



**MURIEL BOWSER**  
**MAYOR**

January 17, 2024

The Honorable Phil Mendelson  
Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 504  
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

I am pleased to transmit to the Council of the District of Columbia the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) Bi-Annual Report for 2021-2022.

In its advisory capacity, as authorized by Mayor's Order 2000-128, and in accordance with its by-laws, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) provides regular updates and guidance to the Mayor and the Council on matters of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention in the District of Columbia.

The Bi-Annual Report for 2021-2022 outlines the JJAG's current membership, ongoing efforts related to grants management and grant making, compliance monitoring in accordance with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, and racial and ethnic disparities work. The report also highlights key accomplishments of the JJAG in an effort to keep city leadership informed and to maintain an official record of our efforts.

If you have any questions regarding the report, please contact Jennifer Porter, Director of the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, at 202-724-7216, or by email at [jennifer.porter@dc.gov](mailto:jennifer.porter@dc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel Bowser".

Muriel Bowser  
Mayor

Enclosure

**District of Columbia  
Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG)**



**2021-2022 Bi-Annual Report to the Mayor  
and the Council of the District of Columbia**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Chair’s Letter	3
Director’s Letter	4
Introduction	5
Juvenile Justice Advisory Group	
I.    Current Active Membership	5
Juvenile Justice Delinquency Act (JJDP A) and Funding Streams	6
I.    Title II Formula Grant Program	6
II.   Title II Program Area Focus	6
III.  Funded Programs	6
Key Accomplishments	7
I.    Continued PINS Reform and Education Enhancement Resolution	8
II.   Youth Leaders in Action Committee	8
III.  Awards and Recognition	8
IV.   Other Notable System Reforms	9
Compliance Monitoring and Racial and Ethnic Disparities Efforts	9
Recommendations to the Mayor of the District of Columbia	10
Acknowledgements	10

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson:

On behalf of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG), I am pleased to present the 2021-2022 Bi-Annual Report. This report describes the JJAG's recent effort to support the District in creating and delivering a robust continuum of care for system-involved youth and stay in compliance with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A).

During the reporting period, the District remained in compliance with the four core requirements of the JJDP A: deinstitutionalization of status offenders (DSO); separation of juveniles from adult offenders; jail removal of juveniles; and reduction of racial and ethnic disparities (RED).

In the last two years, the JJAG has focused its energies on identifying ways in which the juvenile justice system could continue to shift toward strength-based approaches that connect youth and families to meaningful opportunities and supports.

The JJAG remains committed to support the implementation of the PINS reform recommendations<sup>1</sup> and to identify other opportunities for the District's juvenile justice system to do what works for youth, families, and our communities.

This report reflects the continued effort of many community members, youth leaders, government partners, and community-based organizations to improve systems of care for youth and families in the District.

Respectfully submitted,

*Laura Furr*

Laura Furr.  
JJAG Chair

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<sup>1</sup> The PINS reform recommendations were laid out in the 2020 JJAG report *Create New Opportunities for "Persons in Need of Supervision" (PINS) to Succeed Without Legal System Intervention.*

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson:

As the Director of the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, I am pleased to express my support for the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) and my gratitude for the opportunity to transmit this Bi-Annual report of their activities, success, and areas of opportunity they have accomplished and identified.

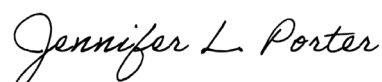
In this report, the JJAG details their fortitude in efforts to support the District in administering funded programs that improve the juvenile justice system. Their goals are in line with your aim to ensure that the collaboration of the many systems, both local and federal, that youth may appear in is equitable, community informed, culturally aware, and responsive. The JJAG's grant making efforts during fiscal years 2021 and 2022, focused on supporting activities surrounding school-based restorative justice programs and delinquency prevention programs. You will see in the report details of the funded programming and key accomplishments. With your support, the JJAG will continue to ensure that the programming supported by the over \$650,000 of Title II funding positively impacts youth and families and improves the juvenile justice system.

Operationally, this report also details key accomplishments and notable recognition of our JJAG. You will see the national selection of our Youth Co-Chair to elevate youth voices in system change work. You will also see of note, our State Juvenile Justice Specialist won the prestigious Tony Gobar Outstanding JJ Specialist Award. The recognition of our advisory group leadership is exemplified by the body of work they have produced. The JJAG has recruited youth leaders with lived experience with juvenile justice-system involvement to advise system leaders on ways that we can balance public safety and our systemic values of evidence-based and trauma informed care to youth, which you will see summarized in the JJAG's system reform proposal and report titled *Create New Opportunities for "Persons In Need of Supervision" (PINS) to Succeed Without Legal System Intervention: District of Columbia Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Recommendation to Mayor Bowser*.

In addition to the PINS report, the JJAG Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee, in partnership with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, produced the *JJAG Recommendations to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Arrest of District Youth Report*, which will be transmitted to you soon. These efforts are the culmination of work with agencies to streamline the data collection among system partners, review of local practices, and develop a set of recommendations around reducing disparities for youth of color.

Thank you for your continued dedication to juvenile justice and public safety, as demonstrated by your support of the JJAG as our state advisory group. I look forward to the continued commitment and collaboration to support the JJAG and the youth of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Jennifer L. Porter, Director  
Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants

## Introduction

The Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) of 1974 created a federal-state partnership to “provide national leadership, coordination and resources to prevent juvenile victimization and respond appropriately to juvenile delinquency.”<sup>1</sup> Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) is the sole State Administering Agency that secures and manages federal grant funds related to juvenile and criminal justice for the District of Columbia.<sup>2</sup> The Mayor’s Order 2009-13 establishes the Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG) as the required State Advisory Group (SAG) to receive Federal Formula funds, Title II, Part B, per section 223(a) (3) of the JJDP Act.

### Juvenile Justice Advisory Group (JJAG)

In accordance with the JJDP Act, the JJAG may consist of between 15 to 33 members appointed by the Mayor. The members have training, subject matter expertise, and special knowledge concerning delinquency prevention and treatment of juveniles in the delinquency system, as well as a cross-section of relevant youth services knowledge that includes behavior, health, and education needs. The composition and membership of the JJAG are specified per the JJAG by-laws.

#### *I. Active Membership*

1. Laura Furr, *Chairperson*, Community Member
2. Kyla Woods, Youth Co-Chair
3. LaShelle Richman, *Vice-Chair*, Community Member
4. Lisette Burton, *Secretary*, Community Member
5. Aaron White, Youth Member
6. Audrey Eismann, Community Member
7. Brittany Mobley, Public Defender Service
8. Bruce Wright, Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services
9. Commander Daniel Godin, Metropolitan Police Department
10. Dave Rosenthal, Office of the Attorney General
11. Jenise “Jo” Patterson, Community Member
12. Honorable Jennifer DiToro, DC Superior Court/Family Division
13. Nataly Del Valle, Youth Member
14. Jamal Holtz, Youth Member
15. Jonah Goodman, Locally Elected Official, ANC 4C10 Representative
16. Mylan Barnes, Youth Member
17. Patrina Anderson, Department of Behavioral Health
18. Penelope Spain, Community Member
19. Sheila Clark, Department of Human Services
20. Shyra Gregory, District of Columbia Public Schools
21. Terri Odom, DC Superior Court/Court Social Services Division

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention’s (OJJDP) Mission.

<sup>2</sup> Per Mayor’s Order 2009-13.

## Juvenile Justice Delinquency Act (JJDP) and Funding Streams

### *I. Title II Formula Grant Program*

This program supports state and local efforts in planning, establishing, operating, coordinating, and evaluating projects directly or through grants and contracts with public and private agencies for the development of more effective education, training, research, prevention, diversion, treatment, and rehabilitation programs in the area of juvenile delinquency and programs to improve the juvenile justice system.

### *II. Title II Program Area Focus*

The Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, on behalf of JJAG and in accordance with the District's current State Plan for administering Title II Funds, administered funding in the following focus areas:

- **Delinquency Prevention:** Comprehensive juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs that meet needs of youth through collaboration of the many local systems before which a youth may appear, including schools, courts, law enforcement agencies, child protection agencies, mental health agencies, welfare services, health care agencies, and private nonprofit agencies offering youth services.
- **Compliance Monitoring/Racial and Ethnic Disparities:** monitoring for compliance with the core requirements and providing training and technical assistance on the core requirements for secure facilities; and programs, research, or other initiatives primarily to address the disproportionate number of youth members of minority groups who come into contact with the juvenile justice system, pursuant to the requirement at 34 U.S.C. § 11133(a)(15).
- **Planning and Administration:** Activities related to state plan development, other pre-award activities, and administration of the Formula Grants Program, including evaluation, monitoring, and staffing, pursuant to 34 U.S.C. § 11132(c).
- **JJAG Operations:** Activities related to carrying out the state advisory group's responsibilities under Section 223(a) (3) of the JJDP Act.

### *III. Funded Programs*

#### *Criminal Justice Coordinating Council – Compliance Monitoring and RED Coordination*

The CJCC employs the District's Compliance Monitor and Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coordinator (CM/RED). This staff member is responsible for helping to ensure that the District is in compliance with the four core requirements of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP). The CM/RED's responsibilities include identifying and classifying all District facilities that should be included in the monitoring universe, conducting site visits and inspections of those facilities, collecting and analyzing admissions/intake data from each secure facility and the court, providing technical assistance to facilities to help ensure compliance, and completing the annual compliance monitoring report. The CJCC also utilizes grant funding to conduct Juvenile Justice Training and Technical Assistance sessions that focus on specific juvenile justice issues that have a nexus to the JJDP core requirements or reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the justice system.

- FY 21 Award: \$80,558
- FY 22 Award: \$78,053

Access Youth, Inc. – Restorative Justice in Schools at Ballou High School

Access Youth’s Restorative Justice in Schools (RJ) program is designed to provide trauma-informed, evidence-based interventions for at-risk high school students at Ballou and Eastern High Schools, in order to reduce suspension rates and school-based arrests and ultimately reduce juvenile delinquency and justice system involvement.

- FY 21 Award: \$125,000
- FY 22 Award: \$125,000

Multicultural Career Internship Program- Delinquency Prevention at the Columbia Heights Education Campus (CHEC)

This is a trauma-informed, care based, juvenile delinquency prevention program delivered to 100 at-risk youth in Columbia Heights, Washington, DC. The project provides trauma-informed counseling, prevention of risk behaviors (e.g., teen pregnancy prevention and gang prevention and intervention), youth development support (e.g., conflict resolution and healthy lifestyles education and skill building), and academic assistance (e.g., tutoring and academic mentoring) to engage youth in education and divert them from delinquency or possible delinquent/risk behaviors.

- FY 21 Award: \$125,000
- FY 22 Award: \$125,000

**Key Accomplishments for the JJAG and the District’s Juvenile Justice System**

***I. Continued PINS Reform Advocacy and the Education Enhancement Resolution***

Since February 2020, the JJAG has advised and provided implementation support guidance to the District in order to responsibly remove Persons In Need of Supervision (PINS) (a.k.a. status offenses) from the juvenile justice system. During the 2019-2020 reporting period, JJAG efforts focused heavily on the development of a system reform proposal, resulting in the report [Create New Opportunities for “Persons In Need of Supervision” \(PINS\) to Succeed Without Legal System Intervention: District of Columbia Juvenile Justice Advisory Group Recommendation to Mayor Bowser](#). The report examines the District’s current response to status offenses, identifies gaps and assets in the District’s systems of care, explores opportunities for cross-system alignment, and enumerates the JJAG’s key recommendations for alternatives to system-involvement for PINS.

In furtherance of this work in FY21 and FY22, the JJAG PINS Committee continued to work with the administration, JJAG members, and community advisors to support JJAG’s vision for reform. One way this was accomplished was through securing federal funding to enhance prevention work outside of the juvenile justice system. The JJAG PINS committee identified and supported OVSJG, in partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), to apply for and win a competitive four-year federal award of \$1.5 million to support expansion of the DHS Parent and Adolescent Support Services Intensive Case Management (PASS ICM+) program, targeting middle schoolers at-risk of prosecution for status offenses. A pilot was launched in partnership with the DHS and DC Public Schools at Kramer Middle School for School Year 2022-2023.

Moreover, the JJAG developed more concrete implementation recommendations that provide a road map to implementation of the recommendations and continuum of care vision developed in the PINS report. Those were submitted to Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice and the City Administrator, who expressed support for improved cross-system coordination and enhancements to the continuum of care for system-involved youth.



Lastly, the JJAG adopted a resolution in May of 2022, entitled [Resolution 2022-1 Supporting Enhanced Responses to Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy](#). The Resolution demonstrates support for the provision of increased resources to schools and the implementation of enhancements at schools to attract and improve student attendance and engagement, as well as the enhancement of community-based resources that respond to youth who are disconnected from schools. The recommendations are all aligned with the JJAG PINS reform vision, and JJAG shared the resolution with the Every Day Counts! (EDC) Policy Committee and representatives for the Deputy Mayor for Education in August 2022.

## ***II. Youth Leaders in Action Committee***

JJAG continued to focus on increasing youth voices by recruiting youth leaders to its membership. Youth members are between the ages of 16-28, and nearly all youth members have lived experience with juvenile justice-system involvement. Youth members are paid a stipend for their work and for active participation in JJAG. These stipends are funded through the State Advisory Groups allocation within the Title II formula funding budget annually.

Youth members meet monthly with the overall JJAG and meet separately as a youth committee each month. The youth committee is called the Youth Leaders in Action (YLA) Committee. YLA is charged with ensuring that the youth perspective is considered in JJAG planning and decision-making, including development of the Three-Year Plan, organizing youth-led initiatives and youth-led engagement opportunities, and appointing at least one youth committee member to participate in the grant peer review process.

During this reporting period, four YLA members participated in the grant review processes, youth members also served as Youth Co-Chairs of the overall JJAG. The YLA also adopted a youth-led initiative and hosted engagement opportunities for other youth and young adults impacted by the justice system around the impacts of electronic monitoring on young people. The goal of this project is to support JJAG members and system leaders in thinking more critically about how to balance public safety and our systemic values of implementing evidence-based and trauma-informed care to system involved youth. This initiative explores the potential harms that electronic monitoring can cause, and the YLA held conversations with formerly system involved youth to better understand how electronic monitoring impacted them. They plan to share their findings and recommendations with JJAG in FY 23.

Additionally, YLA's efforts were recognized on a national scale, and YLA was invited to share their experience developing and leading youth-led initiatives and navigating youth-adult partnerships at the OJJDP State Relations and Assistance Divisions National Conference in December 2022 in San Diego, California.

## ***III. Awards and Recognition***

The Juvenile Justice Advisory Group's Youth Co-Chair Kyla Woods was selected by the Center for the Coordinated Assistance to States (the national technical assistance provider to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) (OJJDP)) to serve as a national consultant on elevating youth voices in state advisory groups and system change work.

Additionally, Melissa Milchman, OVSJG Grants Management and Juvenile Justice Specialist, was awarded the 2022 Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist Award. The Tony Gobar award was presented to Melissa for her "constant compassion and support of all youth, especially those who have experienced challenges and barriers throughout their lives." The Tony Gobar Award recognizes an individual that has served as a State Juvenile Justice Specialist within the last

five years, who exemplifies excellence in service to others, is dedicated to improving the youth legal system, and demonstrates compassion and concern.

#### ***IV. Other Notable System Reforms***

- (1) Starting in July 2022, the DC Superior Court began appointing a “post-commitment juvenile attorney” to every newly committed young person; either the Public Defender Service (PDS) or OVSJG-grant funded organization Open City Advocates is now working in tandem with a youth’s trial attorney, creating a robust and seamless model of representation for youth throughout their supervision in the delinquency system. This new model of juvenile defense is the first of its kind in the nation. The FY 22 grant award to Open City Advocates supported the hiring of two staff attorneys to deliver post-disposition advocacy to District youth committed to the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS).<sup>3</sup>
- (2) The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Juvenile Section Hotline, implemented in 2020 as a help line for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and other law enforcement agencies with arrest powers in the District, has had substantial impact on system involvement for juveniles. If a police officer is making an arrest of a juvenile, they have been instructed to call the hotline for advice and direction. Specifically, direction pertaining to the diversion, release, or detention of juveniles who commit delinquent acts is given when officers call the hotline. The hotline is featured in the new MPD General Order on Juveniles. OAG received its first hotline call on January 14, 2020. The hotline operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and is staffed by OAG Juvenile Section managers.

### **Compliance Monitoring and Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Efforts**

The JJAG annually funds a Compliance Monitor and Racial Ethnic Disparities Coordinator to support the District’s efforts in maintaining compliance with the JJPDA. These grant funds support a full-time staff person employed by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). During this reporting period, the Compliance Monitor conducted site visits for 11 sites, including police precincts and DYRS facilities that securely detain youth in the District. The Compliance Monitor also works with agencies to streamline the data collection and data verification processes among system partners to enable effective reporting on the core requirements of the JJPDA.

During the 2021-2022 reporting period, the Compliance Monitor also undertook a major effort to overhaul, revise, and refine the District’s Compliance Monitoring Manual. This revision process was completed to update our monitoring policies and procedures in accordance with OJJDP requirements for the FY 21 Title II Formula Award application. The updated manual can be reviewed online at: <https://ovsjg.dc.gov/service/juvenile-justice-advisory-group>.

Moreover, CJCC also prepared and submitted the FY 20 and FY 21 Compliance Monitoring Reports and updated the Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Evaluation Plan. Through this work, the District proudly reported that there were no violations of the four core requirements during FY 21.

Consequently, OJJDP found that the District’s updated manual and the data shared in our most recent compliance and RED reports demonstrated that "the District of Columbia has provided for an<sup>3</sup> While the funds for this award are not Title II based, JJAG reviews and makes recommendations for all Juvenile Justice related applications to OVSJG for funding. JJAG’s recommendations are tied to alignment with their mission to support the District’s three-year plan for delinquency prevention and improvements in the continuum of care for system-involved youth.

effective system of monitoring." Further, OJJDP determined that the District is in compliance with each of the four core requirements of the JJDPA, which meant the District was eligible to receive 100% of its Title II funding for FY 21.

Additionally, JJAG continued to convene the Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) committee in 2021 and 2022 to support the review of local practices and to develop a set of recommendations around reducing disparities for youth of color at various touch points in the juvenile justice system, with particular focus on youth arrests and/or contacts with law enforcement. JJAG held a full day training and consensus building meeting in September 2022 to support members in learning and communicating about their shared goals. The committee is in the process of finalizing recommendations around reducing disparities at the point of arrest. These recommendations will be voted on by the overall JJAG in FY 23, and the resulting recommendations will be distributed to the Executive Office of the Mayor for consideration in FY 23.

### **Recommendations to the Mayor**

As noted above, during the 2021-2022 reporting period, the JJAG focused heavily on the continuation of its PINS reform proposal. In the two years since the report was released, JJAG developed more concrete implementation recommendations and adopted a separate Education Enhancement Resolution, which was presented to the Every Day Counts! Task Force and staff of the Deputy Mayor for Education.

The JJAG continues to seek support from the administration around improvements in cross-system coordination and enhancements to the continuum of care that serves youth and families in the District in alignment with our core recommendations for PINS reforms:

1. Respond to PINS behaviors in the community, rather than through the juvenile justice system. Support legislation to remove all mentions of "PINS offenses" as prosecutable offenses from Chapter 23 of Title 16 of the DC Code and make conforming amendments, including to the Attendance Accountability Act.
2. Invest in and realign resources to provide youth, families, and caregivers across all wards with 24/7 access to culturally - and linguistically - competent opportunities to succeed that meet the needs of every family.
3. When PINS behaviors do occur, ensure multiple, "no wrong door" access points to services outside of law enforcement or juvenile justice agencies, including schools and community-based "hubs."
4. Create a non-law enforcement mechanism for the safe transport of youth who are not suspected of a crime to home or to places where they can receive services.
5. Enhance training for all District employees and service providers on topics such as cultural humility, trauma-responsive care, and positive youth development.
6. Create mechanisms for youth, families of served youth, and the community to lead reforms and to hold agencies, philanthropy, and service providers accountable.

### **Acknowledgements**

The JJAG would like to thank the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, and the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) for their participation and assistance in producing this report.