CENTER FOR Children's Law and Policy

EVALUATION OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY INITIATIVE

APRIL 22, 2021

Prepared for the Center for Children's Law and Policy
by **Laura Furr Consulting**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1
Summary of Evaluation Conclusions 2
Why CCLP Created the Law Enforcement Leadership for Equity Initiative 5
CCLP's Reform Process Focused on Law Enforcement Leaders 5
CCLP's Evaluation Process For the LELE Initiative 7
Wins and Continuing Challenges for Law Enforcement Agencies Participating in the LELE Initiative 7
Challenges Remaining from the LELE Initiative 15
Conclusion : New Hypotheses And Next Steps 19
Remaining Questions and Future Considerations 22

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A note about our funder:

The Law Enforcement Leadership for Equity Initiative was made possible through the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF). Founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal pioneer, Will Keith Kellogg, WKKF is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work, and life.

The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special emphasis is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.

A note from the evaluator:

Laura Furr, an independent consultant, provided evaluation and drafting support to CCLP for the Law Enforcement Leadership for Equity Initiative Evaluation. A meaningful evaluation would not have been possible without the thorough and candid recollections and records by CCLP staff who worked directly with each participating law enforcement department. CCLP also wants to extend its gratitude to the law enforcement leaders and community partners from all four participating cities for sharing their honest and robust feedback about the initiative.

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation of the Law Enforcement Leadership for Equity (LELE) initiative between the Center for Children's Law and Policy (CCLP) and four law enforcement departments revealed that law enforcement agencies can achieve policy change goals within one year, confirming that CCLP's process and focus on agency leadership can successfully support reforms in that relatively short time. However, gaps between policy changes and targeted measurable outcomes evidenced that more work remains for law enforcement agencies and youth justice professionals working toward racial equity.

CCLP is a public interest law and policy organization focused on reform of youth justice and other systems that affect vulnerable children, and protection of the rights of children in those systems. Its staff members include lawyers and former youth justice professionals with extensive expertise in creating a more equitable and effective youth justice system.

The four law enforcement agencies that committed to participate in the LELE initiative were:

Baltimore Police Department (Baltimore PD), Baltimore, MD	•A large, urban district currently under consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice.
Burlington Police Department (Burlington PD), Burlington, NC	•A small department with a nascent history of proactive reforms.
Lake Charles Police Department (LCPD), Lake Charles, LA	•A very small department with access to a national model diversion center.
Madison Police Department (MPD), Madison,WI	•A large department with a history of reforms situated in a city with well-documented racial inequity.

While the LCPD withdrew early from the project and did not make any changes, the evaluation and this report incorporated lessons from their engagement.

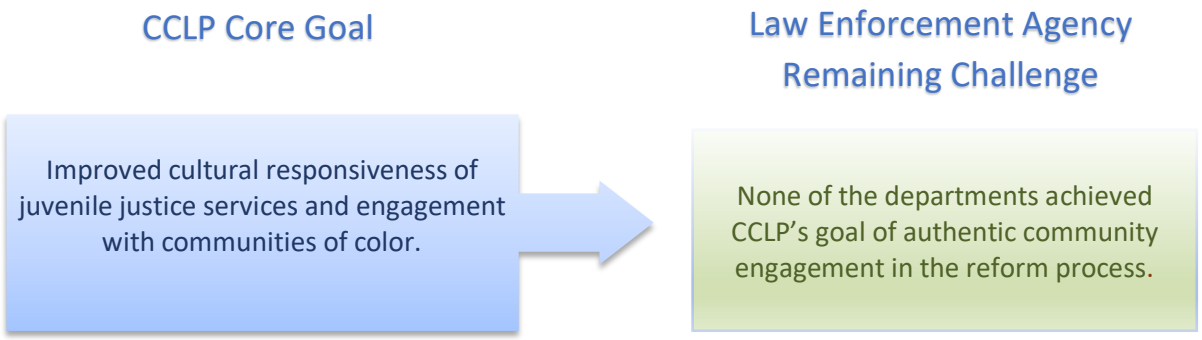
CCLP's engagement with the four departments occurred over one year from Fall 2018 through Fall 2019. The evaluation collected qualitative and quantitative data from each department for periods beginning in Fall 2019 through February 2020. Due to the dramatic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities across the country, the evaluation did not include data past the pandemic's U.S. onset in March 2020.

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation of the LELE initiative revealed eight key achievements departments accomplished by acting on CCLP's targeted recommendations. Each achievement connects to one of CCLP's five core goals for racial equity in youth justice.

CCLP Core Goals	Achievements by Law Enforcement Agencies
Regular collection and analysis of data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, geography, and offense, to inform management decisions, monitor effectiveness, and ensure equitable outcomes for youth of color.	Departments asked new questions of their data.
Structured arrest and diversion protocols to promote fair, equitable, objective, and consistent decision-making that advances equity and the interest of public safety.	Three departments promulgated new policies to govern how officers decide to arrest or divert young people. Departments reduced unnecessary arrests, entry, and deeper involvement with the youth justice system.
Improved collaboration with other child-serving systems such as education, child welfare, and mental health.	Two departments revised partnerships between police and other child-serving systems.
Improved access to culturally responsive diversion programs and services that prevent deeper involvement with the justice system for youth of color.	Burlington PD led statewide legislative change to increase access to diversion.
Articulating agency values and goals that promote equitable treatment for youth of color and managing a process of change that aligns policies, practices, and organizational culture with those goals.	Departments enhanced training. Two departments implemented Youth Interaction policies anchored in values of adolescent development and racial equity. Burlington PD created a new team, including a mental health clinician and social worker, to respond to all incidents involving youth.

The evaluation highlighted one key remaining challenge for the law enforcement agencies and CCLP.



The evaluation also revealed two results of concern for the LELE initiative.

- None of the departments demonstrated CCLP's targeted measurable results after implementing the recommended policy changes.
- Some law enforcement leaders did not demonstrate increased knowledge of or belief in the importance of policing reforms toward racial equity.

Associated with these wins and challenges, the evaluation documented how collected qualitative and quantitative data reflect CCLP's progress toward its originally targeted outcomes. The table below provides an at-a-glance summary of progress toward each targeted outcome and provides a page reference to learn more.

Progress Key:	Not Achieved X	Partially Achieved →	Fully Achieved ✓

KNOWLEDGE OUTCOMES		
Targeted Outcome ***The four law enforcement agencies will learn*:**	Progress	Page Reference
How to regularly collect strategic data on arrests and analyze data to identify racial/ethnic disparities	✓	8
What implicit racial bias is, how and why we have such unconscious bias, and how to reduce its impact in individual officers and supervisors	X	19
How implicit racial bias is institutionalized in law enforcement policies and practices, and how to change those policies and practices	→	19

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES		
Targeted Outcome	Progress	Page Reference
Community representatives are engaged in oversight of the planning and implementation of the project, thereby helping to develop a higher level of trust between the police and the community	→	13, 15
Increased transparency of law enforcement data, particularly arrests and diversions of youth of color	→	16
Enabling the community to hold law enforcement agencies more accountable for their policies and practices	X	16
Having fewer youth of color arrested and entering the justice system, so fewer youth will have arrest records and fewer will suffer the consequences of such records in looking for employment, housing, and eligibility for educational and other support programs	→	12

CHILD OUTCOMES		
Targeted Outcome	Progress	Page Reference
Decrease in arrests of youth of color (measured by number of arrests vs. baseline)	X	17
Increase in use of diversion for youth of color (measured by number of diversions vs. baseline)	X	17
Decrease of arrests of youth in school for misbehavior (measured by number of arrests in school vs. baseline)	X	17
Decrease in arrests of youth for low-level offenses (measured by number of arrests for low level offenses vs. baseline)	X	18
PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES		
Targeted Outcome	Progress	Page Reference
Increase in number of diversion options for law enforcement officers (number of options or number of diversion slots, compared to baseline)	→	13, 18
Increase in number of hours of training for officers and supervisors on implicit racial bias and racial stereotypes and how to reduce their impact	→	14

Number of law enforcement policies revised to make them more race-neutral	✓	10
Number of law enforcement practices changed to decrease impact of implicit racial bias	✓	10
Increase in use of specific criteria by law enforcement officers in deciding whether they should – and should not – arrest young people (measured by number of diversions for specific offenses vs. arrests for those offenses, compared to baseline)	X	17

WHY CCLP CREATED THE LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP FOR EQUITY INITIATIVE

Wave after wave of reform has attempted and failed to reduce the racial and ethnic disparities in the youth justice system. Indeed, federal law has required states to address the issue for over 30 years without success. While short-term or very localized gains exist in the history of these reforms, no one has achieved long-lasting equity. In fact, diversion efforts frequently included in these reforms have often resulted in worsened disparities as system actors more often divert white youth.

This long and cyclical history of failed promises helped feed the outrage sparked by widespread public awareness of rampant deaths of Black people at the hands of police. Whereas people might have been aware of local police killings in the past, viral videos of police violence now embedded in the national consciousness have shown how common this really was. The country barely processed one death before another would occur. As people looked for answers to the problem, many learned what long-time youth justice experts recognized long ago, that nothing we've tried has worked.

Amid this reckoning, CCLP crafted a reform effort laser-focused on law enforcement leaders. CCLP modeled this project on the success of its partnership with the Gainesville Police Department in Gainesville, FL. Gainesville's Chief of Police, Tony Jones, achieved well-documented success leading his officers to reduce disparities in arrests. While no department has fully overcome the systemic and historical legacy of racial and ethnic disparities in policing, Chief Jones 'leadership of an intentional effort created more progress reducing disparate arrests than has been achieved by many other departments.

The LELE Initiative tested a new model for CCLP to support reforms by relying on the hierarchical culture of law enforcement agencies. The reform process differed from that CCLP historically used with courts and youth justice agencies, which tended to be more process-oriented, studying best practices and developing changes in collaborative groups. LELE relied on law enforcement's quasi-military, top-down structure, which allows directives from department leaders to quickly create change.

CCLP'S REFORM PROCESS FOCUSED ON LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS

CCLP developed a process for the LELE initiative based on its long history of supporting reforms by youth justice systems applying a direct, "how to" approach driven from the top of an agency's leadership. The

two sites most closely participating in the planned process accomplished the most achievements. A key component of the process was its accelerated timeline, which resulted in policy and practice changes by law enforcement agencies within one year.

CCLP's planned process to support reforms in this short timeline was to train leaders within law enforcement agencies and provide in-depth assessments of each department, along with recommendations for change, within the first six months after selecting participating departments. These two key steps occurred as planned in Burlington and Madison and differed, as outlined below, in Baltimore and Lake Charles.

Step 1: Select four law enforcement agencies to participate in LELE.

CCLP conducted an application process and selected four sites. Applications requested data on youth arrests and diversions, including by race and ethnicity. CCLP did not ask departments to identify community partners in the application phase.

Step 2: Analyze each agency's arrest data to determine where and how racial and ethnic disparities occur.

CCLP completed much of the data analysis through the targeted assessment, which departments all rated as accurate. Burlington PD faced the most challenges providing solid data for analysis. MPD and Baltimore PD, both departments with histories of engaging in reform efforts, provided more, and more reliable, data.

Step 3: Provide each department with a targeted assessment of its policies and practices related to young people, including arrest and diversion practices.

CCLP provided each engaged department with a targeted assessment of its policies and practices related to youth arrest and diversion and recommendations for reform. CCLP combined Baltimore PD's LELE assessment with a more holistic assessment of youth diversion at multiple points of Baltimore's youth justice system, which CCLP conducted as part of the U.S. Department of Justice consent decree there. LCPD dropped out of the initiative before receiving a full assessment.

Step 4: Train leaders within each department on individual implicit racial bias and systemic racial disparity reform early in the initiative.

CCLP's goal was to train leaders within each department on individual implicit racial bias and systemic racial disparity early in the LELE initiative. CCLP provided a focused, multi-day Leadership Academy within the first six months of the initiative to MPD, Burlington PD, and LCPD. Baltimore PD received informal knowledge development scattered throughout CCLP's engagement with the department.

Step 5: Work with law enforcement agencies to develop transparency and accountability, and to build greater trust and partner more effectively with the communities of color they serve.

CCLP encouraged sites to increase data transparency in all sites and facilitated community input on new or revised police policies in Baltimore and Madison.

Step 6: Assist each agency to implement reforms and reduce disparities, decrease unnecessary arrests, increase diversion, and monitor outcomes, including through increased capacity for regular collection and analysis of data.

The LELE initiative tested CCLP's hypothesis that receiving its assessment, recommendations, and training within the first six months of the project would enable law enforcement agencies to begin implementing policy changes within a year of starting the project. Two of the sites, MPD and Burlington PD, received the services as planned, and both accomplished several changes proposed and supported by CCLP within about a year. Baltimore PD received different versions of the TA activities and is on track to achieve some changes after unavoidable delays from the consent decree process. LCPD only received the training and did not achieve any changes.

CCLP'S EVALUATION PROCESS FOR THE LELE INITIATIVE

CCLP engaged an independent evaluator to evaluate the results of its LELE initiative and compile results to be shared with law enforcement leaders and the youth justice field. The evaluation relies on qualitative data from surveys and interviews with CCLP staff and twenty law enforcement leaders and community or system partners from the four selected sites, as well as quantitative data collection and analysis from the three completing sites.

An accompanying report provides observations and recommendations on how law enforcement and national policy partners, such as CCLP, can best accomplish change.

WINS AND CONTINUING CHALLENGES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES PARTICIPATING IN THE LELE INITIATIVE

Evaluation of the LELE initiative revealed seven achievements and three remaining challenges or gaps. Departments accomplished achievements related to core goals within a year, demonstrating that CCLP's process and focus on law enforcement leadership supported reforms in a relatively short time frame. The remaining challenges evidence that more work remains for law enforcement agencies and others working to build racial equity in policing and youth justice.

Key Achievements by Law Enforcement Agencies

CCLP provided each department with a data-driven assessment and recommended individualized reforms centered on core goals and focused on targeted outcomes. Evaluation of the LELE initiative revealed key achievements and measured progress toward targeted outcomes.

Core Goal: Regular collection and analysis of data, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, geography, and offense, to inform management decisions, monitor effectiveness, and ensure equitable outcomes for youth of color.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Departments asked new questions of their data.

Across the board, the LELE initiative sparked new or deeper inquiry by law enforcement departments into their data on arrests and diversions of youth.

Law enforcement leaders from Burlington PD and LCPD, the two sites with the least experience engaging in reforms, remarked that the data questions in the application served to open their eyes to disproportionate arrests of Black youth. Chief Jeffrey Smythe of Burlington PD said, "We didn't know what we didn't know. When we saw our data, we were shocked."

Targeted Outcome: The four agencies will learn how to regularly collect strategic data on arrests and analyze data to identify racial/ethnic disparities.

Law enforcement leaders from Baltimore PD and Burlington PD reported lasting increases to data knowledge and capacity, and that their departments now believe data is more important than they did prior to the project. MPD incorporated improved data-sharing in new agreements with county-wide diversion programs and the school system.

Core Goal: Structured arrest and diversion protocols to promote fair, equitable, objective, and consistent decision-making that advances equity and the interest of public safety.

Achievement Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Three departments promulgated new policies to govern how officers decide to arrest or divert young people.

Baltimore PD, MPD and Burlington PD all revised policies to change officer discretion when deciding between arrest or diversion of youth. Baltimore PD removed a default toward secure transport for processing and created a presumption toward diversion at the scene. MPD and Burlington PD supported increased direct referrals to services by officers in lieu of formal processing. Burlington PD leadership also prioritized individualized education and support of School Resource Officers (SROs) to increase diversion decisions. Baltimore PD, under a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice, advanced a revised Youth Interaction Policy to the consent decree review process. Once implemented, the Youth Interaction Policy would require officers to resolve most interactions with youth on the scene, potentially including an informal warning or a remote diversion assessment, rather than transporting a young person to the local detention facility. A civilian partner agency would implement the diversion assessment and provide a recommendation to BPD. This change removes the prior default for officers to securely transport all youth in a police car for processing and diversion assessment in a secure booking facility.

MPD's new policy created a default referral to a restorative justice diversion program in lieu of all municipal citations, unless a youth opts out. Prior to LELE, officers could refer to the program immediately or supervisors could upon later review, collectively resulting in restorative justice referrals in lieu of 85-90% of municipal citations. The LELE initiative increased diversions in lieu of municipal citations from the prior 85-90% of the time to 100% of the time. MPD issued municipal citations for an array of low-level offenses and began encouraging officers to choose these lower-level offenses in lieu of charges that would require a state charge, for which diversion is not available, whenever possible. Inspired by its work with CCLP, MPD also expanded this direct referral in lieu of citation to young adults, aged 17-25 years.

Case Study: Accountability Partners Contribute to Progress from Baltimore PD

External partners working toward shared goals contributed to achievements by the Baltimore PD during LELE. Baltimore PD remained under a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice throughout its engagement in the LELE initiative with CCLP and remains under it as of the drafting of this report. The accountability placed on Baltimore PD by the consent decree worked in concert with the expert analysis and recommendations CCLP was able to provide. The consent decree required reforms, and CCLP informed how those reforms could look with respect to young people in Baltimore.

The external accountability measures from the consent decree proved especially important to keep reforms moving through extraordinary levels of transition in department leadership. Baltimore PD went through four chiefs in two years and an unscheduled mayoral transition. Despite this, reforms under the purview of the consent decree moved forward, albeit slowly.

In contrast, reforms outside the view of the consent decree's external accountability did not proceed. For example, an earlier collaborative effort between community partners and Baltimore PD developed a diversion pilot in the Western district. Everyone was in support and the program was planned, but Baltimore never implemented it.

Burlington PD's revised policy allowed investigators to directly refer youth to teen court or other diversion options and guides officers to prioritize juvenile court involvement for "when the

delinquent acts committed by the youth involve any serious felony, including weapons violations, serious gang related events, aggravated assault and battery, and delinquent acts committed by juveniles who are on probation or repeat offenders."

Burlington PD also changed the practices of its School Resource Officer (SRO) Unit during LELE. Following the successful example of the Gainesville Police Department, SRO Unit leaders collaboratively reviewed arrest decisions with SROs and the underlying perceptions of youth, especially Black youth, driving those decisions. They used these discussions to educate SROs about possible implicit racial bias affecting arrest decisions and supported change on a case-by-case basis toward more diversions.

Targeted Outcome: Number of law enforcement practices changed to decrease impact of implicit racial bias.

Burlington PD changed one common practice of its SRO Unit during the project in a way that decreased the impact of implicit racial bias. Burlington PD's new practice collaboratively reviewed arrest decisions of SROs, rather than leaving those solely at the discretion of the officer. According to Burlington PD's data, this change reduced the proportion of Black youth arrested by SROs for the measured three-month period compared to the baseline three-month period. It remained to be seen whether these changes will survive a leadership transition and the temporary dissolution of the SRO Unit due to COVID-19.

Targeted Outcome: Number of law enforcement policies revised to make them more race neutral.

Departments revised a total of three policies to make them more race neutral, but data was unable to demonstrate effectiveness prior to COVID 19. Burlington PD and MPD policies created a presumption toward diversion. Baltimore PD's policy created a tiered framework guiding officer decisions to warn and release, divert to programming, or arrest. Baltimore PD listened to community input, collected by CCLP and Baltimore PD through the consent decree process, by expanding situations when officers can choose to "warn and release" a young person and requiring this lowest level of intervention for trespassing and loitering offenses.

Case Study: Opened Eyes in Burlington

While it was not an expressed goal of LELE, CCLP supported a significant mindset shift among leaders in the Burlington PD that resulted in an important, although not originally targeted, measurable shift toward racial equity. Thanks to CCLP's intensive education of Burlington PD's SRO Unit leaders, these leaders began educating and collaboratively reviewing arrest decisions of SROs, rather than leaving those solely at the discretion of the officer. According to Burlington PD's data, this change reduced the proportion of Black youth arrested by SROs for the measured three-month period compared to the baseline three-month period.

CCLP staff conducted multiple in-person visits early on during its work with Burlington PD and built strong relationships with key members of the department leadership, including the SRO Unit sergeant and captain. While CCLP did conduct a focused training with this unit, Burlington PD leaders credited the consistent education that happened over several visits and in diverse spaces.

Over time, Burlington PD leaders applied what they learned from CCLP about individual and institutional racial bias and confronted how that bias impacted their own actions and those of their team. The SRO unit sergeant and captain leaned into their personal discomfort and challenged each other.

Burlington PD leadership was then able to expand their new understanding to their officers, seeding growth and change throughout the SRO Unit. The SRO sergeant and captain noted that some SROs made arrest decisions based on incorrect assumptions about Black youth and families. For example, some SROs assumed that Black parents who didn't pick up their child when school called about trouble just didn't care, rather than consider that the parent might work multiple jobs or jobs they could not leave without losing.

These assumptions matter when SROs have broad discretion to divert youth they feel will benefit from diversion, a guiding principle for Burlington's SROs. Supporting these officers to step outside their own personal experience helped the SROs make decisions less influenced by racial bias and more informed by the diverse realities of Burlington's Black families and communities.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the SRO Unit was temporarily disbanded, and the officers spread throughout the patrol force. In addition, the former SRO Unit captain now oversees patrol.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Departments reduced unnecessary arrests, entry, and deeper involvement with the youth justice system.

MPD began recording referrals to restorative justice used in lieu of municipal citations as diversion rather than a citation. This shift profoundly reduced the negative consequences of diversions on a young person's record.

In a similar shift affecting youth records, Baltimore PD no longer required that youth admit guilt in order to receive diversion. This change not only reduced a barrier to diversion for youth, but also meant that youth retained due process rights in any future prosecution of the case.

Baltimore PD also increased due process protections to youth through a new Youth Interrogations Policy, informed by CCLP and approved by the consent decree process. Changes to this policy offered additional protections to youth during interrogations, including the right to access a parent, guardian, or attorney.

Already mentioned above, Baltimore's new policy governing youth diversions reduced unnecessary secure transports to the city's juvenile booking center and created a presumption toward on-site diversion and release of youth.

In a missed opportunity, LCPD determined it could not readily record transports to the local diversion program as something other than an arrest, meaning youth records reflected arrests even when charges or prosecution were never likely to happen. An arrest on a youth's record disqualified the youth for future diversion. CCLP recommended this relatively simple and cost-free change as a very meaningful reform in LCPD, but the police department felt constrained by the local Parish Attorney's determination that this would require a state law change.

Targeted Outcome: Having fewer youth of color arrested and entering the justice system, so fewer youth will have arrest records and fewer will suffer the consequences of such records in seeking employment, housing, and eligibility for educational and other support programs.

By revising the impact of police decisions on youth records, two departments reduced future barriers to youth in court, when looking for employment or housing, and seeking access to educational and other support programs.

Core Goal: Improved collaboration with other child-serving systems such as education, child welfare, and mental health.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Two departments revised partnerships between police and other child-serving systems.

Burlington PD and MPD partnered with service providers, schools, or other law enforcement agencies to develop or revise agreements governing police presence in schools. MPD also formalized a previously informal agreement for restorative justice diversion. Burlington PD temporarily convened a collaborative body to increase diversion services.

Burlington PD instigated county-wide reforms following CCLP's recommendations about the role of police in schools, leading to a new MOU among Burlington PD, the local school system and the four other police departments in the county. Burlington PD was able to expand uptake of CCLP's recommendations to four other local departments that would not have otherwise had the benefit of CCLP's support. Burlington PD's SRO unit leaders also met with school officials to educate them about the appropriate role of police in schools, leading to reduced pushback from schools to Burlington PD's reforms.

MPD modified its existing contract to provide the local school system with School Resource Officers following CCLP's recommendations about the appropriate role of police in schools. However, due to a city law change removing SROs from Madison's schools altogether, MPD never implemented it or measured the results of the changes.

MPD also completed a new MOU with the county human services department to provide restorative justice services for 12- to 16-year-olds following a referral by MPD. The MOU formalized an informal arrangement that had previously existed and includes tracking data to monitor the outcomes of diversion.

Burlington PD also convened a Youth Engagement Committee, which included the Department of Social Services, the Alamance County School System, Alamance Racial Equity Alliance, a local collaborative of community organizers, and Teen Court, to co-author a grant application to meet the needs of youth in Burlington with increased services. This collaborative body stopped meeting after completing the grant application but may reconvene as COVID-19-related restrictions lift.

Targeted Outcome: Community representatives are engaged in oversight of the planning and implementation of the project, thereby helping to develop a higher level of trust between the police and the community.

Two departments engaged service providers, schools, or other law enforcement agencies to develop or revise agreements governing police presence in schools. A school system partner in Burlington rated the department's engagement of system partners as "outstanding," and reported being "much more likely" to partner with the Burlington PD in the future because of their work in the LELE initiative. Likewise, a county partner in Madison reflected a stronger partnership between his agency and MPD and felt that CCLP's recommendation led MPD to seek his agency's input.

Core Goal: Improved access to culturally responsive diversion programs and services that prevent deeper involvement with the justice system for youth of color.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Burlington PD led statewide legislative change to increase access to a teen court.

Burlington PD's Chief of Police led successful education efforts to state legislators about an opportunity to reduce unnecessary system involvement by allowing officers to refer youth to a statewide diversion program more than once. Previously, the law limited youth to one chance at diversion to Teen Court, which created a perverse incentive to officers to "save" that one chance for potential future arrests and caused them to arrest youth they would have otherwise diverted. The Alamance County Teen Court did not have demonstrated cultural responsive goals or outcomes.

Targeted Outcome: Increase in number of diversion options for law enforcement officers.

No departments added new diversion options, but departments did increase access to existing diversion programs. Neither the number of options nor diversion slots in existing programs increased because of LELE.

Core Goal: Articulating agency values and goals that promote equitable treatment for youth of color and managing a process of change that aligns policies, practices, and organizational culture with those goals.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Departments enhanced training.

Departments engaged new training partners in adolescent development or enhanced existing internal training for officers.

MPD secured a grant to bring the Strategies for Youth *Policing the Teen Brain* training on adolescent development to its officers, plus local school staff and other youth-serving agencies. MPD planned to continue this train-the-trainer curriculum following COVID-19. MPD also provided internal training to all officers on its new direct referral practice in lieu of municipal citations.

Through their participation in LELE, Burlington PD recognized that their officers didn't understand the consequences of arrests for youth and therefore enhanced its own internal in-service training using data and information provided by CCLP. Burlington PD also planned to use part of a separate grant it received with help from CCLP to provide racial equity training to all county staff who work with youth.

Targeted Outcome: Increase in number of hours of training for officers and supervisors on implicit racial bias and racial stereotypes and how to reduce their impact.

None of the departments reported a lasting increase in the number of training hours on racial bias required for officers, but MPD and Burlington PD reported improved quality of training available during their engagement with the LELE initiative. Baltimore PD anticipated having increased training in the future following the consent decree process.

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Two departments implemented Youth Interaction Policies anchored in values of adolescent development and racial equity.

MPD and Baltimore PD drafted new Youth Interactions policies establishing their understanding of adolescent brain development and commitment to achieving equity in policing and setting practices officers should follow in every interaction with young people.

Baltimore PD deeply engaged youth and community members in developing its revised Youth Interaction Policy, which was pending approval under the consent decree at the time of this report. The policy required that Baltimore PD officers *"recognize that Youth are developmentally different from adults and therefore require the use of special approaches during voluntary contacts, investigative stops, searches, and custodial contacts."*

MPD's Youth Interaction SOP, implemented December 2019, included the values statement "*MPD is also committed to reducing the overrepresentation of youth of color in the criminal justice system. MPD is committed to the pursuit of equitable policing practices to forge positive relationships and build trust between law enforcement and communities of color."*

Achievements Departments Accomplished Within a Year: Burlington PD created a new team, including a mental health clinician and social worker, to respond to all incidents involving youth.

Burlington PD obtained a grant to create two new staff positions, a Juvenile Mental Health Crisis Counselor, and a Youth Diversion Coordinator. Once it filled the positions, Burlington PD planned to partner these new positions with its Youth Detective, a previously existing position that will evolve to handle all cases in which a person under age 18 is a suspect or victim. This new team would cooperatively handle all cases involving youth, embedded in the civilian professionals ' understanding of adolescent development and mental health. This step advanced the Burlington PD in the use of alternative response models highlighted by current national advocacy efforts.

CHALLENGES REMAINING FROM THE LELE INITIATIVE

CCLP initially stated goals to increase engagement of communities of color in the reforms undertaken by the participating agencies during LELE and establish lasting structures for ongoing, authentic community partnership. While CCLP guided two departments toward some novel community engagement during the project, the community engagement that occurred did not meet CCLP's stated goals. Based on the results of the evaluation, CCLP hypothesized that this gap limited the departments 'ability to achieve measurable progress toward equity in policing and may have hampered a foundational mindset shift among leaders in two departments.

Core Goal: Improved cultural responsiveness of youth justice services and engagement with communities of color.

Challenge Remaining for Departments After One Year: None of the departments achieved CCLP's goal of authentic community engagement in the reform process.

CCLP sought an array of reforms to increase authentic community engagement during the project and sustain it through structures, policies, and practices lasting after the project's year long timeframe. The evaluation revealed participating law enforcement departments did build stronger partnerships with system partners but failed to do so with the communities of color they serve.

The evaluation also revealed that the LELE initiative supported little to no change in the level of community engagement practiced by the departments. CCLP accomplished some community engagement activity in Madison and Baltimore, but neither department nor community respondents reflected increased, sustained internal capacity developed during the LELE project period. Likewise, Burlington department leaders did not see increased community engagement capacity and expressed surprise that it was a priority of the initiative. Finally, despite multiple efforts by CCLP to reach out to community leaders in Lake Charles, LCPD began and ended their engagement in LELE with zero community engagement other than their connection with the local assessment center.

Targeted outcome: Community representatives are engaged in oversight of the planning and implementation of the project, thereby helping to develop a higher level of trust between the police and the community.

Case Study: Starts and Stops in Madison

Two meetings with an existing advisory body of partner organizations convened by MPD represented the most community engagement activities of any of the participating departments during LELE. Unfortunately, the evaluation revealed that the included partner organizations felt less trust in MPD following this engagement.

MPD advised engaged community partners that they would consider their input as part of the internal process. Community partners were disappointed and frustrated that MPD did not continue to engage them in the process beyond those two meetings. When MPD shared the completed policies with the community partners, the partners felt anger and disappointment that MPD incorporated so little of their recommendations in the policies.

MPD was surprised to hear anger and disappointment from the community partners. MPD leaders felt like community leaders acted supportive in meetings with MPD and then angry when talking to third parties or the public. Community partners expressed feeling like MPD ignored their input and held the listening sessions for show.

Tensions between the community partners and MPD remained high months after these community engagement sessions when the evaluator sought feedback. Law enforcement respondents reported some improvement in their relationships with communities of color, but community respondents almost exclusively and vehemently disagreed.]

Two departments sought input from community representatives on policy revisions they undertook during LELE, but LELE appears to have sparked ongoing deeper community engagement only for Baltimore PD. Overall, the evaluation did not indicate that the departments provided engagement opportunities that rose to the level of "oversight" or developed greater trust between the police and the community.

While community engagement is already required by the consent decrees process, Baltimore respondents reported that CCLP supported a more robust public comment process than Baltimore PD would have conducted otherwise. Baltimore PD reported plans to actively seek youth input on youth-specific policies, develop training on those policies, and add two community representatives to a working group developing a community-based diversion program.
MPD asked CCLP to facilitate two listening sessions with local community organization leaders, as described in the associated Case Study. However, the department did not demonstrate or express plans to continue engaging these community representatives in refining or implementing the policies. In addition, the engaged community representatives indicated unchanged or decreased levels of trust in MPD following LELE.

Targeted outcome: Increased transparency of law enforcement data, particularly arrests and diversions of youth of color.

CCLP's direct engagement and leadership encouraged departments to increase data transparency during the project and resulted in sustained public access to data on arrests in schools by one department. One-time examples of additional data transparency occurred through public statements or presentations to partner agencies by MPD and Burlington PD. MPD also began including data on arrests in schools in a publicly accessible quarterly report.

Targeted outcome: Enabling the community to hold law enforcement agencies more accountable for their policies and practices.

None of the departments provided examples of increased accountability to the community.

Core Outcome Gaps After One Year: None of the departments demonstrated CCLP's targeted measurable results after implementing policy changes.

CCLP established several outcomes to measure the impact of law enforcement reforms at the start of the project. The evaluation collected baseline and comparison data reflecting these from each of the participating departments. Comparison data covered at least three months following implementation of each change.

The widespread impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic forced the evaluation to collect data from before March 15, 2020, which precluded Baltimore PD from demonstrating measurable results. Baltimore PD had not yet implemented any of CCLP's recommended policy or practice changes that would affect these numbers and is thus not included in this section. Likewise, since LCPD withdrew from the project early without implementing any changes, the evaluation did not collect or analyze comparison data from the department.

Targeted Outcome: Increase in use of specific criteria by law enforcement officers in deciding whether they should – and should not – arrest young people (number of diversions for specific offenses vs. arrests for those offenses, compared to baseline).

The number of arrests of youth of color in Burlington increased. Burlington PD revised its policy to prioritize arrest for "when the delinquent acts committed by the juvenile involve any serious felony, including weapons violations, serious gang related events, aggravated assault and battery, and delinquent acts committed by juveniles who are on probation or repeat offenders." Burlington PD changed the source of its data from the beginning to the end of the initiative, and this change reduced the evaluation's capacity to measure absolute numbers over time.

Targeted Outcome: Decrease in arrests of youth of color.

The number of arrests of youth of color in MPD and Burlington PD increased. Lack of buy-in from the local prosecutor limited the scope of MPD's direct diversion options to non-custodial, municipal citations rather than arrests for offenses in state law. As stated above, Burlington PD changed the source of its data during the initiative, thereby reducing the evaluation's capacity to measure absolute numbers over time.

Target Outcome: Increase in use of diversion for youth of color.

MPD's diversions occurred primarily through municipal citations, and the number of municipal citations decreased. MPD's reforms encouraged officers to issue municipal citations in lieu of state citations when possible.

Burlington PD was unable to provide data measuring diversions.

Target Outcome: Decrease of arrests of youth in school for misbehavior.

Burlington PD's data showed either no change or an increase in school-based arrests. Burlington PD implemented a practice change to collaborate on SRO arrest decisions and use "teachable moments" for SROs to advance racial equity. That department's data challenges likely affected

this result since department leaders anecdotally observed significant reductions in SRO decisions to arrest youth.

While tracking changes to absolute numbers was challenging with Burlington PD's data, the evaluator was able to identify a reduction in the proportion of youth arrested who were Black. The evaluator compared the proportion of Black youth among all arrested youth in the baseline dataset with that of the comparison dataset.

MPD began publicly sharing data measuring arrests in school because of the LELE initiative. Arrests in schools did not decrease during the period.

Target Outcome: Decrease in arrests of youth for low-level offenses (number of arrests)

Neither Burlington PD nor MPD provided data by offense.

Target Outcome: Increase in number of diversion options for law enforcement officers, to be measured by the number of options or number of diversion slots, compared to baseline.

Departments increased access to diversion slots, rather than increasing the number of diversion slots or program options. Two departments, MPD and Burlington PD, expanded access to existing diversion programs. While these expansions did not increase the number of slots in the program, they did loosen restrictions on diversion referrals or create a presumption toward diversion referrals.

Outcome Gap After One Year: Some law enforcement leaders did not demonstrate increased knowledge of or belief in the importance of policing reforms toward racial equity.

The evaluation indicated mixed results of the LELE initiative toward CCLP's goals of increased knowledge. Respondents from Burlington PD and MPD reported minimal to moderate lasting increases in knowledge and advised that they have used their new knowledge to develop policy. Leaders in Burlington PD also demonstrated significant learning as described above in the relevant Case Study. However, the respondent from LCPD advised zero to minimal increase in knowledge from the training and no application. Baltimore PD's learning increases proved harder to measure since CCLP did not provide leaders there with a single, focused training but rather scattered informal learning opportunities throughout the initiative. One Baltimore PD respondent reported a moderate increase, but everyone else reported not participating in training.

Open-ended responses revealed gaps in some leaders 'knowledge of how individual or institutional racial bias impacts policing decisions. Notably, multiple law enforcement leaders placed responsibility for reducing racial disparities in youth arrests outside law enforcement. Baltimore PD and LCPD respondents stated that decisions of whether to divert a young person should not be the responsibility of law enforcement but should be made by partners outside law enforcement. LCPD respondents said that disproportionality in arrests is not attributable to law enforcement decisions but is caused by larger societal inequities.

The learning outcomes in LCPD stand out as concerns. A LCPD law enforcement leader reported applying for the LELE initiative due to concern about disproportionality in their data and curiosity whether their policies or officers were causing the high rates of arrest for youth of color. However, they prematurely exited the project having learned, in their words, that the disproportionality in

their numbers was due to outside influences, including higher offense rates among Black youth, and that it was not police policy or practice causing the high rates of arrests of Black youth.

Target Outcome: Departments will learn what implicit racial bias is, how and why we have such unconscious bias, and how to reduce its impact in individual officers and supervisors.

The survey collected individuals' self-assessment of the lasting increase in their knowledge on each of the five components listed between the two stated knowledge outcomes. Most respondents reported "none" or "minimal" increases in their knowledge of individual racial bias. Some respondents may have rated their increase so low due to a belief in their own high level of knowledge before the initiative.

Target Outcome: Departments will learn how implicit racial bias is institutionalized in law enforcement policies and practices, and how to change those policies and practices.

The survey collected individuals 'self-assessment of the lasting increase in their knowledge on each of the five components listed between the two stated knowledge outcomes. More respondents indicated "large" or "moderate" than those reporting "none" or "minimal" increases in their knowledge of institutional racial bias.

CONCLUSION : NEW HYPOTHESES AND NEXT STEPS

While the impact of ongoing and historical oppression compounds to increase arrest numbers of Black youth in participating cities, that reality does not excuse the need for law enforcement to be anti-racist. It may, however, limit the efficacy of small to moderate changes like those made by law enforcement agencies through LELE without associated structural changes to how communities use law enforcement and invest in services and opportunity. Increased diversion from arrest may mitigate some of the harm to Black or Indigenous youth and other youth of color, but the LELE initiative deepened CCLP's awareness that key changes center in authentic partnership between police and communities toward a shared goal of safety and wellness.

What's Next: Authentic Community Partnership to Advance Racial Equity

CCLP's future work will test how authentic community-police partnership supports progress toward measurable racial equity in policing. CCLP is currently developing and testing models for this through its ongoing support of the Baltimore PD. Lessons learned from LELE and other existing resources provide CCLP with models for community-police partnership but leave open questions.

- What can national organizations reasonably expect to contribute toward the long process of building authentic community-police partnerships?
- Do certain policy changes or mindsets demonstrated by local law enforcement agencies best demonstrate readiness and commitment to build authentic community partnership?
- What lessons do the outcomes from LCPD provide for how increases in racial equity in policing might happen at scale across the country?

Lessons Learned from the LELE Initiative

1. Support and attention from external partners can contribute to community engagement.

   External accountability mechanisms in the U.S. Department of Justice consent decree process caused Baltimore PD to engage community partners in reforming youth interactions by officers. CCLP's external support caused this engagement to include new partners and to be more creative and thoughtful. Law enforcement culture has traditionally demonstrated a willingness to remain insular absent this type of external pressure and support.

2. Effective community partnership requires sustained communication and collaboration vs. one-time opportunities for input.

   Law enforcement agencies participating in LELE sought discrete community input on policy changes. However, failure to sustain communication with the community further damaged the community's trust and harmed future engagement efforts.

3. Effective community engagement requires local community-based partners with strong existing ties to the community.

   CCLP, as a national organization, struggled to engage community partners or even to identify potential community partners in cities where it did not have close, local ties.

Potential Models and Strategies for Authentic Community-Police Partnerships

Authentic partnerships among decision-makers and those affected by decisions can center on four core principles: shared power, shared accountability, shared resources, and shared culture. Diverse, national efforts in recent years have developed and begun to test recommendations for how these core principles may work in authentic community-police partnerships. These include the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, Campaign Zero, and Cities United's Reimagining Public Safety project. CCLP will apply and learn from these recommendations in its future work.

- **Shared Power**

  People most affected by policing must hold power over how they are policed. This fundamental shift will be challenging to balance with law enforcement's hierarchical or quasi-military structure. Practical steps could include the following.

  - Fund local community-based organizations to engage a broad, representative group of community members in all policy review, revision, and development, including the department's budget and officer allocation. A representative community group includes the community being policed, such as youth, the elderly, disabled persons, and LGBTQ people, and centers people who have experienced the justice system as perpetrators and/or victims of crime. Race and ethnicity of the group must mirror that of the communities most heavily policed.
  - Host routine public meetings to create space for community members to share ideas for increasing safety in the community and concerns with police leadership and elected officials, including through anonymous means to prevent retribution. Meetings should follow best practices for accessibility by all, incorporate feedback loops to report on

changes, and occur in locations welcoming to the community, which may not be government buildings.

- Convene civilian oversight boards with the power to hire, discipline, and fire law enforcement officers, and to set hiring and firing parameters and process.

❖ **Shared Accountability**

Cultivate a "we're all in this together" mindset and a learning culture, so law enforcement leaders learn from mistakes and criticism. Empower more "outside eyes" on law enforcement policies and practices.

- Ensure public access to a robust complaint process and publicly accountable, transparent complaint reviews by members of the public.
- Convene a review board of community members and police leadership to review and identify remedies to cases of serious violence by officers or other officer actions that can jeopardize police legitimacy.
- Change officer performance evaluation measures to move away from citation and arrest numbers and toward measures of community trust and actual safety in a jurisdiction.
- Make measures of officer performance evaluation transparent to the public.
- Share data on all police actions publicly, broken down by race, ethnicity, gender identity, geography of offense, and type of offense in readily accessible language, and in the language(s) of community residents. Publish protocols for sharing individualized information about specific incidents and follow those protocols.

❖ **Shared Resources**

Law enforcement leaders pointed to broad societal and historical factors as influencing racial disparities in policing and should therefore stand ready to share resources to fix those factors. The role law enforcement plays in much of America has expanded into education, mental health, substance use disorder, and other arenas outside their stated role of enforcing the law. Neither law enforcement leaders nor communities profess to complete comfort with these new responsibilities.

- Rebalance resources to support law enforcement in their stated role of enforcing laws. Resource professionals outside law enforcement to complete non-law enforcement responsibilities. Match funds for sworn officers with proven strategies to increase safety and wellbeing over the long-term, including civilian first responders focused on holistic wellbeing, violence interrupters, and pro-social spaces for youth to grow and develop.
- Employ participatory budgeting through Collaborative Public Safety Funding Models to drive local financial investments.
- Leave more money in communities that need it. Eliminate fines and fees as tools for compliance or punishment in the criminal justice system. Stop civil forfeiture as a matter of course and require a higher bar of proof to support taking property.

❖ **Shared Culture**

Recommendations that law enforcement agencies hire from within communities of color seek to build shared culture and shared understanding, but these recommendations have not led to the hoped-for sea change. Potential new opportunities focus on reducing the influence of the dominant, white culture in law enforcement.

- Reframe the dominant narratives around public safety, including about Black, Indigenous and Brown community members, and especially about normal adolescent development, the use of drugs, and sex work. Recent reframing around sex trafficking could provide a model.
- Partner with Indigenous and other cultures to restructure the justice system around community-centered restorative practices.
- Engage community to rewrite the scripts law enforcement officers use with the community, including Miranda warnings, and to translate them into languages spoken in the policed community.
- Engage community-based organizations in developing and delivering academy and in-service training.

REMAINING QUESTIONS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

- What can national organizations reasonably expect to contribute toward the long process of building authentic community-police partnerships?
  - National organizations planning to provide technical assistance or other supports to help law enforcement agencies increase racial equity bring crucial expertise and peer connections but should engage local community organizers and community-based organizations with capacity to support authentic partnerships.
  - Funders and national organizations focusing on racial equity need to build in resources and time for the challenging and time-consuming process of developing authentic community partnerships. Three-to-five-year projects may need to be the new norm to even get started.
  - Partnerships with law enforcement should no longer declare success with new policies or protocols approved, but should require sustainable structure, a culture of community partnerships, and measurable change to disparities in police decisions.

- Do certain policy changes or mindsets demonstrated by local law enforcement agencies demonstrate readiness and commitment to build authentic community partnership?
  - As a starting point, departments should seek objective review of policies and procedures for racial impact and review data to evaluate the impact of policies and procedures. Because of the entrenched and historical nature of racial inequities in policing, objective and data-driven evaluation is key.
  - Incorporate time and resources for community partnership into plans to evaluate and change policies or protocols.
  - Departments engaged in racial equity reforms should strategically plan for and around leadership transitions to avoid losing progress in mindset and knowledge developments.

Steps could include promotion plans with the express goal of retaining or spreading knowledge of racial equity.

- Departments should provide training on racial equity and youth development up and down the ranks from frontline officers to the command level and beyond specialized teams to educate the full department.

- What lessons do the outcomes from Lake Charles provide for how increases in racial equity in policing might happen at scale across the country?
  - Not every law enforcement department is ready to learn and apply lessons about racial equity in policing. National partners may want to require departments to provide some of the basic demonstrations of readiness outlined above before committing to long-term support.
  - To engage with departments at the beginning phases on exploring their role in racial disparities, national organizations should prioritize securing partnerships with robust local community-based organizations and/or community organizers before committing to long-term support of a law enforcement department.

As CCLP and the nation continue to develop and evaluate progress toward racial equity in policing, the evaluation of the LELE initiative and these initial considerations provide a solid foundation for what comes next.