

DOÑA ANA COUNTY JUVENILE JUSTICE CONTINUUM BOARD
September 24, 2025

The following are summary minutes from the Doña Ana County Juvenile Justice Continuum Board meeting held on Wednesday, April 22, 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)
Chief Vanessa Ordoñez (Former Anthony NM Police)
Grace Diaz proxy Sgt. Jesse Gonzalez proxy (LCPD)
Lt. Eden Flores proxy Sheriff Kim Stewart (DAC Sheriff's)
Lisa Chavez proxy Brian Kavanaugh (FYI)
Lindsay McDonnell-Benatar (NM Public Defenders Dept)
Brenda Ballard proxy Dr. Robert Lozano (LCPS)
Christy Williams proxy Richard Johnson (CYFD)
Manuel Arellano (BCA)
Tommi Fisher (CYFD-PS)
Robert Nunez (CLC Parks & Rec)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Fernando Macias, Third Judicial District Attorney
Scott Adrews, County Manager, Doña Ana County
Carmen Lucero (Treatment Court 3rd Judicial District)

OTHERS PRESENT: Pat Acosta
Ted Nieto, NMSU
Shuly Serrano Las Cruces Public Libraries
Juan Garcia, CEIA
Tom Swisstack
Ron Nest
Vanessa Gouveira, CYFD
Brian Padilla, CYPD
Liz Bennett, NM School of the SW
Grace Telles, LCPD

STAFF PRESENT: Sofia Hughes (Case Manager/Youth Services)
Ed Padron, (CLC Administration)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND NM FLAG SALUTE

All stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. WELCOME

Board members, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

1 **4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

2 None.

3
4 **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

5 None.

6
7 **6. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

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

10
11 **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 24, 2026**

12 Remove NM Police next to Vanessa Ordonez.

13
14 Motion to approve the minutes as correct and seconded. Motion carried
15 unanimously.

16
17 **8. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

18
19 **8.1 Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee Members - Introductions**

20 Every state in the country has a Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. They
21 get federal funding and state funding. How to get people to start to work
22 together? Everybody is talking, everybody has new programs, but all the
23 horses aren't going in the same direction. In July they are going to try to do
24 a retreat with each of the continuum sites to put together a business plan
25 that has measurable outcomes.

26
27 **8.2 YDD Team Updates**

28 Pat Acosta recognized Ms. Bianca. Many of the children they serve
29 regardless of the referral, a high percentage have been exposed to
30 domestic violence when they were young. They start running away or
31 getting involved in gangs or criminal activity. This is the first program in the
32 state of New Mexico to offer a TIP curriculum to youth who are being cited
33 with battery against a household member. Also thanked Chief Johnson.
34 Yesterday she did the J. Paul Taylor class. Be sensitive to the youth and
35 their stories.

36
37 **• Children's Law Institute Conference**

- 38 **○ Presentations**
39 **○ Recognition**
40

41 The Child Welfare Institute has a conference every year. It should be
42 attended as it is well rounded program and presenters. They got to present
43 twice, the program and then presented in TIP. She congratulated Carol on
44 her award. Community service seems to connote negative thoughts.
45 Carol's programs create their own soaps, candles, and goody bags for the
46 elderly, or Farmers Market. Best way to teach empathy is doing it. A

gentleman comes from Canada and gets mesquite and creates flutes, and teaches the kids, and then they do concerts. For a different future we have to listen. The youth consistently say the staff is cool, they care, and they feel safe. This is the third state recognition received. In 2022 the top referrals were vaping, THC, paraphernalia, battery. In 2023 the top referrals battery, vaping, and battery against a household member. Domestic violence does not discriminate. Start as best practice and have three years to get to evidence based. Either went with university and established their own or work with a program that already has the evidence based. Started working with Family Peace Initiative out of Kansas and they are already teaching it in their Juvenile Detention Facility with excellent results. She has certified but has to attend regular meetings to remain certified. The biggest feedback is from JPO. Parents are now starting to ask for a parent support group to understand. CYD will find a group, but it has to be two or more people. There are some changes to the application, one would be case managers. Need to pay staff more money.

8.3 City budget for proposed programming - COMBINED with 8.5 Gun Violence Program - update

There were \$83,000 left for a service that went way. What to do meaningfully in terms of action. The conversation went to gun violence. Are we moving in the right direction. City Council allocated \$100,000 to add to that \$83,000 to do a needs assessment specifically for new programming for gun violence. Talking to stakeholders, making it realistic, trying to find evidence-based curriculum to work for our area. Meet next week to allocate the monies. Bernalillo's is more adjudicated, but this would be more prevention based. A suggestion for education for kids that are incarcerated. Now just working with the facility but already working with Doña Ana kids. Once they get evidence based settled and do the training, then can start having others start training and doing own TIP programs. Do not want to duplicate services. This program does not have a behavioral health component. They want a response within two weeks, not later. Peak has been good to work with. It was suggested to need more funding than \$183,000. There is a serious problem with gun violence in the community, and it is not being addressed. Need to come together as a team. One of the key components of a community school is there is student and family engagement. Students want to know what is going on, what happened and good to share with them as it helps understanding. Las Cruces PD is having a meeting April 28th, 5:30 p.m., East Mesa Public Safety Complex to have discussions with the families and an action plan. She has heard that lights are not on enough in the parks, not to play or to practice. Kids need places to go to share their talents and their voice. Suggestion of freezing the recreation fees to help families. An area that is not discussed is responsible gun ownership. Key is to educate children early. State is moving with peer support certification specialist.

1 • **CLC Communications video - "I am Las Cruces"**

2 This is a series the city is going to do. It has not launched yet.

3 VIDEO SHOWN, ABOUT A MINUTE.

4 Want to see work or plan with the youth. Be creative and listen.

5
6 • **Continuum Coordinator**

7 This has been a process. They are in the final stages. The contract is
8 getting finalized through legal. Hopefully the first of month she will be on
9 board.

10
11 • **Bylaws needs/assessment/strategic plan**

12 Last meeting there was some discussion about bylaws and strategic plan.
13 That is going to need to be completed and put in a final draft. It was updated
14 two years ago when the application was submitted. But do not want to wait.
15 Suggestion to book a four-hour timeframe as it seems lots of committees
16 are doing retreats. Probably do this within the next couple of months.

17
18 • **New Board Recruitment**

19 Open for new members. Meetings are on Wednesday fourth at noon. Also,
20 if need a bigger room, let the chair know. Teens, students welcome.

21
22 • **Marketing Op-Ed**

23 Let's develop an Op-Ed that talks about what is being done as there are
24 people asking what is being done. Chair McClure will write something up
25 and get it published.

26
27 Updates from continuum board members seem to be missing on the agenda. If
28 there is any feedback, comments, or events, please share. There is Youth,
29 Outreach, and Recreation Collaboration which is a committee of community
30 members.

31
32 JPO updates, steady increase in referrals. Also seeing increasing violent felony
33 referrals for kids that have no history.

34
35 Youth support certification which was developed and in play in New Mexico and
36 training process facilitated by the Center of Innovation for Behavioral Health and
37 Wellbeing at NMSU. They are primarily supported by CYF behavioral health
38 services funding which has been affected by the last budget cuts through
39 legislature. This is an impactful intervention to get young people back in the
40 community in paid positions supporting other young people to act as a guide to
41 navigate challenging moments. Give a 10–15-minute presentation to the board
42 at some point.

43
44 Functional family therapy is launching in June. Operating a fully mobile crisis in
45 Doña Ana County, so respond 24/7/365 within an hour. There are transitional

1 youth living. Hold on congregate care setting because it is hard work and have
2 staffing shortage.

3
4 There are programs at the library for kids, teens, and adults. They want more
5 teens in the building. Most that come are homeschooled.

6
7 April is Child Abuse Awareness Month.

8
9 Las Cruces Public Schools is hosting a writing event on Saturday, April 25th, 9:00
10 - 2:00 at Mayfield Highschool. Focus on the audience being juniors and seniors.

11
12 **9. RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE ITEMS**

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14 **10. ADJOURNMENT**

15 Motion to adjourn and seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned
16 at 1:08 p.m.

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22 _____
Recording Secretary

Date