

**Regionalization Task Force
Meeting Notes
September 3, 2015**

External Representatives Attending	
Tom Brooks Southeast Texas Juvenile Chief's Association Thomas.brooks@hcjpd.hctx.net (713) 222-4100	Ron Quiros Central Texas Chiefs Association rquiros@co.guadalupe.tx.us (830) 303-1274
William Carter Panhandle Area Juvenile Probation Officer's Association wcarter@co.lubbock.tx.us (806) 775-1820	Lauren Rose Texans Care for Children lrose@txchildren.org
Homer Flores TJJD Advisory Council homer.flores@co.nueces.tx.us (361) 855-7303	Angie Scalf Northeast Texas Juvenile Chief's Association ascalf@rockwallcountytexas.com (972) 204-7450
Luis Leija South Texas Juvenile Chief's Association Luis.leija@calhouncotx.org (361) 552-4670	Sy Tabor West Texas Juvenile Chief's Association scurrychief@snydertex.com (325) 573-3703
Estela Medina TJJD Advisory Council Estela.medina@traviscountytx.gov (512) 854-7000	Lisa Tomlinson JJAT/TPA Group ltomlinson@johnsoncountytx.org (817) 556-6880
Ken Metcalf North Central Texas Juvenile Chief's Association Ken.metcalf@dentoncounty.com (940)349-2400	Doug Vance TJJD Advisory Council dvance@brazoscountytx.gov (979) 823-3544
Diana Norris TJIPA dnorris@noblesg.com	Lynne Wilkerson JJAT/TPA Group lwilkerson@bexar.org (210) 335-7500

Texas Juvenile Justice Department: Internal Representatives Attending	
Carolyn Beck <i>Governmental Relations</i>	Dr. Pernilla Johansson <i>Director of Research</i>
Chelsea Buchholtz <i>Chief of Staff</i>	Jill Mata <i>General Counsel</i>
Lisa Capers <i>Senior Dir. Training & Organizational Development</i>	Mike Meyer <i>Chief Financial Officer</i>
Dr. Tushar Desai <i>Medical Director</i>	Colleen Moran <i>Planner</i>
Eleazar Garcia <i>Chief Auditor</i>	James Williams <i>Senior Director, Probation & Community Services</i>
Jim Hurley <i>Communications Director</i>	

Handouts

Regionalization Task Force Binder Containing the Following:

1. Agenda
2. Regionalization Task Force Group Contact Information
3. Senate Bill 1630
4. Probation and State Operated Facilities Reference Map
5. Departments and Secure Facilities by Region
6. Article: *Understanding the Risk Principle: How and Why Correctional Interventions Can Harm Low-Risk Offenders*

Added by Meeting Participants

7. PowerPoint Presentation by Dr. Pernilla Johansson, *Research-Based Practices in Juvenile Justice*. Presented to Regionalization Task Force on September 3, 2015. Austin, Texas.
8. Texas Human Resources Code Section 201.002 (Purposes and Interpretation) and Section 201.003 (Goals) of Texas Human Resources Code. Presented by Lauren Rose to Regionalization Task Force on September 3, 2015, Austin, Texas.

Meeting Notes

Selection Process for the Task Force. The members of the Regionalization Task Force were specifically selected by the organizations they represent for their expertise, their roots in the field, and their ability to share information. To be certain of the future success of the RTF, members will have to be willing to identify the weaknesses of the juvenile justice system and to commit to improving them. Success will not be guaranteed by accepting the status quo.

Introductions. Each member of the RTF introduced themselves, their tenure in juvenile justice, and their tenure in child-care related services. Well over 432 years of service were represented at the meeting.

Action: It will be important that each member of the RTF disseminate information to their constituencies as quickly and consistently as possible. Members will act as the conduit for communication and information as the Task Force moves forward with its work.

Overview of Senate Bill 1630. Mr. Williams provided a brief overview of the requirements of the regionalization work described in Texas Human Resources Code Section 203.017, *regionalization Plan*. The statute calls on TJJD to develop a plan, in consultation with juvenile probation departments, for keeping children closer to home in lieu of commitment to the secure facilities operated by the department. The plan is required to include identification of post-adjudication facility capacity that may be dedicated to support the plan and the resources needed to implement the plan.

The seven regions defined for the plan are already established and have successful relationships within and between regions. While the agency has not yet completed answering the question about the capacity of the post-adjudication facilities, much of the research is complete. Dr. Lori Robinson and Mr. James Williams traveled to almost all of the post-adjudication facilities to meet with local administrations, learn about the facilities and the types of programming available at each, with the hope of implementing the same rigor in conversations with private providers to learn more about what is available.

Ultimately, these discussions will result in common definitions across the state so all juvenile justice partners will have a common understanding of the types of programming/services available by each provider.

Target Population/Divisions. Dr. Johansson provided a thorough overview of research-based practices in juvenile justice, including discussions related to the origin of and the term “evidence-based,” research-based practices, the training and technical assistance available to local juvenile probation departments and the requirements related to research-based practices.

A discussion followed related to the target population for research-based practices (RBP), the future scope of research-based practices, and how TJJD can help local probation departments related to research-based practices. Ms. Buchholtz added that the future scope of RBP within the Regionalization model may well help develop programming that could be opened up to all kids, not just “targeted diversion” kids. Assistance from TJJD could include training, technical assistance, tightened contract language to use with RBP vendors. Mr. Mike Meyer added that two dedicated research positions will also be available to help with the training/technical assistance. Additionally, Ms. Buchholtz described the agency’s plan to hire three regionalization administrators who would serve as Field Support Staff to help the Regions in the implementation of the Regionalization Plan.

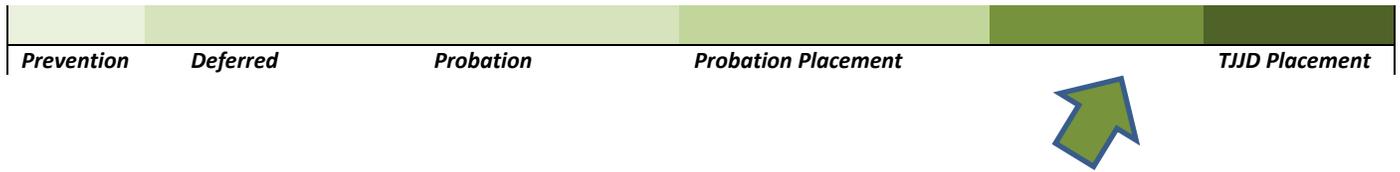
Risk Needs Assessment. Dr. Johansson continued her presentation of Risk/Needs assessments and what they can and cannot accomplish. Some discussion followed about the importance of using professional judgment in conjunction with a risk assessment.

Lisa Capers provided a short history of Risk Assessments in the Texas juvenile justice system.

- 2009 Law changed to require juvenile probation departments to do risk assessments for all kids formally referred. Nancy Arrigona and her staff developed and approved the RANA (Risk And Needs Assessment). Additionally, the agency (legacy Texas Juvenile Probation Commission) approved the PACT (Positive Achievement Change Tool) and the Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI).
- 2014 Council for State Governments-Justice Center published their white paper (*Core Principles for Reducing Recidivism*) which recommended that supervision of juveniles should be based on a validated risk and needs assessment.
- Jan 2015 *Closer to Home* report was published by the Council for State Governments' Justice Center. In this report, the CSG indicated that the youth's offense and history drive disposition, not the results of a risk assessment.
- Mar 2015 TJJJ's *Improving Youth Outcomes in the Juvenile Justice System* report was released. This was Texas' response to the Core Principles and the Closer to Home report. In the *Improving Youth Outcomes* report, Texas committed to study risk assessments and to determine if the state should use only one validated risk assessment statewide.
- June 2015 Advisory Council met. TJJJ staff presented information to Advisory Council on risk assessments.
- Aug 2015 Advisory Council met and brought in experts in the field of risk assessments to discuss risk assessments in general. Experts included people familiar with the development of the Washington state risk assessment (later became the PACT) and the YLS.

Mr. Reilly later sent a letter to Estela Medina, the chair of the Advisory Council, requesting the Council make a recommendation to the Texas Juvenile Justice Board in November on whether or not to go to one risk assessment tool. The Board's decision will then be fed into the Legislative Appropriations Request and the agency's Strategic Plan.

Target Population. Discussion then centered on the targeted population related to the Regionalization diversion. Dr. Johansson drew the following diagram on a flip chart.



Much discussion centered on whether these youth could be the targeted diversion youth and if so, what would be a standard way of defining these youth across probation departments. Comments included:

“Drawn like that, you’d miss out on a pool of kids that are your hardest to serve kids – kids who commit misdemeanors and are just your worst kids.”

“We’re looking at the 782 kids from 2014 and analyzing them. Who are the misdemeanors who went on to become one of the 782 kids?”

“It’s important to remember to find out not just what the kid did, but why he did it. We have to treat the “why.”

“Have to remember that sex offenders can be the hardest to treat in the community, yet they’re often pretty low risk.”

Ms. Buchholtz added commented that 15% of kids committed to TJJD go from the Orientation and Assessment Unit to a halfway house. Those kids are the low hanging fruit for Regionalization.

Action: Thinking Assignments: RTF members should think about what the target populations for the SB 1630 Regionalization/Diversion kids should look like. What do low risk kids look like?

Begin thinking about the possibility of a checklist that would help counties see if they missed something. One suggestion was that it could be a document which asks the department to identify youth’s needs and what the department did to meet those needs.

Send TJJD (James.Williams@tjtd.texas.gov) the types of data you want for your region, the words/terms/phrases to use for a glossary, and ideas related to incentives that would encourage counties to participate.

Dr. Tracy Levins will be creating an outline of the elements to include when writing your regional plan. Mr. Williams will be sending that out in the next couple of weeks.

Wrapping Up

Mr. David Reilly joined the meeting (he was called to the Capitol unexpectedly for the first part of the meeting) and restated the need for RTF members' assistance in generating ideas related to the regionalization plan, incentives, services, and the best ways to count the outcomes/outputs of what we do. Mr. Reilly fielded questions from Task Force members related to 17-18 year olds and the changes likely if the age of jurisdiction is extended.

Next Meeting

There was a discussion about the framework for the next meeting and a general consensus to have a longer meeting. There were several conflicts with the date of the next meeting, however when other dates were explored, there were also conflicts then. As such, the next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2015, from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm at TJJJ headquarters.