data Collection: Gary, Monica, Stephanie, Jameson, Mark,

Meeting adjourns, subcommittee meetings commence.