

## **RE/D SUBCOMMITTEE CHARTER**

(Racial and Ethnic Disparities Subcommittee)

### **CHARTER STATUS**

Original Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Next Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **PURPOSE**

The RE/D Subcommittee exists to identify, examine, and address racial and ethnic disparities impacting youth and families within California's juvenile justice system. The committee is committed to reducing inequitable outcomes that improperly and unfairly contribute to youth entering the system and interfere with youth successfully exiting the system and thriving within their communities.

The subcommittee will work to promote equitable policies, practices, and accountability measures rooted in community voice, data analysis, lived experience, and systems transformation. The committee recognizes that disparities are not only reflected in quantitative data, but also experienced directly by youth, caregivers, and communities impacted by the youth justice system.

The RE/D Subcommittee is grounded in the belief that youth and families most impacted by the system must remain centered in both the identification of problems and the development of solutions. The committee acknowledges that racial and ethnic disparities are rooted in historical and structural inequities that have disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous, Latino, and other marginalized communities. The committee commits to advancing equitable practices that interrupt systemic harm and improve outcomes for youth and families.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **I. Examining Key Decision Points**

- a. The subcommittee will assess racial and ethnic disparities across critical juvenile justice decision points where inequitable treatment and outcomes may occur, including but not limited to:
  - School-based discipline, referrals, suspensions, and school policing practices
  - Initial contact with law enforcement

- Initial probation intake and detention decisions
  - District Attorney filing decisions
  - First court appearance and custodial determinations
  - Attorney negotiations related to settlement, diversion, alternatives to detention, and case resolution
  - Disposition and sentencing decisions
  - Probation terms, probation violations, and technical violations
  - Diversion eligibility, access, completion rates, and barriers to successful participation
- b. The subcommittee will also examine whether certain supervision conditions or compliance expectations disproportionately impact youth experiencing housing instability, trauma, educational disruption, caregiving responsibilities, poverty, or other systemic barriers.

## **II. Centering Youth and Family Voice**

- a. The subcommittee will intentionally incorporate youth, caregiver, and community lived experience into its work through methods such as:
- Listening sessions
  - Community forums
  - Surveys and interviews
  - Partnerships with trusted community-based organizations
  - Youth and caregiver stipends for participation and consultation
  - Facilitated discussions led by individuals with lived experience
  - The committee recognizes that data alone cannot fully explain how disparities are experienced, sustained, or challenged within communities.

## **III. Community Leadership**

- a. The RE/D Subcommittee affirms that communities most impacted by racial and ethnic disparities should play a leading role in shaping recommendations, priorities, and solutions. The committee recognizes lived experience as expertise and commits to ensuring youth, families, formerly incarcerated individuals, and directly impacted communities are not merely consulted, but meaningfully included in leadership and decision-making processes.

## **IV. Data, Accountability, and Measurable Outcomes**

- a. The subcommittee will work to identify measurable indicators of progress and accountability related to racial and ethnic disparities within the juvenile justice system. Areas of review may include:
- Referral rates
  - Detention decisions

- Diversion access and completion
- Probation violations
- Sentencing outcomes
- Access to supportive services and alternatives to detention
- Geographic and school-site disparities
- Disparities by race, ethnicity, gender identity, LGBTQIA identity, disability, or other impacted populations
- The committee will seek to establish clear benchmarks and recommendations that allow progress to be tracked over time and support transparency and accountability across systems.

**V. Collaboration with Local Jurisdictions and Stakeholders**

- a. The subcommittee may engage with local Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commissions (JJNPCs), community organizations, youth-serving agencies, and other stakeholders throughout California to:
  - Assess local racial and ethnic disparities
  - Support implementation of equitable practices and policies
  - Share tools, recommendations, and promising practices
  - Strengthen community-informed approaches to juvenile justice reform
- b. The committee acknowledges the importance of collaboration across sectors including education, probation, behavioral health, courts, diversion providers, community organizations, and impacted families.

**VI. Advising the State Advisory Group for Youth Justice (SAG YJ)**

- a. The RE/D Subcommittee will provide information, recommendations, and analysis to the State Advisory Group for Youth Justice (SAG YJ) regarding programs, policies, and funding priorities connected to racial and ethnic disparities within California's juvenile justice system. The committee may also review whether funded programs are meaningfully addressing RED issues and advancing equitable outcomes for youth and families.

**VII. Development of Guidance and Tools**

- a. The subcommittee may develop templates, frameworks, recommendations, and practical tools that support jurisdictions in identifying and addressing racial and ethnic disparities.

**VIII. Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered Practice**

- a. The RE/D Subcommittee recognizes the impact of trauma, systemic inequity, family separation, poverty, and community violence on youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. The committee commits to promoting approaches that

are healing-centered, restorative, culturally responsive, and designed to support long-term youth and family well-being rather than punitive system involvement.

#### **IX. Annual Reporting**

- a. The RE/D Subcommittee may provide an annual summary of activities, findings, recommendations, and progress related to addressing racial and ethnic disparities within California's juvenile justice system. The report may include:
  - Identified disparities
  - Recommendations made
  - Progress updates
  - Data trends
  - Community feedback
  - Ongoing challenges and opportunities

#### **MEETING CADENCE AND SCHEDULE**

The RE/D Subcommittee will meet every two months, with additional meetings or workgroups scheduled as necessary to advance committee priorities and responsibilities.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

The subcommittee will consist of approximately 13 members, including a Chair and Co-Chair. Membership should prioritize individuals with demonstrated experience in:

- Racial equity work
- Youth advocacy
- Community organizing
- Juvenile justice reform
- Behavioral health
- Education
- Diversion and restorative justice practices
- Lived experience within impacted communities or systems

Diversity among members is essential, including representation across:

- Race and ethnicity
- LGBTQIA identities
- Geographic regions throughout California
- Formerly incarcerated individuals
- Youth and family advocates
- Individuals with professional system experience alongside strong representation from directly impacted communities

Membership composition should maintain a community-centered balance that prevents any one system perspective from dominating the work of the subcommittee. The committee should maintain a strong community-centered approach that prioritizes voices and leadership from communities most impacted by racial and ethnic disparities within the juvenile justice system.

The committee and OYCR staff will recommend and select members for the subcommittee. OYCR staff will conduct outreach, while final member selection decisions will be made by the Chair. A Co-Chair will be appointed to support continuity and shared leadership responsibilities. The subcommittee retains the authority to expand membership as appropriate to support its goals and statewide representation needs.

### **VALUES AND APPROACH**

The RE/D Subcommittee commits to conducting its work through an approach that is:

- Youth-centered
- Family-informed
- Community-led
- Trauma-informed
- Healing-centered
- Equity-driven
- Collaborative
- Accountable
- Transparent
- Grounded in restorative practices

The committee recognizes that addressing racial and ethnic disparities requires not only policy analysis, but also sustained partnership with communities most impacted by systemic inequities.

# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** RED Subcommittee Members

**FROM:** Laura Ridolfi

**DATE:** July 21, 2026

**RE:** Charter Revisions - Proposed Changes

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Thank you to Judge Back and Christina for the excellent draft charter. It's thoughtful and grounded in strong values. I want to raise three concerns and some proposals for consideration:

First, I think we should strengthen the purpose to name structural racism and data invisibility as central to our work and clarify what we, as a subcommittee, can (and perhaps cannot) do.

Second, even if our subcommittee had the capacity and resources to do more work, we can't do meaningful work on disparities because we don't have access to the data we need. California collects comprehensive data on racial and ethnic disparities, but it's not publicly available. This isn't a data problem, it's a choice by the state and jurisdictions to keep data suppressed. We should name this barrier and make data transparency central to our work.

Third, we should clarify that we have a platform and consider how to use it. With only 4 meetings per year and limited resources, our power is to amplify voices, ask hard questions, recommend priorities to SACJJD, and hold the state accountable

With these three things in mind, I want to propose that we ground the charter in this understanding: this committee exists because California's juvenile justice system is designed and maintained to disproportionately criminalize, control, and incarcerate youth of color. This is neither an accident nor incompetence. This is structural racism. These outcomes result from policies, practices, and decision-making systems that are designed and maintained to produce them.

## **(1) Purpose Section**

### **Proposed revision for consideration:**

The RED Subcommittee exists to hold California accountable for structural racism in its juvenile justice system. The committee recognizes that structural racism operates through policies, practices, and decision-making systems designed and maintained to disproportionately criminalize, control, and incarcerate youth of color. Comprehensive data on racial and ethnic disparities at key decision points are not publicly available, whether by state policy, jurisdictional practice, or institutional choice. Data invisibility is a form of institutional racism that enables these disparities to persist without accountability.

Through our platform, we amplify community and grantee voices on disparities, ask hard questions about data transparency, and advocate for structural change.

The committee recognizes that disparities are experienced directly by youth, caregivers, and communities impacted by the youth justice system. The RED Subcommittee is grounded in the belief that

youth and families most impacted by the system must have meaningful voice and decision-making power in this work.

## **(2) New Section: Data Transparency and Accountability**

I think we should add a section “**Data Transparency and Accountability**” that names the lack of public access to data and acknowledges that data invisibility is not separate from structural racism. In fact, it's how structural racism operates. When data are suppressed, disparities persist without accountability.

California enacted the Racial Justice Act, giving youth an unprecedented right to challenge sentences based on racial disparities. Yet very few RJA claims are brought, partly because youth and their attorneys cannot access the county-level data they need. Under *Young v. Superior Court*, youth must present a plausible factual basis, from specific facts, that a violation could or might have occurred. Without accessible aggregate county-level data by race/ethnicity and decision point, that threshold cannot be met. When data is invisible, hard-fought legal rights like the RJA become meaningless.

The RED Subcommittee should use our platform to make data transparency non-negotiable and to support RJA claims. This needs to be explicit in the charter.

### **Proposed text for new “Data Transparency and Accountability” section to consider:**

Comprehensive data on racial and ethnic disparities at critical decision points exist across California's juvenile justice system- they are collected by OYCR, DOJ, and are in county probation reports. Yet these data are not publicly available. This is a policy choice by the state and jurisdictions.

Data invisibility is a form of institutional racism. When systems refuse to track or report disparities, they protect harm and prevent accountability. Youth cannot bring RJA claims. Communities cannot see the harm. The system escapes accountability.

The RED Subcommittee will recommend data transparency as a condition of Title II funding and will publicly elevate to state leadership that California's suppression of disparity data is a systemic problem that hinders local and state efforts to promote equity and undermines the Racial Justice Act.

## **(3) Scope of Our Work for Remaining Sections**

For the remaining sections, I suggest we review through this lens: What are our values? How do we realistically use our platform to advance them? With only 4 meetings per year and limited resources, our platform is our power. We need to amplify voices, ask hard questions, recommend priorities to SACJDP, and hold the state accountable.