
Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Meeting Date: 12/3/2024

Title: Resolution Affirming Metro County Engagement on Youth Intervention

File Number: 2024-657

Background and Rationale:

In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature established a working group on youth interventions through Chapter 62, Article 2, Statute 119 of the Minnesota Session Law. This working group was tasked with developing recommendations for a regional system of care for youth interventions, exploring sustainable financing models, and identifying alternatives to traditional system responses. Additionally, the group was charged with evaluating coordinated approaches for youth with high behavioral health needs, with the aim of reducing their interactions with the justice system and identifying community-based services to address these needs and service gaps. The Working Group on Youth Interventions delivered its report and recommendations to the Minnesota Legislature in February 2024.

Youth with complex needs are often served by multiple systems, including social services and juvenile justice systems. Data indicates that Black and American Indian youth are disproportionately represented in these systems and face significant disparities in outcomes when interacting with social services and juvenile justice. These disparities contribute to sometimes lifelong implications across various domains such as health, housing, education, employment, and justice involvement. Additionally, youth found incompetent to proceed in delinquency matters may be referred to social services, further emphasizing the need for a coordinated approach.

County-connected youth are shown to have poorer outcomes in several critical areas. Recognizing this, the county's 2024-2025 Strategic Priorities emphasize well-being, prosperity, opportunity, and accountability. These priorities aim to place well-being and community at the center of justice system transformation. As part of these efforts, the county is working to establish a model for healing and treatment homes for court-ordered out-of-home placements, reflecting a commitment to comprehensive care solutions.

There is currently significant interest in developing a metro-wide plan to improve the system of care. Ramsey County aims to transform the justice system responses to be more compassionate and focus on better meeting underlying needs so young people succeed in life and don't get referred back to the justice system. However, state-level leadership is crucial for success, particularly in areas such as licensure, certification, and sufficient, sustainable funding to enhance the system of care to better serve children with the most persistent and complex needs.

Ramsey County is committed to contributing to a metro-wide plan to build and improve the system of care for county-connected youth with complex needs, emphasizing a whole-person, cross-system approach rather than focusing solely on a juvenile justice-specific response.

As the county builds upon its efforts and collaborates on the metro-wide discussion, it is important to lead with its values and center the voices of community as it goes forward.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Affirm the work of the 2024 Working Group on Youth in promoting best practices and improving the system of care.
2. Affirm the county's work to provide holistic, intentional, and therapeutic support through healing and treatment homes, as well as wrap around services for justice system-interacting youth and their families in alignment with Minnesota Session Laws 2023, Chapter 52, Public Safety Omnibus Bill.
3. Direct the county to participate in a metro county workgroup to develop a plan to address placement options for county-connected youth with complex needs in both social services and juvenile justice systems.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Xiong, seconded by Commissioner Moran.
Motion passed.

Aye: - 5: Frethem, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

Absent: - 1: McGuire

By: _____



Jason Yang, Interim Chief Clerk - County Board