

JUVENILE JUSTICE OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

Minutes

October 8, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The second meeting of the Juvenile Justice Oversight Council was held on October 8, 2025, at 10:30 AM in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Brandon J. Storm, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Brandon J. Storm, Co-Chair; Representative Daniel Elliott, Co-Chair; Senators Danny Carroll, and Keturah J. Herron; Representative Nick Wilson; and Lesa Dennis, Christina Weeter for Robbie Fletcher, Mona Womack for Keith Jackson, Beth Jordan for Dr. Katie Marks, Damon Preston, Randy White, John Adams, Paula Garner, Zach Ramsey, and Tyra Walker.

Guests: John M. Tyson, Jr., Director, Helping Families Initiatives (HFI); Chad Butler, President, Kentucky Directors of Pupil Personnel (KDPP); and Ashley Clark, Executive Officer, Department of Family and Juvenile Services, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

LRC Staff: Roberta Kiser, Stephanie Larkin, Matissa Robinson, Randall Roof, Joshua Shelepak, and Robert Wright.

Approval of Minutes of the August 29, 2025, Meeting

A motion was made by Ms. Garner and seconded by Mr. Ramsey to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2025, meeting. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

Agency Updates

Chair Storm reviewed a report provided by the AOC regarding enhancing youth accountability and support through case plans; Family Accountability, Intervention, and Response (FAIR) Teams outcomes and mandated member attendance; and trends in juvenile complaint filings.

Truancy

John M. Tyson, Jr., Director, HFI; Chad Butler, President, KDPP; and Ashley Clark, Executive Officer, Department of Family and Juvenile Services, AOC, discussed truancy in Kentucky.

In response to Chair Storm, Mr. Butler outlined Kentucky chronic absenteeism statistics; discussed the impacts of 2024 RS HB 611 on chronic absenteeism rates; and detailed root

causes of chronic absenteeism.

In response to Mr. Preston, Mr. Butler discussed KDPP historical data recording methods regarding chronic absenteeism.

Mr. Tyson detailed his previous professional experience; outlined the history and mission of the HFI; reviewed a report provided by HFI regarding chronic absenteeism in Alabama; outlined chronic absenteeism statistics from Kentucky and Alabama; detailed HFI's impact on attendance in the Mobile County Public School System (MCPSS) and related financial implications for MCPSS; detailed HFI's funding sources including Alabama's Mandatory School Attendance Act; discussed each stage of the HFI program process; reviewed program results from the 2024-2025 school year, including the number of students directly served and stressed that student absenteeism wastes tax dollars; outlined HFI's case management database; reviewed preliminary program results from the 2025-2026 school year; discussed key takeaways from the program; and shared several cases where HFI served Alabama students.

In response to Ms. Garner, Mr. Tyson discussed effective methods of communication with families in HFI's "Engagement" program phase.

In response to Chair Storm, Mr. Tyson confirmed HFI's report was submitted to the Alabama legislature; and confirmed statistics in the report related to reduced truancy in MCPSS after the implementation of HFI's program.

In response to Senator Herron, Mr. Tyson discussed HFI's funding sources and HFI's financial investment in reducing truancy and chronic absenteeism.

In response to Senator Carroll, Mr. Tyson clarified HFI tries to broker services in partnership with the District Attorneys in Alabama to reduce truancy and chronic absenteeism.

Ms. Clark presented truancy trends and data insights found within AOC's Court Designated Worker (CDW) Program; defined status offense, truant, and habitual truant; discussed key provisions of 2024 RS HB 611, including unexcused absence trigger reporting, distinction by grade level, and diversion agreements and process; discussed how truancy complaints are processed and the number of truancy complaints and average absences per truancy complaint in FY2024 and FY2025; detailed the number of truancy complaints filed by county in FY2025, the percentage change of truancy complaints filed from FY2024 to FY2025, truancy complaints by reported absences, and the average number of absences by county for FY2025; discussed each stage of the preliminary intake inquiry once a truancy complaint has been filed with a CDW; outlined the purpose and average length of diversion agreement case plans; outlined the responsibilities of FAIR teams relating to truancy

complaints and reviewed FAIR teams' referrals and referral reasons for FY2024 and FY2025; reviewed the status of open and closed truancy complaints filed in FY2025, stating a majority of complaints have been closed and referred to court; discussed the reasons why a truancy complaint is referred to court; reviewed statistics related to the running total of truancy complaints referred to court for FY2024 and FY2025; discussed Kentucky's Truancy Diversion Program (TDP), stating its purpose, outlining the program's phases of intervention, and the number of active sites from 2023 - 2025; and delivered final thoughts regarding how the CDW program can reduce truancy.

In response to Chair Storm, Ms. Clark discussed the decrease of TDP active sites from 2023 to 2025; and specified the number of counties where CDWs are active.

In response to Senator Carroll, Ms. Clark discussed truancy complaint trends; and confirmed alternative education options are provided as a part of the CDW program.

In response to Ms. Weeter, Ms. Clark cited a lack of staff support as a reason why TDP sites are not active in every county across the state.

In response to Senator Herron, Ms. Clark discussed requirements of the diversion program as it relates to a hypothetical student; and detailed how diversion programming is funded.

In response to Mr. Preston, Ms. Clark discussed possible recommendations for increasing the FAIR teams' success rate.

In response to Ms. Walker, Ms. Clark confirmed the Jefferson County schools with which the CDW program is partnered; and confirmed the program provided resources to families in need with children who have had truancy complaints filed.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:11 PM.