

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT  
JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL SB 823 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

**December 9, 2025, AT 2:00 P.M.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Host Location:** 3960 Orange St, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor County Counsel Training Room, Riverside

**1. Call to Order – Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Chief Probation Officer Christopher Wright at 2:02 p.m.

Roll call of the members was taken. The following representatives were present:

Christopher Wright, Chief Probation Officer, Chairperson  
April Frey, Behavioral Health Administrator, RUHS Behavioral Health Services  
Melissa Moore, Managing Deputy District Attorney, District Attorney’s Office  
Dr. Deanna McCarty, Executive Director, Riverside County Office of Education  
Joelle Moore, Supervising Deputy Public Defender, Public Defender’s Office  
Marcus Walls, Juvenile Director, Riverside Superior Court  
Alejandra Gutierrez, National Center for Youth Law  
Amanda Wade, Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Committee

In attendance but not present during roll call:

Noelia Sanchez, Regional Manager Social Services, DPSS

**2. Approval of Minutes from Special Meeting April 15, 2025**

Christopher Wright presented the minutes from the Special Meeting on April 15, 2025 (handout). Christopher Wright made a motion for the JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee to approve the special meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Dr. Deanna McCarty. Minutes were approved.

Oppositions: None

Abstained: None

**3. OYCR Juvenile Justice Realignment Block Grant Annual Report**

Chief Deputy Probation Officer LaToya Thomas introduced new leadership roles within SB 823 operations: Division Director Rebecca Cloyd and Assistant Division Director Jacob Brown.

a. PTS Updates

Division Director Rachel Ligtenberg provided a summary of recent developments in PTS. Highlights included:

- i. The completion of the incident-based model revamp, which is scheduled for implementation in January 2026 for pathways youth.
- ii. The expansion of vocational programs such as Masonry Industry Training Association and Skyrocket Construction.
- iii. Advancement on SB81 Round2 vocational building, with groundbreaking anticipated in 2026.
- iv. Youth Employment Initiative: 55 youth enrolled in job readiness and placement programs.

- v. Two youth attending four-year universities and 31 youth enrolled in community college.
- vi. New initiatives included launching a speaking series featuring individuals with lived experience and the strengthening of partnerships with Project Rebound and Rising Scholars.

b. JJCC Subcommittee Workgroup Update

Behavioral Health Administrator April Frey provided an update, noting the launch of family advocate groups at each juvenile hall, the addition of parent partner services to support families, and the development of a multi-agency pre-release case management JI initiative scheduled for rollout next year.

**Comments:**

Rebecca Acevedo inquired whether family and parent services are offered in Spanish.

April Frey confirmed that services are available in both English and Spanish and can also be accessed via Zoom. She noted that she could not confirm if the services are identical across languages but will gather additional details and provide an update at a future meeting.

c. Joelle Moore provided a brief update on the Transitional Housing and Step-Down Programming workgroup:

- Met with multiple housing providers and collected surveys detailing current funding sources and future funding expectations.
- Compiled survey data into a spreadsheet tracker and shared with Probation.
- Made progress in building partnerships with CBOs, including, Chance initiative, Happier Life Project and Amity.
- Experienced a temporary pause during the RFP process; will resume conversations re: housing needs following contract award(s).

**Comments:**

Alejandra Gutierrez asked if there is a count of youth who have transitioned to community-based housing programs.

Joelle Moore responded that the number is not currently available and would need to be obtained from Probation.

Alejandra Gutierrez further inquired whether any funding from this budget is allocated to the LRP or related expenses.

LaToya Thomas clarified that two youth recently transitioned into community-based housing programs. The LRP has its own funding and is privately funded through the CBO.

**4. JJRBG Budget/Expenditures (handout)**

Chief Deputy Probation Administrator Cherilyn Williams provided an update.

a. Fiscal Year 2024-2025

- i. The fiscal year ended under budget. Approximately \$3,000,000 in JJRBG funds were carried forward into the current FY.
- ii. At the close of the fiscal year, nearly \$8M was available for rollover into FY 2025/2026.

b. Fiscal Year 2025-2026

- i. State funding for this fiscal year is projected at \$14.3M.
- ii. Total available funding for FY25/26 was \$17.9M, which includes \$14.3M in state allocation plus \$3.6M in carryover from prior years.
- iii. Based on the current FY25/26 budget, the remaining available funding is \$ \$4.3M, which remains unallocated.
- iv. A mid-year expenditure report to be presented at next JJCC meeting.

**Comments:**

Rebecca Acevedo asked about the actual versus budget figures for FY 24/25 and questioned the variance under the line item: Other Contracted Services. She also noted that the Education Services exceeded the budget while the amount remained unchanged, asking why additional staff were added without increasing the educational services budget and why other line items, such as Pine Grove Fire Camp and CBO culturally responsive programs, were not utilized.

Cherilyn Williams responded:

- For the first question, the \$306,601 is specifically for the current MOU with RCOE. The reason for the variance of \$3,279 is the increase in the agreement.
- Regarding public contracts and services, an RFP was issued last year, and funds were budgeted anticipating community benefit for at least part of the year. These services took effect on July 1, 2025. She explained that these factors contributed to the variances between budgeted amounts and actual expenditures.

Rebecca Acevedo emphasized the importance of ensuring youth receive the necessary services and urged that budget planning account for potential increases in youth population, ensuring adequate funding is allocated to meet their needs.

Carolina Herrera asked whether the \$2,000,000 budget for LRP originated from RFP 095.

Cherilyn Williams confirmed that it did.

Carolina Herrera then asked where RFP 093 and RFP 094 fall within the budget.

Cherilyn Williams explained that these are included under Other Contracted Services, as referenced earlier in response to Rebecca Acevedo's question.

Rebecca Acevedo sought clarification regarding community support, noting that Elisa Judy previously mentioned funding had been exhausted, causing the RFP to close in March instead of August.

Elisa Judy explained that RFP 094 was originally intended to remain open for one year with quarterly reviews. However, after the initial posting, no additional submissions were received. To allow for debrief and provide applicants with the opportunity to reapply in the future with improved proposals, the decision was made to close the RFP early.

Deanna McCarty noted a recent change regarding education funding. She noted that not all current programs operating at the facilities will appear in Probation's budget, as these are allocated from external sources to cover specific grants. Funding is divided between education programs and college initiatives.

Alejandra Gutierrez inquired about the staff allocation within the 2024/2025 budget.

Cherilyn Williams clarified that actual costing is determined by current staff assignments rather than funded positions.

Alejandra Gutierrez pointed out that she had previously requested an update on current budget expenditures.

Jamila Purnell noted that any expenditure report produced would need to be presented publicly.

Alejandra Gutierrez observed that staff allocation appears to increase by approximately \$3M annually and asked about changes in youth population.

LaToya Thomas explained that youth are placed in the program by court order, and over the past year, the average daily population increased by approximately 10.

Cherilyn Williams added that staffing levels are based on labor negotiated contractual obligations.

LaToya Thomas further described staffing ratios and requirements for off-campus activities.

Daniel Castaneda outlined staffing needs for opening an additional unit.

Alejandra Gutierrez asked whether the remaining contingency funds could be reallocated.

Cherilyn Williams responded that program proposals will be addressed at the January JJCC meeting; they can be submitted through the AdHoc Committee.

Alejandra Gutierrez noted changes to the JJRBG formula, which now incentivizes counties to place youth in community-based LRPs.

## **5. RFP for SYTF Re-entry Services Update**

LaToya Thomas reported that RFP 095A was released in early September and closed on October 30, 2025. The proposal is currently in the evaluation phase of the procurement process.

### **Comments**

Alejandra Gutierrez asked whether a specific dollar amount had been allocated for this initiative.

LaToya Thomas confirmed that \$2M has been designated for less restrictive programming.

## **6. Data Collection of Outcomes of Youth in SYTF**

Alejandra Gutierrez initiated a discussion regarding the need for comprehensive data on youth outcomes noting that at previous meetings she highlighted the importance of establishing a mechanism to track results. She emphasized the need for robust metrics addressing recidivism, social-emotional progress, and program effectiveness.

LaToya Thomas suggested that this topic be revisited once the JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee is fully reestablished with all community members, as that would provide an ideal opportunity to address these concerns.

The metrics workgroup will reconvene following the re-establishment of the JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee.

#### **7. JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee Members (handout)**

Rachel Ligtenberg noted that all Community-Based Organization (CBO) terms expired in July 2025. Individuals interested in applying for the subcommittee should submit applications to Leticia Haro by January 5, 2026. Voting for new members is scheduled for the January 26, 2026 JJCC meeting. Rachel requested that the subcommittee establish member's term. She proposed a two-year term, renewable for one additional two-year term.

The subcommittee decision was that community member terms would be set for two years, with the option to renew them for one additional term of two years.

#### **Comments:**

Rebecca Acevedo raised concerns regarding voting members who have not been attending meetings and asked whether their level of service could be reevaluated to allow seats to be filled by individuals who can commit.

LaToya Thomas confirmed that the bylaws stipulate any member absent for three consecutive meetings will be referred to the subcommittee for replacement. She assured the group that attendance will be monitored and appropriate action taken in accordance with these guidelines.

Christopher Wright made a motion for the JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee to approve the subcommittee member's term as two years, with a maximum of two consecutive two-year terms. Motion was seconded by Joelle Moore.

Oppositions: None

Abstained: None

#### **8. JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee Co-Chair Position**

Alejandra Gutierrez introduced the topic for discussion, seeking input from subcommittee members and the public regarding the potential establishment of a community co-chair position and the process for implementation. She encouraged the county to consider this option as a means of fostering community engagement and balance.

Rachel Ligtenberg noted that WIC Section 1995(b) allows any member to be selected, with the process determined by the subcommittee. If there is interest, members will define the selection process. She added that, should the subcommittee decide to create a co-chair role, responsibilities for the position would need to be clearly established.

LaToya Thomas recommended postponing the decision until new community members have been appointed to the subcommittee.

The matter will be revisited once the subcommittee is fully reconstituted.

#### **9. Youth Position on JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee**

Alejandra Gutierrez initiated a discussion noting that, during the previous meeting, a public comment recommended adding a youth representative to the subcommittee.

Rachel Ligtenberg expressed full support for this proposal and stated that the subcommittee must establish appropriate criteria for the position. She indicated that youth applications will continue to be accepted on an ongoing basis; however, a formal vote to reestablish the subcommittee will take place on January 26, 2026. Youth applications will be reviewed and voted on as they are received.

Christopher Wright made a motion for the JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee to approve the youth position, with applications due by January 5, 2026, to be reviewed at the January 2026, JJCC meeting. Motion was seconded by Dr. Deanna McCarty.

Oppositions: None

Abstained: None

#### **10. Proposed 2026 JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee Meeting Dates**

Christopher Wright presented the proposed 2026 JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee regular meeting dates (handout): March 17, 2026, and September 15, 2026. All meeting times are at 2:00 p.m. and in-person.

Christopher Wright made a motion to approve the 2026 JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee regular meeting dates. The motion was seconded by April Frey. Motion passed.

Oppositions: None

Abstained: None

#### **11. Public Comments**

Rebecca Acevedo expressed support for increasing staffing when it enables youth to fully access available services and programs, emphasizing the importance of data transparency and equitable access. She raised concerns about limited recreational access for youth at Southwest Juvenile Hall, specifically to areas such as basketball courts and the grass area, citing staffing shortages or restrictive protocols.

Daniel Castaneda clarified that Southwest Juvenile Hall always maintains adequate staffing for recreation, with three exercise yards and at least two staff members assigned to outdoor activities. He noted that concerted efforts are made to balance access to the basketball court, large field, and volleyball court for safety and security reasons. Except for recent construction-related disruptions, it is not a standard practice to restrict youth from the large field due to staffing shortages.

Rebecca Acevedo asked whether youth who have already applied would need to resubmit their applications once the new youth application form is created.

Rachel Ligtenberg confirmed that any youth applications submitted to date will be considered. Applications should be sent to Leticia Haro and cc LaToya Thomas.

Dante Green shared that he first attended a JJCC meeting in March when the current proposal was introduced. He expressed interest in learning what progress has been made since, particularly regarding the inclusion of individuals with lived experience, often referred to as credible messengers, in program development and implementation. Dante emphasized the importance of engaging these individuals beyond traditional probation roles, suggesting that their involvement could strengthen community-based initiatives and support systems.

Rachel Ligtenberg noted that, as mentioned earlier in the agenda, the subcommittee currently includes service providers and the program itself utilizes service providers and credible messengers, individuals with lived experience. She also highlighted the ongoing speaking series, which regularly includes individuals with relevant experience to engage with youth. Rachel further clarified that the proposal for a co-chair position was first introduced in March 2024 and revisited in March 2025, and discussions on this topic are continuing.

**12. JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee Comments**

None

**13. Adjournment**

Christopher Wright thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Next JJCC SB 823 Subcommittee Meeting:

Date/Time: March 17, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

Location: 3960 Orange St, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor County Counsel Training Room

The meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.

An attendance sheet was signed by all present and will be kept on file.

Meeting Minutes submitted by Probation Executive Secretary Leticia Haro