SUPREME COURT OF NEBRASKA

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
OF THE COURTS & PROBATION**

Corey R. Steel
State Court Administrator

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July 24, 2017

Dear Board of Commissioners:

On behalf of the Nebraska JDAI, we are pleased to hear that Lancaster County is evaluating the possibility of becoming a JDAI site. Lancaster County has a long history of investing in youth and forward thinking and we believe that JDAI would be an instrumental tool in assisting you in continuing your efforts. We have received your letter dated June 29, 2017 with several questions. The following information should answer your questions to the best of our ability and we are happy to meet for further conversation and support.

1. *What steps will the County Board need to take in order to become a JDAI site?*

    A. The first step will be to convene leaders in local county government and juvenile court to form a collaborative group. This could be an existing group (such as your Steering committee) but should include, at a minimum, juvenile court judge(s), county board representative(s), Juvenile Detention Director, Human Service Director, County Attorney, Public Defender, Probation Chief, DHHS, Law Enforcement, Community Providers, and other key decision makers.

    B. This group would meet to discuss the attached standardized Readiness Questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers and you may not have answers to all the questions. This questionnaire is designed to assess the capacity and willingness of the key stakeholders to implement detention and juvenile justice system reform. This step helps in formalizing previous discussions and includes acknowledging where change is needed and improvements can be made. The expectation is NOT that counties must have all of the answers but that there is a collective readiness to organize, assess and develop plans for system change. The state JDAI coordinators can assist in facilitating this discussion.

    C. After this discussion, the Board would submit a formal letter indicating their intent to become a JDAI site and documented commitment by all key stakeholders through letters of support. Locally, Lancaster County will need to do an MOU among all of the key stakeholders to demonstrate commitment to each other in implementing JDAI with fidelity. Depending on the timing of receiving the letter it will be presented for approval at the next state JDAI collaborative meeting. (The next meeting is scheduled for September 26th).

    D. Upon approval from the state JDAI collaborative, the state JDAI coordinators would meet with your established collaborative group to plan for the system assessment and detention utilization study. Together we would develop a timeline and would need to establish who from Lancaster County would be the liaison(s) with the state

coordinators to help coordinate this process. The liaison(s) would help provide contact information for those identified for interviews, may be asked to help find interview space if necessary, and provide requested data. The actual system assessment and detention utilization study are conducted by the state team.

E. Attached is an overview of Phase 1 of site development milestones. Once the system assessment and detention utilization study have been presented to the board and collaborative team, these are the activities that can be expected over the course of the next year.

2. *Are there financial obligations which the County will be expected to assume?*

JDAI sites must designate a site coordinator. Having a designated coordinator is critical to ensuring ongoing communication at the local, state and foundation level. The general expectations of a coordinator include scheduling collaborative and work groups, ensuring documentation of all meetings through minutes, supporting work group chairperson(s), oversight of collaborative and work group work plans, participate in technical assistance calls with other Nebraska JDAI coordinators and Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) technical assistance liaison, oversight of data collection and reports.

Each jurisdiction is unique and designates coordination based on their local capacity. Some jurisdictions hire a new full time coordinator, while others are able to assign the work to existing position(s). Some jurisdictions identify co-coordinators and they divide the responsibilities (i.e. one person handles meetings while the other handles data). In Nebraska, Douglas County has a full time coordinator and a full time data person; Sarpy County has a part time coordinator who also does the data; Otoe County has co-coordinators- one handles meeting coordination while the other handles data. Some sites start with a contracted coordinator and after several years of sustainability the duties are later assigned to existing positions. If the board desires, we can assist Lancaster County in examining the current infrastructure to help determine the best approach for implementation. Based on discussions to this point, it is possible that there is infrastructure for most of the coordination activities and the board may want to consider resources for a data position to coordinate all juvenile justice initiative data activities.

3. *Are there any resources available to assist the County in becoming a JDAI site?*

By becoming a JDAI site, the county receives technical assistance from the AECF through the technical assistance team leader assigned to Nebraska and JDAI Connect. The county also receives direct technical assistance from the state JDAI coordinators and collaborative and joins the network of local JDAI sites for ongoing information sharing and support. As the liaison agency with the AECF, the Administrative Office of Probation receives a small grant from the Foundation that supports a Nebraska delegation to attend the National JDAI conferences every other year and model site visits. In full transparency, the Foundation is shifting their technical assistance model which does not impact the county directly, but we anticipate could impact the grant funds in the future. This has not been decided yet, but we are doing contingency planning at the state level to identify other resources should those grant funds go away in the future. All the aforementioned technical assistance is provided to the county at no cost.

A part of committing to becoming a JDAI site is the commitment of resources to coordinate the effort. This could be through existing resources or new funds. Many

jurisdictions utilize grant dollars, in Nebraska that is most often Community Based Aid Funding. However, there are no restrictions on the source of grant dollars to fund coordination.

4. *Data*

Data collected for the purposes of implementing JDAI are designed to evaluate system points, guide strategic decisions, and evaluate implementation and document success. This is done through the baseline Detention Utilization Study conducted by the system assessment team for the local site. From there, sites use this baseline information to identify core strategies are areas to drill down deeper in data using the QRS tool and other local data. This analysis lives at the local level as you are the experts on your jurisdiction.

The letter suggests collaboration between JDAI efforts and the Community Based Aid data system and we greatly appreciate your spirit of identifying efforts toward efficiency. Both the Juvenile Justice Institute and Nebraska Crime Commission are collaborative JDAI partners. The database utilized for Community Based Aid programs collects program specific data for research and program fidelity purposes. The data collected for the QRS tool for JDAI is systemic in nature and designed to identify trends in order for sites to "drill down" on local target populations, policies and practices.

Efficiency in information sharing has been a statewide challenge for years and many partners are working to develop improvements. We cannot speak for the Crime Commission or Juvenile Justice Institute in regard to making adjustments to the Community Based Aid system. We do have a state data work group where these ideas can be discussed and as a JDAI site, Lancaster County's voice would be a valuable partner at the table to make progress on data sharing efficiencies.

We thank Lancaster County for their time and diligence in examining this process and welcome any and all questions. Please let us know how we can assist you further and we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Monica Miles-Steffens
Director of Placement
Administrative Office of Probation

JDAI Developmental Milestones: *Year/Phase 1 Site Development*

The following checklist provides general site development milestones. It identifies implementation activities for reform work in year/phase one based on replication results achieved by successful sites. The checklist is organized within the framework of the eight core strategies. Since each site is different there will predictably be differences in the sequence of work. To this end, please consider that "low hanging fruit" identified at any point should be addressed without delay. The items that follow stem directly from the milestones sites should expect to accomplish in year/phase one.

Site Immersion in JDAI

1. Leadership Has Been Established and All Major Stakeholders Have a Proficient Understanding of JDAI Values and Principles
   - Convene leadership (JDAI Policy-level Collaborative) to assume responsibility for implementation of detention and equity reform
   - Conduct a "kick-off" meeting
   - Attend Model Site visit(s)
   - Conduct state, regional and/or state detention and equity reform conference/training
   - Study publications and JDAI materials (see attached)
   - Sign-up for the JDAI Help Desk and national newsletter
   - Attend JDAI National Inter-site Conference
   - Attend the JDAI Fundamentals training

2. The Collaborative Has A Consensus on the Purpose of Detention
   - Convene the Collaborative to deliberate a consensus on the Purpose of Detention
   - Utilize the results of the Detention Utilization Study, the Site System Assessment and juvenile justice research to inform the discussions

Initiative Organization

1. An Effective, Deliberative and Functioning Site Governance Structure Has Been Established
   - Ensure JDAI Policy-level Collaborative has appropriate stakeholders (both traditional and non-traditional), authority and staff support
   - Form topical work groups as informed by the System Assessment and site work plan
   - Engage community (i.e., non-system) representatives
   - Establish internal & external communications plan
   - Establish routine and frequent contact with TA/Team Leader
   - Designate a state and/or local site coordinators
   - Define site coordinators' roles and responsibilities
   - Orient new collaborative members as needed

2. State/Local Coordinator Has an Understanding of Role in the Reform Process
   - Participate in coordinator coach up, attend model site visits, trainings & JDAI national conference

Collecting, Analyzing, & Reporting Data

1. A Statistical Baseline of Detention Utilization Has Been Completed
   - Identify team that will develop the Detention Utilization Study
   - Review data collection manuals
   - Conduct and complete the Detention Utilization Study
     - Disaggregate all data by race/ethnicity/gender
     - Include a geographic profile of detention use
   - Analyze results of the study and debrief the study with the Collaborative

2. Data Systems and Capacities Have Been Identified
   - Catalog existing site data systems and determine extent of systems integration
   - Provide TA/Team Leader with data definitions and screens for review
   - Review and act upon any technical assistance (TA) reports regarding data system actions needed to produce statistical reports

3. Capacity To Collect and Report Fundamental Data Indicators Has Been Established
   - Participate in TA overview of the JDAI Quarterly Reporting System (QRS)
   - Conduct intra-site data skills building sessions
   - Develop the capacity to disaggregate all data by race/ethnicity/gender
   - Prepare quarterly statistical reports that monitor fundamental indicators (e.g., admissions, offenses, ADP, ALOS) all disaggregated by race/ethnicity/gender
   - Ensure that public safety indicators (e.g., pre-adjudication FTA & re-arrest rates) are collected and reported within the site Quarterly Reports
   - Complete the annual Results Report

4. Data Analyses Capacity Has Been Developed
   - Data reports are analyzed and presented to the JDAI Policy-level Collaborative and Work Groups on a routine basis
     - Reports provide headlines in a manner that tells the "story"
   - Policies and practices are informed by data

Site System Assessment

1. A Documentation and Analysis of Juvenile Justice System Policies, Practices and Programs Has Been Conducted
   - Schedule stakeholder interviews
   - Assemble and make available existing documents and data as requested by the TA/Team Leader
   - Assist the TA/Team Leader in Conducting the System Assessment

- ➢ Ensure intentionality in conducting the System Assessment through a racial/ethnic/gender lens
- ➢ Convene stakeholders to debrief the written observations and recommendations in the assessment
- ➢ Develop an active site work plan as informed by the assessment

Site Work Plan Development

The JDAI Policy-level Collaborative has developed and designed key changes to policy, practice and programming consistent with JDAI's 8 core reform strategies.

1. A Site Work Plan with Measurable Outcomes Has Been Developed and Monitored
    - ➢ Develop and/or modify work plan as informed by System Assessment, Detention Utilization Study, any other relevant data and Year/Phase 1 Developmental Milestones
    - ➢ Ensure that work plan includes accountability measures (e.g., objectives, tasks, responsible party(s), timelines)
    - ➢ Ensure that work plan objectives intentionally address the reduction of racial/ethnic disparities
    - ➢ Monitor progress of work plans

2. Work Groups Have Developed Work Plan to Meet the Objectives of the Overall Site Plan
    - ➢ Develop work plans for Work Groups
    - ➢ Monitor progress of work plans

Targeted Reform Activities

1. Risk Assessment Instrument (RAI) Development
    - ➢ Establish a RAI Work Group of relevant stakeholders
    - ➢ Arrange training on RAI design, testing & implementation
    - ➢ Study the RAI Guide and relevant tools and materials provided by TA/Team Leader and accessible on the JDAI Help Desk
    - ➢ Design and/or enhance the RAI
        - o Develop/Enhance the RAI through a Racial/Ethnic/Gender lens
    - ➢ Pilot the New/Modified RAI

2. Address Special Detention Cases
    - ➢ Using detention utilization study, identify those special detention cases which contribute the most to the use of detention and develop tools and practices to reduce detention for these cases
    - ➢ Since violations of probation generally comprise 40-60 percent of the average daily population in detention centers, develop a Work Group of relevant stakeholders and design a work plan to address probation violations and technical violations of court orders

➢ Design and/or enhance a Probation Response Grid through a Racial/Ethnic/Gender lens
➢ Examine Case Processing, policies and procedures to reduce detention for violation of probation cases and implement the Probation Response Grid
➢ Routinely monitor probation data to assess efficacy of the Probation Response grid and other case processing changes and to determine the impact on racial, ethnic or gender disparities

3. Conditions of Confinement/Detention Facility Self-Assessment Process
➢ Assemble an inspection team which include diverse system & community representatives according to the JDAI guidelines
➢ Study the JDAI Detention Facility Self Assessment Practice Guide, completed reports from JDAI sites and materials from the TA/Team Leader and the JDAI Help Desk
➢ Arrange training for the Detention Facility Self-Assessment Team
➢ Conduct the Assessment of the detention facility
➢ Produce report on findings of the Self-Assessment
➢ Convene the JDAI Policy-level Collaborative to review the Facility Self-Assessment report and recommendations
➢ Develop an action plan to address problem areas as informed by the Self-Assessment

4. "Low- Hanging Fruit"
➢ Identify areas of policy, practice or programming that stakeholders believe can be readily changed to produce improved results
➢ Review reforms other sites have implemented (via the JDAI Help Desk) to improve specific problem areas
➢ Develop recommendations for change from the relevant Work Groups
➢ Implement the reforms

Nebraska JDAI Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Leaders in local county government and juvenile court should come together to review this document. The review group should minimally consist of juvenile court judges and key county representatives. A jurisdiction should also include other relevant system key actors in this group. Once a group has been formed, the jurisdiction should answer the following questions. Upon completion of this questionnaire, the jurisdiction must submit a letter of interest and documented commitment to juvenile justice system improvement through Nebraska's statewide expansion of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI).

Directions:

Please answer the following questions, and keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. The intention of the discussion is to gauge county level capacity and willingness to implement detention and juvenile justice reform. The expectation is not that counties must have all of the following in place, but that there is a readiness to organize, assess and develop responses to the following questions.

A. Collaboration, Leadership and Governance
1. Describe your vision for JDAI implementation. What does your county hope to achieve through juvenile detention and system improvement replication through JDAI?
2. Are there any emergent issues related to detention reform local key leaders might rally around? If so, what are they?
3. Describe the membership and organizational structure of your county stakeholder group. Is your jurisdiction using groups that already exist or creating a new group?
   a. Does membership include agency heads and/or those with authority to make decisions?
   b. If using existing committee(s), do they receive input from line staff, community members, youth and families?
4. What strategies will be used to encourage and maintain ongoing participation and engagement?
5. By definition, reform involves change and change is difficult. Where might potential barriers to system reform occur? How will the county address such obstacles?
6. Please provide any examples of innovative ways in which your county has used funding to support juvenile justice system change.

B. Data Collection, Analysis and Use

7. How does your stakeholder group use data to inform juvenile justice system improvement decisions/policies/practices/planning?
8. What barriers has your county identified when using data to inform those processes?

9. How does your county measure recidivism? Average daily population? Average length of stay?
10. Do all stakeholders know how much money is allotted/spent on detention annually, and where does this money come from? What is the detention per diem in your county and how is that determined?
11. Describe your jurisdictions overall conceptualization of detention alternatives and their purpose.
12. At the county level, what would you identify as indicative of the jurisdiction's capacity to implement juvenile justice system reform on a broad basis?
13. How does your county use race, ethnicity, gender, geography and offense (REGGO) data to inform system improvement efforts? Describe current initiatives related to reducing racial and ethnic disparity.