

# The DMC Stakeholder

Buy-in and  
Participation



TA Seminar- DMC Coordinators

# The Balancing Act

## Traditional and Non-Traditional

### Traditional Stakeholders:

- Judges
- Prosecutors
- Public Defenders
- Probation Chief and Staff
- Law Enforcement
- Detention Staff

DMC Coordinator



### Non-Traditional Stakeholders:

- Youth
- Parents
- Service Providers
- Child and Family Advocates
- Faith-Based Entities
- Community Residents
- Business Owners

# Judge (The “Authority Figure”)

<b>LENS:</b>	Concerned with a broader view of the system and the rights of children
<b>VALUE-ADDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides a “bully pulpit” to wield influence and push policy changes when other stakeholders are reluctant or unwilling</li><li>• If appointed, tends to demonstrate greater individuality and openness to policy changes and case processing innovations</li><li>• Can easily authenticate issues as important and urgent</li></ul>
<b>POTENTIAL BARRIERS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If elected, may feel obligated to be “tough on crime” in the eyes of the electorate to maintain his or her position</li><li>• Tend to favor more restrictions if youth present the slightest risk to public safety or risk of flight</li><li>• Concerned with being embarrassed by decisions that yield bad outcomes (e.g., released youth alleged with committing murder)</li></ul>
<b>MESSAGING NEEDS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey that other key stakeholders fully support reforms so that he or she will not feel like a “lone ranger”</li><li>• Convey and present evidence (data) that low-level offenders can be better served in the community at lower costs and with better results (<i>e.g., lower recidivism rate, improved re-entry outcomes, etc</i>)</li><li>• If reluctant, utilize other judges who support system reform as they more often trust and value the insights of their peers</li></ul>

# Prosecutor (The “Protector”)

<b>LENS:</b>	Concerned with public safety; represents the voice of the victim
<b>VALUE-ADDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trusted more often by the general public as servant and protector of their interests</li><li>• Can influence charging protocols to increase fairness</li><li>• Early involvement in reform planning helps eliminate roadblocks in policy and case processing changes</li></ul>
<b>POTENTIAL BARRIERS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May view certain policy changes as threats to public safety</li><li>• More favorable to sanctions as the best means of preventing further delinquency in youth</li><li>• Support for policy changes largely driven by public safety, which does not always prioritize improved youth outcomes</li></ul>
<b>MESSAGING NEEDS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey that diverting low-level offenders from formal processing will increase focus on high-risk, violent, and repeat juvenile offenders</li><li>• Provide assurance that community-based alternative programs will restrict youth movement and invoke sanctions in the case of non-compliance with supervision</li></ul>

# Public Defender (The “Zealous Advocate”)

## LENS:

Concerned with the best interests of the juvenile client, with a core focus of getting the client exonerated of all charges or securing the most favorable resolution for the client

## VALUE-ADDED:

- May benefit from having gained the trust of the juvenile client and family
- Serves the interests of the juvenile client, which increases potential and support for advocacy on behalf of youth
- Keeps the focus on impact of incarceration on youth

## POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- May oppose expedited case processing, preferring instead various trial tactics to have the case dismissed
- Often concerned with net-widening impact of enhanced serves for pre-adjudicated youth (e.g., ERC with case management)

## MESSAGING NEEDS:

- Help them to understand that DMC can be resolved by getting the “wrong kids” out of detention (e.g., low-level offenders and youth with technical violations)
- Ensure them of plans to monitor net-widening impact of implemented strategies, followed by immediate modifications

# Probation Chief/Staff (The “Monitor”)

<b>LENS:</b>	Concerned with youth behavior and compliance
<b>VALUE - ADDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can influence the perspectives and decisions of other key stakeholders</li><li>• Can speak on behalf of youth and family needs when needed</li><li>• Can readily speak to system challenges that may inhibit change</li><li>• Buy-in helps expedite and reinforce policy and practice changes</li></ul>
<b>POTENTIAL BARRIERS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often driven to comply with procedural rules that may not reflect the actual delinquent act</li><li>• May have difficult relationships with youth and parents</li><li>• Large caseloads may compete for their time devoted to monitoring youth in the community and bonding with families</li><li>• Often experience difficulty sharing decision-making with others</li><li>• May lack objective tools and advanced knowledge that may enhance case management practices</li></ul>
<b>MESSAGING NEEDS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey that reduced reliance on secure detention will improve outcomes for youth</li><li>• Convey support for reform by other key leaders in order to increase their comfort in implementing policy and practice changes</li><li>• Involve line-level staff in planning and monitoring of strategies to increase ownership and sustainability of effective reforms</li></ul>

# Law Enforcement (The “Law”)

<b>LENS:</b>	Concerned with public safety and crime prevention
<b>VALUE-ADDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Serve as the driving force in determining which youth are presented at the gates of the system</li><li>• Drive or directly influence decisions about diversion eligibility</li><li>• Direct involvement in reform activities increases access to arrest data and improved reporting of data by law enforcement agencies</li><li>• May have strong relationship with community constituents, especially at precinct-level</li></ul>
<b>POTENTIAL BARRIERS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May interpret reform activities as being “soft on kids or crime”</li><li>• May resent reform as an effort that undermines their work and public safety agenda</li><li>• Tend to be prevention-oriented rather than willing to review police policies</li><li>• May have tense relationship with community youth</li></ul>
<b>MESSAGING NEEDS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey that effective community-based diversion and alternative programs will benefit public safety, especially when youth are placed under strict supervision (e.g., electronic monitoring)</li><li>• Work to protect them from being blamed or treated with hostility by other members of the collaborative</li><li>• Find frequent opportunities to engage the officers in public forums about reform as a show of solidarity between law enforcement and other agencies</li></ul>

# School Administrators (The “Educator”)

## LENS:

Concerned with the learning and safety of school children, with a priority often given to youth who remain engaged in school

## VALUE-ADDED:

- Involvement may increase potential for diversion protocols
- May bring an additional resource to the table for school-based interventions
- Administrators and teachers with long histories in neighborhood schools possess key information about target populations

## POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- Often view delinquent youth as dangers to the rest of the school population and academic process
- Financial barriers limit their capacity to directly develop or support school-based interventions
- May become defensive if they feel blamed for referrals to the system or accused of disparity in discipline policies
- May view juvenile justice reform as burdensome as they often deal with educational reform needs (different issues and solutions)

## MESSAGING NEEDS:

- Convey that there are no competing values as education and juvenile justice are serving the same youth and families in communities
- Attract them with opportunity to access new resources from multiple child-serving systems
- Ensure them of the educational continuity of keeping delinquent youth on a path of educational goal attainment



# Community (The “Community”)

## LENS:

Concerned with safe, clean neighborhoods and the quality of life of community partners (residents, businesses, schools, etc)

## VALUE-ADDED:

- Members who wield influence are often quite verbal in holding elected officials and agency administrators accountable in a public way
- Community leaders are more often seen as credible messengers
- Members provide the greatest context for delinquency in real-time

## POTENTIAL BARRIERS:

- More often concerned with prevention and younger kids
- Concerns over community safety may lead to resistance to reforms
- Community leaders may see participation in reform as a means of securing funding for non-related projects
- In-fighting among community members creates distractions
- Self-appointed leaders may not have real attachment to community families and may not truly represent their needs

## MESSAGING NEEDS:

- Continually educate them about the system and problem issues (DMC)
- Work to build community consensus about their values and priorities around public safety and youth and family needs
- Provide assurance that increasing community-based programs for delinquent youth will improve community safety and youth outcomes

# Parents and Youth (The “Clients”)

<b>LENS:</b>	Concerned with fair, decent treatment and access to services that help improve their outcomes
<b>VALUE-ADDED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clients become the greatest champions for reform when they benefit directly from policy and practice changes</li><li>• Can hold system decision makers accountable for bad decisions and shower them with praise for good decisions</li><li>• “Veteran” parents are more readily embraced by system-involved parents as credible sources of help and information</li></ul>
<b>POTENTIAL BARRIERS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May not understand the language or navigation of the system</li><li>• May not readily participate in case management decisions due to limited knowledge of levels of supervision and types of care available</li><li>• May be tempted to use system decision makers as crutches to avoid making decisions that they or the youth do not like</li><li>• Often defensive if they feel blamed or overwhelmed with the demands on their time to actively participate in the process</li></ul>
<b>MESSAGING NEEDS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convey that their ability to articulate their needs and advocate their preferences gives them more control over outcomes</li><li>• When possible, allow youth and parent choice in program selections to increase their sense of ownership and successful completion</li><li>• (LOGISTICAL NEEDS) Remain flexible about times and locations of meetings to increase family involvement</li></ul>