STATE ADVISORY GROUP ON YOUTH JUSTICE: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
October 26, 2026
1:00 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Physical Location:
925 L Street, Suite 1275
Sacramento, CA 95814

Virtual Public Participant Link:
Via Zoom
Meeting ID: 165 364 0637 I Password: 212990

Welcome and Roll Call (1:00 P.M.-1:10 P.M.)
Facilitator: Jessica Ellis

I. Meeting started at 1:07 P.M.
   a. Co-Chair Ellis conducted Roll Call. She confirmed quorum. 11 subcommittee members attended the meeting.

II. Roll Call
   a. The following State Advisory Group on Youth Justice (SAGYJ) Restorative Justice (RJ) Subcommittee members were in attendance
      - Victoria Birch, Youth Advisory Board Member
      - Don Carney, Executive Director of Youth Transforming Justice
      - Jessica Ellis, Executive Director of Centinela Youth Services and Co-Chair of the RJ Subcommittee
      - Jodie Geddes- SOS Program Director and Healing Services Manager with Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY)
      - Kent Mendoza, Associate Director of Local Advocacy of the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC) and Chair of the RJ Subcommittee
      - Greg Srolestar, Director of Research and Technical Assistance with Prosecutors Alliance
      - Javier Stauring, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Healing Dialogue in Action
      - Alannah Tomich, Executive Director with Yolo Conflict Resolution Center (YCRC)
      - Sheri Wiedenhoefer, Executive Director of the Community Justice Center
      - Efrain Morales, Program Manager of 3Strands Global Foundation
      - Rodrigo Jimenez, Associate Director with Youth Alliance
   b. The following SAGYJ RJ Subcommittee members were not in attendance

- Julie Hilt, Founder of the Alternative Restorative Communities (ARC)

c. The following Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) staff were in attendance:
   - Protima Pandey, Chief Legal Counsel
   - Krystal Lewis, Federal Title II Program Manager
   - Cecilia Arredondo Simmons, County Liaison Analyst

Approved September Minutes and Addition of New Member (1:10 P.M.-1:20 P.M.)
Facilitator: Co-Chair Jessica Ellis

I. Member Carney motioned to approve the September minutes, and Member Tomich seconded the motion. All other members voted to approve the minutes. The September meeting minutes were approved.

Review of Draft Title II RJ Recommendations (1:35 P.M.-1:45 P.M.)
Facilitator: Chair Kent Mendoza

I. Member Srolestar presented on California OJJDP Title II Formula Grant recipients.
   a. Most funded programs were aftercare, reentry, job training, and peer mentorship — not explicitly RJ.
   b. The City of Gilroy program was identified as clearly aligned with RJ and included victim engagement; program leads reported positive recidivism signals.
   c. Conclusion going forward, when Title II funds support RJ, the committee wants clearer program standards so applicants claiming RJ can be assessed against RJ-aligned criteria.

II. CA Title II Plan Recommendation
   a. Draft language proposes that Title II include/support programs that advance healing-centered, community-rooted approaches and RJ practices as defined in AB 60.
   b. Group consensus, avoid language that appears to make RJ the single top priority across all Title II funding; instead include RJ explicitly as an eligible/endorsed area, with clear definition and expectations.
   c. Core RJ elements the subcommittee wants emphasized include centering harmed parties, relationship building, harm repair, community-rooted practices, and non-punitive processes.
   d. Chair Mendoza and Co-Chair Ellis agreed to edit language to reflect “including restorative justice” (not blanket prioritization) and to explicitly require AB 60 alignment and harmed-party inclusion where appropriate.
   e. Members emphasized the need to distinguish restorative practices (circles, reflection, etc.) from RJ (processes that include harmed parties, negotiated repair agreements, and accountability).
   f. Preferred features for funded RJ programs:
      i. Mutually agreed, tailored repair agreements (not one-size-fits-all or system-determined checklists).
      ii. Community-rooted leadership and trusted community-based organizations as primary implementers or partners.
      iii. Explicit plans for harmed-party engagement, including pathways if direct harmed parties decline to participate.

g. Subcommittee asked to surface examples of poor practices that are mislabeled as RJ to explicitly exclude those in the guidance.
h. Subcommittee discussed options when the direct harmed party declines participation: use of impacted community representatives (or surrogates) was raised as an approach, but members cautioned against creating default surrogate use that undermines outreach to direct harmed parties.
i. Proposed working text: allow harmed party and/or impacted community participation so jurisdictions have flexibility to include appropriate representatives when direct participation is not possible.
j. Refine wording to permit surrogate/impacted-community participation when appropriate while encouraging genuine outreach to harmed parties.
k. Strong interest in prioritizing RJ as an available diversion option at the earliest stages (pre-arrest / pre-booking / pre-charge) to reduce youth entry into the system.
l. RJ diversion elements discussed:
    i. Emphasize diversion that significantly improves services to harmed parties and interrupts arrest/charges when appropriate.
    ii. Ensure diversion outcomes include mutually agreed repair and, if fulfilled, avoidance of permanent juvenile records for the youth.
    iii. Identify secondary legal off-ramps (post-charge or post-filing alternatives) where RJ may still be appropriate.
m. Members requested legal review and clearer wording on the points where RJ constitutes an official off-ramp and how record consequences are handled.
n. AB 60 requires notification to victims of community-based RJ options; members discussed whether Title II funds should support community outreach/notification and court accompaniment by community-based organizations.
o. Examples: multidisciplinary team meetings (i.e. MVTs) and court check-ins can re-traumatize survivors unless accompanied by trusted community advocates; some counties already provide community-based pretrial and post-conviction accompaniment
p. Subcommittee members flagged a major service disparity - youth who are harmed often receive concentrated reentry support (housing, employment, education) that victims/survivors rarely receive. The committee wants to surface this gap in the SAGYJ update and encourage funding strategies that reduce that imbalance when feasible.
q. Subcommittee needs to decide whether to include a recommendation for Title II to fund community outreach/notification and accompaniment or to reference coordination with victim services funding streams.
r. Draft review timeline- the working draft review period extended to **November 6** to allow more member input. Co-Chair Ellis will send updated revisions to Member Birch so YAB can review changes and make recommendations.
s. Other updates
    i. Krystal Lewis said by Spring of 2027, we should have funding updates for Title II.
    ii. Annual report for the SAGYJ is due on 10/30/2026. RJ Subcommittee members mentioned having some information in the annual report on fighting for equality services for victims and survivors. Chair Mendoza and Co-Chair Ellis will meet to finalize the document.
    iii. Suggested for RJ Subcommittee to touch base with victim services.
    iv. Chair Mendoza won't attend the RJ Subcommittee meeting on 11/23/26. He recommended meeting might need to be postponed or canceled. Austin will send a doodle poll to subcommittee members if meeting is postponed or rescheduled.

III. Call for New Subcommittee Members Discussions (1:45 P.M.-2:20 P.M.)
Facilitator: Chair Kent Mendoza

I. Co-Chair Ellis mentioned they are considering new stakeholders to join subcommittee. It is important to have someone that understands and agrees with RJ principles.

Public Comment (2:20 P.M.-2:25 P.M)

Facilitator: All

I. No public comments

Closing (2:25 P.M.-2:30 P.M.)

Facilitators: Kent Mendoza and Jessica Ellis

I. Co-Chair Ellis opened up the meeting for any last thoughts.
II. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Meetings are held the 4th Monday of each month.

Upcoming Subcommittee Meeting Dates:

- 11/23/26 - 1:00 pm-2:30 pm
- 12/28/26 - 1:00 pm-2:30 pm

The order agenda items are considered may be subject to change. Depending on the number of individuals wishing to address the Subcommittee, the Chair may establish time limits on comments.

The agenda and meeting materials can be viewed on the State Advisory Group on Youth Justice webpage. Please contact OYCR at SAGYJ@chhs.ca.gov with questions about the meetings.

Any person who wishes to request this notice or other meeting materials in alternative format, requires translation services, or any disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, which would enable that person to participate at the meeting must make that request at least seven (7) business days prior to the meeting date to: SAGYJ@chhs.ca.gov.

ADDENDUM - Notice of Expected Remote Attendance

Member	Expected Attendance
Chair Kent Mendoza	Virtual
Co-Chair Jessica Ellis	Virtual
Greg Srolestar	Virtual
Victoria Birch	Virtual
Efrain Morales	Virtual
Javier Stauring	Virtual
Rigo Jimenez	Virtual
Sheri Wiedenhoefer	Virtual
Alannah Tomich	Virtual
Don Carney	Virtual
Jodie Geddes	Virtual