

## Washtenaw Equity Partnership Working Group

May 17, 2022 4:00-6:00pm

### Attendees:

Alma Smith (co-chair)  
Heather Martin  
Natalie Holbrook  
Deb LaBelle  
Desirae Simmons  
Peri Stone Palmquist  
Eli Savit  
MaryAnn Sarosi  
Belinda Dulin  
Ariana Gonzalez

Judge Miriam Perry  
Nichollette Hoard  
Rachelle Wilson  
Elizabeth Swavola (Vera)  
Alex Roth (Vera)  
Angie Carpio (Vera)  
Kaitlin Kall (Vera)  
Sandhya Kajeepeta (Vera)  
Tara Dhanraj (Vera)  
Shahd Elbushra (Vera)

- Meeting called to order at 4:10pm
- Chair welcomed the group and thanked subcommittee chairs for meeting over the past month to discuss potential overlap in priority areas across subcommittees.
- Run through of finalized priority areas by Vera staff member
  - o At the last WEP meeting, subcommittee co-chairs reported out on priority areas. There was opportunity for feedback from other WEP and subcommittee members. Since the last meeting, subcommittees worked to refine and finalize priority areas. Most are similar with minor edits.
  - o Front end and prevention – no changes to priority areas since last meeting.
  - o Court process
    - Opted to remove a priority area to track racial inequities in the court. Data subcommittee will take the lead on this with support from this subcommittee.
    - The 5<sup>th</sup> priority which includes a review of sentencing will also encompass probation terms and violations.
  - o Post sentencing and reentry
    - The first priority is now in coordination with the court process subcommittee.
    - Priority 3 has removed the focus on prosecutorial sentencing as it is more in the scope of the court subcommittee.
  - o Youth justice and schools subcommittee- no changes to priority areas.
  - o Behavioral health
    - Second priority area was previously focused on staffing challenges. It is now taking a broader view looking at barriers to effective provision of services and continuity of care.
  - o Data subcommittee – no changes to priority areas.
- Next steps – information gathering presented by Vera staff member

- Now that priority areas have been determined, the group is embarking on fact finding process which will last through the end of July.
  - The next step is to develop research questions and plan research activities
  - Vera pulled together a compilation of potential activities for each subcommittee based upon the priorities that were determined.
  - Subcommittees need to prioritize activities with consideration to time and resources to conduct them.
- Vera staff member shared PowerPoint slides with potential information gathering activities for each subcommittee.
  - The lists for each subcommittee are exhaustive including informal activities like conversations, desk research, and hearing from experts to more primary data collection such as interviews, focus groups and surveys.
  - Feedback from WEP members
    - One member asked about ways to effectively work with overlap in population for surveys/focus groups.
      - Vera response: in terms of recruitment and scheduling, the plan is to create one recruitment flyer which invites a person to take a screening questionnaire where they select applicable criteria. Where possible, the idea is to combine focus groups and ask those who complete the questionnaire questions that are relevant to them.
  - The next step is for subcommittees to start narrowing and prioritizing research activities.
- Other business
  - Staffing changes at Vera.
    - Kaitlin Kall and Sandhya Kajeepeta are transitioning off the project.
    - Angie Carpio and Shahd Elbushra are transitioning onto the project.
  - Meeting minutes
    - April meeting approved unanimously.
- Meeting concluded.