



Youth Justice Oversight Committee

Data Work Group

Minutes from July 14, 2026 Data Work Group Meeting

The Youth Justice Oversight Committee (YJOC) Data Work Group met on July 14, 2026 at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom. Chris Biehn chaired the meeting.

1. Attendance

Members Present:

- Chris Biehn, Indiana Office of Court Services, Co-Chair
- Kristi Bruther, Johnson County Juvenile Detention Center
- Hon. Paul Felix, Indiana Court of Appeals
- Melanie Pitstick, Marion County Juvenile Probation
- Colleen Saylor, Indiana Office of Court Services
- Corajeon Medina, Department of Child Services
- Kaitlyn Christian, Management Performance Hub
- Beca Stockman, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute
- Morgan Leuner, Indiana Department of Child Services
- Nancy Wever, Indiana Office of Court Services, JDAI
- Traci Lane, Madison County Juvenile Probation

Members Absent:

- Dr. Matt Aalsma, Indiana University School of Medicine, Co-Chair
- Hon. Sarah Mullican, Vigo Circuit/Superior Court 3
- Bri Youn, Indiana Youth Institute

OJA Staff Present:

- Lisa Thompson, Indiana Office of Court Technology

Guests Present:

- Katie Schwartz, Indiana University School of Medicine

Chris Biehn welcomed Nancy Wever (IOCS) and Beca Stockman (ICJI) as newly established members of the YJOC Data Work Group.

2. Approval of Minutes from May 12, 2026 Meeting

Committee members were provided with a copy of the May 12, 2026 meeting minutes prior to today's meeting. Hon. Paul Felix made a motion to approve the minutes; Kristi

Bruther seconded the motion. The work group members unanimously approved the May 12, 2026 meeting minutes.

3. Final Report Review & Discussion

Prior to today's meeting, work group members were asked to review a draft report from the IU School of Medicine regarding Phase 2 Pilot Findings and Recommendations. Katie Schwartz led the discussion and pointed out that there were likely no major surprises in the final report, as many of the items were discussed in previous meetings.

One area that was identified as needing additional attention was the Referral Outcome data element. While the group has developed a clear definition and received positive feedback on the field, Katie acknowledged that requiring probation officers to return later to complete the Referral Outcome field creates an additional burden. The report includes recommendations intended to simplify this process and improve data collection. Katie indicated that the recommendations are clearly outlined in the report and she welcomed additional feedback from the group. Pending any further comments, a final draft of the report is expected to be circulated by the end of the week.

Nancy Wever commended the report, describing it as thorough and well done, and expressed enthusiasm about the opportunities for future work stemming from its recommendations. She requested that references to "JDAI Strategists" throughout the report be updated to "Youth Justice Strategists." During the discussion of Section 4.1 – Core Data Elements, Nancy raised a question regarding the relationship between the Preliminary Inquiry (PI) report and Referral Recommendation. She noted that not every case includes a referral and questioned whether the report should recommend capturing an indicator showing whether a PI report was associated with a referral. She also observed that statute does not require a written PI report, emphasizing that a preliminary inquiry is a process, rather than a document, and that local practices vary considerably. Nancy questioned whether the Data Work Group should consider recommending policy changes that would improve documentation and better support probation officers' decision-making. Colleen Saylor agreed that incomplete documentation, particularly during county-to-county case transfers, presents challenges.

The discussion also explored whether probation officers should document the reasoning behind their Referral Recommendations. Melanie Pitstick explained that probation officers generally do not have difficulty justifying their recommendations, but emphasized that they work on behalf of the court, not the prosecutor, and that statutory language can sometimes create confusion regarding that role.

Katie noted that establishing a more direct relationship between referrals, PIs, and diversion assessments would improve the quality of the data. Lisa Thompson explained that system enhancements implemented on July 1, 2025, addressed many of these concerns by aligning the preliminary inquiry process with statutory changes enacted through HEA 1359-2022. Under the updated process, each Preliminary Inquiry report is now linked to a Diversion Tool, a Detention Tool (when detention is being considered),

and the JDAI Detention Screening Tool decision (if applicable), creating a one-to-one relationship among these records. In addition, when a required assessment is not completed, the system now captures the reason, providing greater context for the Referral Recommendation and strengthening the connection between assessments and probation decision-making.

The group discussed whether additional information should be collected when a Preliminary Inquiry report is not completed. Members questioned both the value of collecting this information and the additional burden it could place on probation staff. Traci Lane noted that completing a PI, including the interview and assessments, currently requires approximately 90 minutes, not including additional research or report writing. It was noted that practices vary considerably among counties, with some jurisdictions investing additional time in developing comprehensive PI reports that later serve as the Predispositional Report (PDR), eliminating the need to prepare a separate report. Kristi Bruther confirmed that Johnson County follows this approach by incorporating research and disposition recommendations into the PI. Kristi questioned the benefit of creating additional data elements for situations where no referral action is taken, while Traci suggested that documenting reasons such as a child's death or relocation could provide meaningful context for why a PI report was not completed.

Chris Biehn observed that many of the report's recommendations ultimately point to the need for additional training. Building on that discussion, Colleen suggested that Indiana could benefit from a statewide juvenile probation data support infrastructure, similar to the data support available through the Court Improvement Program (CIP). She proposed the possibility of dedicated data specialists who could assist probation departments across the state. Lisa agreed, noting that while Court Technology provides technical assistance on system use, there is currently no statewide probation data expert available to provide guidance on probation practices and data collection. Chris shared that this concept was included in the original YJOC report and he indicated that he plans to raise the recommendation again, acknowledging that implementation is largely a matter of timing. The group agreed to continue discussing what a statewide data support model might look like during the August meeting.

Katie concluded the discussion by asking members to submit any additional comments or suggested revisions to her by the end of the week so they can be incorporated into the final report.

4. Next Meeting

The next YJOC Data Work Group meeting will be on **August 11, 2026 from 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm** via Zoom.

The next Youth Justice Oversight Committee Meeting is **August 13, 2026 at 10:00 am** at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room A, 402 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN. There will be a live webcast of this meeting available on the Youth Justice Oversight Committee website: www.in.gov/youthjustice.