

**COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
JUVENILE JUSTICE COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes – June 2, 2026
Via Zoom**

Commissioners Present: Marcie Bellicitti, Chair
Howard Pomerantz, Secretary
Victoria Burton Burke
Nora Manchester
Penny Blake
Andrew Cain
Deryk Clark (*virtual*)
Kevin Rudich
Michelle Wu
Susan Bates
Heidi Schmittel
Lisa Macias
Cruzsilla Gutierrez

Commissioners Absent: Neha Parthasarathi
Diana Traub

Also Present: Kara Vega, Superior Court
Honorable Andrea Flint, Superior Court
Honorable Sunil Kulkarni, Superior Court
Honorable Christopher Van Meir, Superior Court
Veronica Robles, BHSD
Mayra Vargas, BHSD
Vone Kegarice, Probation Department
Etelvina Alvarez, Probation Department
Victoria Contreras-Wolfe, Probation Department
Ashanti Hayes, Probation Department
Trina Gauthier, Probation Department
Ignacio Carriles, Probation Department
Melissa Garcia, Probation Department
Frank Nesci, Probation Department
Daniel Cortez, Probation Department
Dolores Morales, Probation Department
Liwei Wei, Probation Department
Maria Yakoub, SCCOE
Mark Camilleri, SCCOE
Eugene Santillan, SCCOE
Ana Reyes, SCCOE
Alex Adams, DAO
Gilda Valeros, PDO
Cesilia Fernandez, PDO
Gracen Eiland, LACY
Melissa Suarez, DFCS

Jamie Marcil, City of San Jose
Aurelia Bailey, City of San Jose
Tyler Invill, SJYEA
Maribel Goulet, City of San Jose PRNS
Petra Riguro
Olympia Williams

Call to Order & Introductions: Chair Bellicitti called the meeting to order at 12:18pm.

Agenda Approval: The agenda was approved by all Commissioners present.

Swearing In: Judge Flint administered the oath of office to Cruzsilla Gutierrez as Juvenile Justice Commissioner in Santa Clara County.

Public Comments/Oral Petitions: None.

Approval of Minutes: May 5, 2026 Minutes approved by all Commissioners present.

REPORTS

PRESENTATION: San Jose Youth Empowerment Alliance (Tyler Linvill, Maribel Goulet)

Brings services together through the convener, direct service provider, and funder

Services offered:

- Clean slate tattoo removal, female intervention team, safe school campus initiative, SJ works, hospital-based intervention, late night gym, BEST grant, safe summer initiative grant

SJYEA pillars: prevention, intervention, diversion and reentry, healing

Prevention objective:

- Reduce chronic absenteeism in priority schools

Intervention objective:

- Reduce percentage of level 1 of incident responses proportional to all reported Safe School Campus Initiative responses

Diversion and reentry objective:

- Increase number of participants in career and readiness programs

Healing objective:

- Implement “No Wrong Door” service delivery pilots at Mayfair/Poco Way and Santee/Seven Trees neighborhoods

Key successes and outcomes:

- Youth connection to caring adults increased by 3%, with 92% of BEST grant participants reporting they have an adult they can go to that cares about them
- Three out of four priority schools experienced an overall 5% reduction in chronic absenteeism

- SSCI Level 1 incidents decreased 11%
- SJWorks program completion rate improved by 5%
- Juvenile arrests in San Jose declined 13% compared to 2024

Served over 13,000 participants and delivered 460,000 hours of dedicated service

Program outcomes:

- 90% of school administrators rated SSCI overall efforts as good or excellent at keeping schools safe
- 92% of youth felt safe in BEST grant funded programs
- 92% of youth felt SSIG was a safe program

Youth Services and Support Continuum

- Tier 1: Universal prevention
 - Library & community center programs, children & youth services master plan, school/district led services, recreation programs, parks
- Tier 2: Early intervention
 - Leadership & life skills, mentoring, school reengagement and academic support, family strengthening group
- Tier 3: Intensive intervention
 - Street outreach, restorative practices, focused deterrence

Chair's Report: Chair Bellicitti reported on the following:

- No public meeting in July.
- New commissioner-- Cruzsilla Gutierrez.
- Commissioner BurtonBurke and Commissioner Blake will be retiring.

Presiding Judge: Judge Flint had nothing new to report.

Dependency Court: Judge Van Meir had nothing new to report.

Legal Advocates for Children & Youth (LACY): Gracen Eiland had nothing new to report.

Victim Offender Mediation: No one present to report.

Alternative Schools Department:

Eugene Santillan reported on the following:

- Heidi Emberling has been hosting a series of meeting with the County superintendents to work with local districts that have students who use county services the most.
- South County and North County tech teams have started SST (Student Study Team) meetings.
- Opportunity Youth Academy will be coming under the umbrella of the Alternative Schools Department starting July 1st.

Maria Yakoub reporting on the following:

- One student at Osborne completed State Seal Civic Engagement project.
 - He is the third student at Osborne to earn his State Seal this year.

- One student recently graduated from SJCC.
- Celebrated 4 high school graduations from SYTF last week.
- 16 students graduating this year.

Mark Camilleri reported on the following:

- 17 students graduating (10 from James Ranch, 7 from South County community school).
- Students at Blue Ridge have access to a variety of career enrichment programs—welding, forklift operations, food handler’s certificate
 - Students also have the opportunity to explore podcasts, music development, and visual arts

Department of Family and Children’s Service (DFCS): Melissa Suarez reported on the following:

- ESTRTP got their license and will receive first youth this week.
 - Hopeful a second one will open before the end of the year.

Probation Department: Vone Kegarice reported on the following:

- Chief Birchard will be retiring on July 3rd.
 - Alex Villa will be acting chief.
- Jill Ugalde will be reassigned to Professional Standards over Internal Affairs unit in the interim.
- Ashanti Hayes will be acting Deputy Chief over institutions.

Trina Gauthier reported on the following for Juvenile Hall:

- Youth made posters and cards for nursing staff.
- “Flower Lady” hosted annual Mother’s Day program to make flower arrangements for loved ones.
- Juvenile Hall supported the medical clinic with their opioid project presented to Dr. Aggarwal.
- Current population: 62 (5 female, 57 male, 21 SYTF)

Frank Nesci reported on the following for the Ranch:

- Current population: 28 (7 younger youth, 18 older youth, 3 SYTF)
- Celebrated nurses, teachers, and made special gift cups for Mother’s Day.
- Hosted summer pool kickoff party.

Ignacio Carriles reported on the following for Services:

- Education Services Unit completed their South County rites of passage curriculum group.
- DIY unit hosted two sessions of the cross systems partnership for dually involved youth.
- Supervising Probation Officer Jake Jennings will be retiring.

Behavioral Health: Veronica Robles had nothing new to report.

Medical Services: No one present to report.

Law Enforcement Agencies: No one present to report.

District Attorney’s Office: Alex Adams had nothing new to report.

Public Defender’s Office: Gilda Valeros reported on the following:

- Cesilia Fernandez is the new Juvenile supervisor.

Alternate Defender’s Office: No one present to report.

Independent Defenders Office: No one present to report.

Announcements/Correspondence:

- None.

Adjourn to Executive Session: Chair Bellicitti adjourned to Executive Session at 1:13p.m. **There will be no public meeting in July.** The next meeting will take place on August 4, 2026 via Zoom. Participants are also welcome to attend in person in the Independence Conference Room on the ground floor of 353 West Julian Street, San Jose.

Respectfully submitted,

Kara Vega