

DELAWARE COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION BOARD OF MANAGERS
TUESDAY MARCH 17TH, 2026
4:30PM
HYBRID: DELAWARE COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING ROOM AND VIRTUAL

Board Members Present:

Rev. James Turner, Chair
Nathaniel Nichols, Vice Chair
Louis Rosenthal, Controller
Mathew Bilker, Esq.

Richard Womack, Council Chair
Elaine Schaefer, Council Member
Mark Houck

Call Meeting to Order: Councilwoman Schaefer called the meeting to order at 4:35PM.

Pledge of Allegiance: The pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment (Agenda Items Only): No public comment.

Approval of Minutes: Councilwoman Schaefer motioned to approve the February 17th meeting minutes. Council Chair Womack seconded the motion. The February 17th meeting minutes were approved.

Reports:

- A. There are currently ten (10) youths in detention. There are two (2) youths are currently being housed at Adelphoi Village (Ebensburg, Pa) and one (1) youth being housed at Bucks County (Doylestown, Pa). The remaining seven (7) youths are direct file cases with two (2) being housed at Abraxas Morgantown, three (3) being housed at George Junior Republic (Grove City, Pa) and two (2) being housed at George Hill Prison (Thornton, Pa).
- B. Interim Director of Juvenile Justice Services, Nelson Walker- Mr. Walker provided the Board with a quarterly update. Mr. Walker began by updating the board on matters regarding current programing. Mr. Walker reported that the Youth Advocate Programs (YAP) continue to thrive and are reporting strong numbers with 218 unduplicated youth being served through the Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) program and 95 unduplicated youth through the Targeted Intervention Prevention Services (TIPS) program.

Mr. Walker additionally reported that Dr. Williams, the OJJDP Grant Coordinator, has been researching and gathering information regarding best practices of care in Delaware county is looking forward to next steps including working with the DA's office to create a list of automatically deferred charges for youth in Delaware County.

Regarding the Assessment Center Convening that occurred on March 2nd, 2026, Mr. Walker reported that participants highlighted several areas where a single point of contact could improve system coordination, reduce duplication of effort, and create earlier access to support including working with school districts and law enforcement to create prearrest points of intervention.

Mr. Walker reported that participants emphasized that Delaware County already has a strong network of community-based organizations and partnerships serving youth and families. Additionally, Mr. Walker noted that barriers identified during the convening include is not the absence of services, but rather the lack of coordination across systems and difficulty connecting youth and families to appropriate resources in a timely manner.

Moving forward, Mr. Walker stated that key stakeholders including Chester Police Department, Chester Magisterial Courts, Chester-Upland School District, Delaware County Children and Youth Services (CYS) must be actively engaged in planning efforts and implementation.

Mr. Walker additionally stated that another meeting would occur in three months to assess the implementation and follow up of the points discussed during the March convening. Mr. Walker stated that next steps included, finding a location in Chester for the Assessment Center, scaling the Chester pilot program into a countywide model. And enabling a cross system data sharing network. Regarding leadership, a project manager/implementation lead will need to be designated and an oversight and governing board will need to be established.

Judge Nichols commented that Chief DiMatteo (Juvenile Probation) and the District Attorney's office need to be intimately involved in the process as she sees the youth who go through the system daily.

Mr. Walker responded that her and her office's input has been invaluable and that they continue to collaborate as the charge for preventative intervention moves forward.

Chairman Turner asked if there was any youth involvement of the process.

Mr. Walker responded affirmatively that youth had been surveyed in the fall of 2025 and that another data listening session and survey will happen again to gather input from youth on what has been done and what will be done moving forward.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked if there has been any discussion regarding funding as preventative interventions continues to trend statewide.

Mr. Walker responded that the Assessment Center is developed into the needs-based budget, it would be classified as a Promising Practice that would receive 80-90% reimbursement from the state following implementation.

Councilwoman Schaefer asked if there was any funding that could be sourced for the one-time and initial startup costs.

Chairman Turner additionally asked what the initial startup cost is.

Mr. Walker responded that the costs would be dependent on the model of the Assessment Center. As they are crafted for individual communities, operations could range from a phone bank set up, to office with typical business hours, to a 24-hour center.

Chairman Turner asked if there would be transportation provided to youth to the Assessment Center.

Mr. Walker responded that there would transportation provided to and from the Assessment Center

Old Business: Councilwoman Schaefer added that the open board position has not received any application submissions. Councilwoman Schaefer implored the Board to reach out to their networks to garner interest.

Councilwoman Schaefer additionally mentioned that the Montgomery County contract with Delco has been approved and will immediately provide two beds to Delaware County youths.

New Business: No new business.

Public Comment: Joan Broadfield, Chester, Pa-Ms. Broadfield implored the Board not to continue old practices that were harmful to children and that the County should continue to look towards evidence based best practices.

Board Member Comment: Councilwoman Schaefer commented that the old detention center will not reopen and that the County is committed to better serving delinquent youth in Delaware County.

Adjourn: Judge Nichols moved to adjourn. Councilwoman Schaefer seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm.