

DOÑA ANA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE CONTINUUM BOARD
August 26, 2026

The following are summary minutes from the Doña Ana County Juvenile Justice Continuum Board meeting held on Wednesday, August 26, 2026, at 12:00 p.m., WIA Building, 340 N. Reymond Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilor Cassie McClure proxy Mayor Eric Enriquez, CLC
Sgt. Jesse Gonzalez proxy Chief Jeremy Story, LCPD
Brian Kavanaugh, FYI
Dr. Robert Lozano, LCPS
Richard Johnson, CYFD
Manuel Arellano, BCA

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vanessa Ordoñez
Sheriff Kim Stewart, DAC Sheriff's Office
Fernando Macias, Third Judicial District Attorney
Lindsay McDonnell-Benatar, NM Public Defenders Dept
Carmen Lucero, Treatment Court 3rd Judicial District
Scott Andrews, DAC Manager
Tommi Fisher CYFD-PS

OTHERS PRESENT: Shuly Serrano, CLC Public Library
Johnny Rivera, Community School Manager for LCPS
Ariel Bobrick, DACC
Donna Stryker
Susana Chaparro, DAC commission
Elizabeth Bennett, NMSU Assistant Professor
Ruby Estrada, Continuum Coordinator
Carol Montoya, Diversion Specialist
Rafael, Diversion Specialist
Pat Acosta, YDD Supervisor
Adriann Figueroa, Diversion Specialist YDD
Ryan Steinmetz, administrator with parks and recreation
Robert Nunez, CLC Youth Services Director

STAFF PRESENT: Ruby Estrada, Continuum Coordinator
Sofia Hughes, Case Manager/Youth Services
Sheena Cobb, CLC Administration

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:12 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

1 **3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

2 Board members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

4 **4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

5 None.

7 **5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

8 Motion to approve the agenda as presented and seconded. Motion carried
9 unanimously.

11 **6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - July 26, 2026**

12 Motion to approve the minutes as presented by Manuel Arrelano; seconded by
13 Jesse Gonzalez. Motion carried unanimously.

15 **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

16 None.

18 **8. MEMBER UPDATES**

19 Cassie McClure stated City Council is going to be doing a night session September
20 14th to focus on youth council, this would be an advisory youth council. And also,
21 gun violence initiative with \$100,000 to be best used in their community.

22
23 Robert Nunez stated he will be presenting the gun violence reduction and crisis
24 intervention presentation at the September 14th work session at 6:00 p.m. He will
25 reach out to many board members for assistance and subject matter experts
26 regarding this topic. How to assist to improve, expand with the funds. Initially with
27 the funds they are looking for city specific, but they have spoken with CYFD and
28 there are federal funds that may be available to expand this throughout the county.

29
30 Shuly Serrano stated they do have a new teen program every Wednesday night
31 5:00-7:30. Also in relation to early childhood development the library youth
32 services team recently underwent a special training called Mother Goose on the
33 Loose. That is a system of story time that was created by a librarian with a
34 doctorate named Dr. Betsy Diamant-Cohen. The training was provided by a grant
35 from the Friends of the Library. This will be implemented by two story times
36 designed for ages 0-3. This can be adapted for older kids. This will be on
37 September 8th and September 22nd in place of the regular story times, 11:00-
38 11:30. Right it is primarily in English but are looking at including some songs and
39 rhymes that will be in Spanish.

40
41 Robert Lozano stated the family support center will be opening up on September
42 30th at 9:00 a.m. This will have resources available to the entire community,
43 families that need parent skill sets, supporting families in different facets. This is
44 at 505 S. Main Street.

1 National Night Out will be held October 6th at the Downtown Plaza from 6:00-9:00
2 p.m.
3

4 **9. ACTION ITEMS**

5 **9.1 Board Memberships**

6 Asking for NMSU School of Social Work and for LCPS Community
7 Schools to be in advisory rolls on this board.
8

9 Motion to include NMSU School of Social Work and LCPS Community
10 Schools on the board and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
11

12 **9.2 FY27 DACJJC Board Meeting Dates**

13 Motion for fiscal year 2027 board meeting dates, fourth Wednesday, except
14 November and December, and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
15

16 **10. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

17 **10.1 FY27 Budget Update**

18 Robert Nunez said the state is finalizing the budget next month and hopes
19 to hear the status of the remaining three-quarters for FY27. We are getting
20 ready for the next cycle of funding. Originally CYFD set up funding for three
21 years, 2025, 2026, and 2027. There will be discussions on programs to
22 possibly implement for this continuum. There is hope for another three-year
23 cycle with the opportunity to amend budgets, as necessary. In the near
24 future, along with the needs assessment, the bylaws, everything discussed
25 here, they will be reaching out to the board to identify various components
26 of services that can utilize continuum funding throughout the communities.
27
28

29 **10.3 Needs Assessment Focus**

30 Last month a needs assessment was given out that was YDD focused with
31 collaboration. The board is moving towards making this a true continuum
32 where there is collaboration with the community in addition to what is
33 provided at YDD. This is a different point of view, but maybe more inclusive
34 in that they are looking to involve the community more in the continuum.
35 Possibly looking at doing a new needs assessment that is not as YDD
36 focused.
37

38 **10.4 Strategic Plan: Planning to Plan Committee**

39 The strategic plan will come from the needs assessment. Looking today for
40 people to be on the strategic plan. Whenever there is a recession, strategic
41 plans usually move forward a year at a time versus a three-year projection.
42 The plan will be focused for this fiscal year. There is a sign-up sheet for
43 volunteers for this committee. The commitment for this would be several
44 times a month to continue to move forward, maybe before and after board
45 meetings. Whatever is required to strengthen the Doña Ana Juvenile
46 Justice Continuum. There is a strategic plan from 2024 for review. If the

1 type of commitment is more defined, X Day, X time, every month, there may
2 be more people involved. An e-mail will be forwarded to all board members
3 to populate this committee. The next needs assessment will go to the
4 county as names were obtained from the peer support summit at FYI+.
5 There is room for feedback, and that is what the needs assessment is about
6 for the board. A spreadsheet with all responses has already been created
7 and postscripts. The strategic planning committee will continue to look at
8 the questions and analyze them to help move forward.

9
10 A lot of the organizations are reaching out to peers they work with in service
11 areas, but also the families. It would be ideal to share of those
12 assessments. This continuum could assist in gathering information for
13 various organizations and for the continuum to strengthen and identify gaps,
14 how to connect everybody. This continuum is the second largest in the state
15 regarding funding. In looking at data points in regard to formal referrals we
16 are with Bernalillo County which is five to six times our size population. We
17 are doing some fabulous services here. But how can we connect and
18 strengthen for our families and the youth. Community schools is a great
19 environment to connect everything. Robert Nunez stated in the 10 years
20 he has been involved there has been a strategic plan done twice and needs
21 assessment twice. But at this point we need to look at a broader spectrum,
22 wider view so that as the community grows, the county grows we grow with
23 it in being able to identify, assist everyone, organizations and/or service
24 providers to be able to offer the services to the families. April is the deadline
25 for the application to have it all ready.

26
27 Pat Acosta stated there are always trends happening and they have to stay
28 with those trends. In 2023 they saw a change in what referrals were being,
29 a decision was made, started seeing less of the substance abuse in the top
30 five, but started seeing more assault, more battery. There were a lot of
31 parents of Hatch, Chaparral, and Cruces that have come and asked for
32 support meetings, support groups, a safe space to talk about what does a
33 diagnosis mean and help them understand.

34
35 Is part of the strategy involving incentives for participation families and
36 young people to compensate them for their time and to get the direct input
37 from families and young people who are receiving the services? A few
38 months ago, it was mentioned that it was possibly a paid opportunity for
39 young people to serve on this board and question if that is proceeding. The
40 answer is yes. If there are students, they are welcome to come as there
41 are three open spots. There is a stipend that is \$25-40, unsure of exact
42 amount. The age limit for the students is 16-24. An e-mail will be sent to
43 the board with the exact stipend amount, and all other details for the student
44 members.

45 **10.2 Review Bylaws**

46

1 The latest copy of the bylaws from 2024 was presented and the board was
2 given time to review them. The needs assessment and strategic plan will
3 also be shared and comments collected in an open access type of situation.
4

5 Chief Johnson suggested there be a better designation between because
6 although under the umbrella of Children Youth and Families Department
7 there are CPS and juvenile justice. Make that designation clearer. In parts
8 of the bylaws the word "youth" and "young people" are used.
9

10 Could juvenile be used in reference to a young person versus a system or
11 department. Section 7.2, "periodic updates," can that be more specific like
12 quarterly, monthly, semiannually as periodic seems very open ended.
13 Section 8.4, "committee meetings" should there be advanced notice, as not
14 appropriate being called the day of the meeting.
15

16 There will continue to be opportunities to give input. Sometimes doing
17 things after meetings while it is still fresh in the mind is good. It was
18 mentioned to have a night meeting once in a while may open it up more to
19 students. It would great to get one high school, one college student, and
20 one from the branch to get a wider representation. Also, various
21 departments, social work, criminal justice, etc. There is a mother that would
22 love to join too from Chaparral. She could not come today, but she is
23 making arrangements to come in the future. Youth participation may be
24 increased through committee work rather/other than this board. A
25 committee would be a smaller group, meet in the evenings/late afternoon,
26 Zoom. And the regular board member that is in that committee could report
27 back to this board. The three slots are for youth leader and then two
28 members. That is a great idea. There are some guidelines and then fill in
29 the slots, but some are vacant on the board. At one time there were over
30 25 voting members, but they had a real problem with getting a quorum to
31 be able to hold the meeting. When the bylaws were updated in 2024 there
32 were six identified required through the state statute and then added the
33 other five committee members, service providers, schools, and faith based.
34 More voting members can be added, but advisory members are just as
35 important to provide their expertise and information to this board.
36

37 A board member went to a meeting for law enforcement training on
38 domestic violence in Mesilla and the marshal had about 20 criminal justice
39 students there serving food, registering people for the event. They have
40 been invited to the meeting. The marshal will reach out to those students.
41 Also, some discussions with social work students being involved.
42

43 Creating the committee and having it through Zoom, after school, in the
44 evenings, weekends are possible, and an incentive for any student to be
45 able to attend. And then bring the ideas back. At the state level JJAC also
46 has youth representation. There is a diversion specialist on that youth

1 advisory board. They work together to bring topics to the JJAC committee
2 each quarter.

3
4 Another area to look at for students, the school board has student that sit at
5 the dais, each school has two representatives.

6
7 **11. ADJOURNMENT**

8 Motion to adjourn and seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned
9 at 12:52 p.m.

10
11
12
13
14
15 _____
Chairperson

_____ Date