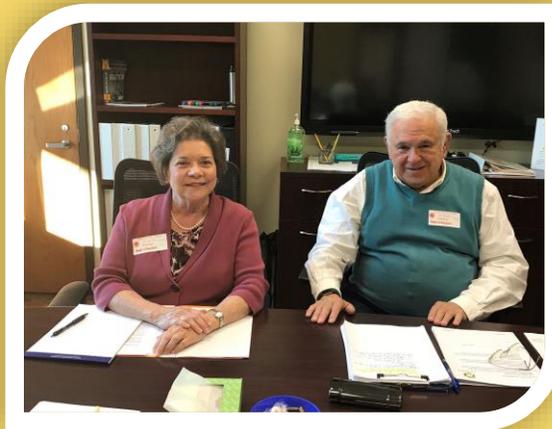


# Macon-Bibb School Justice Partnership



## 2018-2019 End of Year Summary

Office of the District Attorney  
Macon Judicial Circuit - *Juvenile Division*

560 Oglethorpe Street  
Macon, Georgia 31201

[www.macondistrictattorney.org](http://www.macondistrictattorney.org)



**School Justice Partnership**  
**Macon-Bibb County**

# OVERVIEW

The Macon-Bibb County School-Justice Partnership (SJP) Agreement was locally planned and implemented to reduce the number of students who enter the juvenile justice system. The agreement focuses on providing an alternative response to students who commit certain offenses (focused acts) at school. The protocol allows SJP to address the needs of those students as a way of reducing the likelihood that they will re-offend.

SJP's Notice of Offense graduated response ladder outlines the most appropriate types of warnings or referral options associated with each focused act offense. The SRO also considers various student factors to determine the most suitable action. A student can be issued up to 3 separate Notices of Offense before a referral is made to juvenile court.

This report provides a summary of individuals, activities and services involved with the initial implementation of the School-Justice Partnership Agreement in Macon-Bibb County, Georgia during the 2018-2019 school year. This report includes three sections: I. **School-Justice Partnership Engagement**, II. **School-Justice Partnership Participant Data**, and III. **School-Justice Partnership Project Narrative**.

## ***School-Justice Partnership Engagement Highlight***

More than 140 school administrators, officers and other stakeholders have received information and/or training about the Macon-Bibb School-Justice Partnership Agreement.

## ***School-Justice Partnership Participant Data Highlight***

207 middle and high school students were issued a Notice of Offense in response to focused acts committed at schools within the Bibb County School District during the 2018-2019 school year.

**“I am very pleased with the first-year results of the School-Justice Partnership. Intervening early, providing targeted support and remaining true to the partnership are proving to be quality mainstays of this effort. The School-Justice Partnership is another great example of the community and school district working together to support our students.”**

**--- Dr. Curtis Jones, Superintendent**

**“This program validates our shared belief that building strong kids in school today means we won't have to fix as many broken adults in the courtroom tomorrow.”**

**--- K. David Cooke, District Attorney**

## **Looking Ahead**

SJP is a community-driven project that has provided numerous opportunities for Macon-Bibb stakeholders to reflect, align and contribute to juvenile justice reform. Together, we celebrate its first year of accomplishments and lessons learned. Together, we move forward into new opportunities to create and serve!

# I. PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

The first year of Macon-Bibb's School-Justice Partnership involved a variety of meetings and other activities where professionals from throughout the county were engaged in program planning and discussion. During these sessions, meeting attendees were provided updated information about SJP's implementation and progress. At least half of the sessions involved technical assistance as it related to the SJP Agreement (protocol) and the Notice of Offense graduated response ladder.

## Stakeholder Meetings

- The Bibb County School District, local government, law enforcement, juvenile court, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Family & Children Services as well as a host of community organizations were among the 22 different organizations/offices (partners) represented at stakeholder meetings.
- On average, 20 individuals attended each stakeholder meeting with at least 27 partners attending 3 or more meetings during the school year.

## District-Level Meetings

- Bibb County School District staff received information about SJP at Victory In Progress (VIP) sessions held in October 2018 and March 2019.

## School Meetings

- 12 SJP meetings were conducted with School Administrators and School Resource Officers during the 2018-2019 school year.
- School meetings were held at each of the 6 middle schools, 5 high schools and 1 specialty school within the Bibb County School District.
- The types of school staff represented at on-site SJP meetings included: Principal, Vice Principal, Counselor, School Resource Officer (SRO) and School Administrative Manager.



## School Resource Officer Training & Support

- 16 School Resource Officers, 7 campus police leadership staff, and 1 campus police support staff participated in SJP training.
- Following the February 2019 SJP training for School Resource Officers, 91% of those surveyed reported being more able to identify the role of the SRO in reducing pathways into the juvenile justice system. In addition, 100% reported being able to identify at least 2 ways that the School-Justice Partnership can enhance the SRO's role in promoting positive school climate.
- There were at least 39 occasions where phone or in-person support was provided to School Resource Officers in response to student offenses and/or the interpretation of the SJP protocol.

## Family Engagement

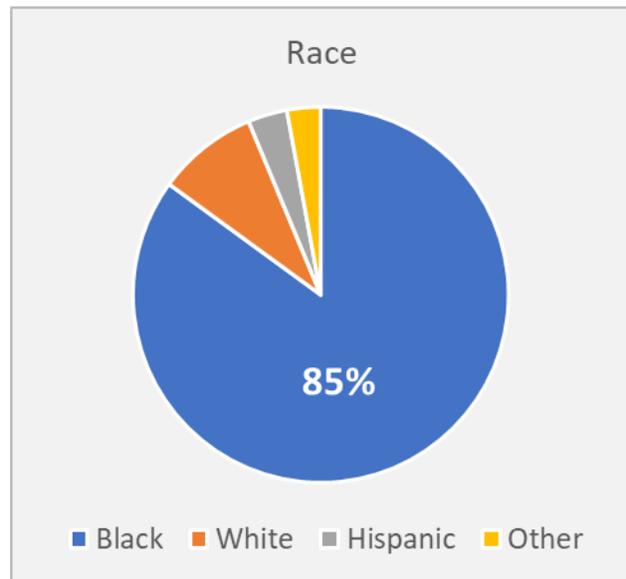
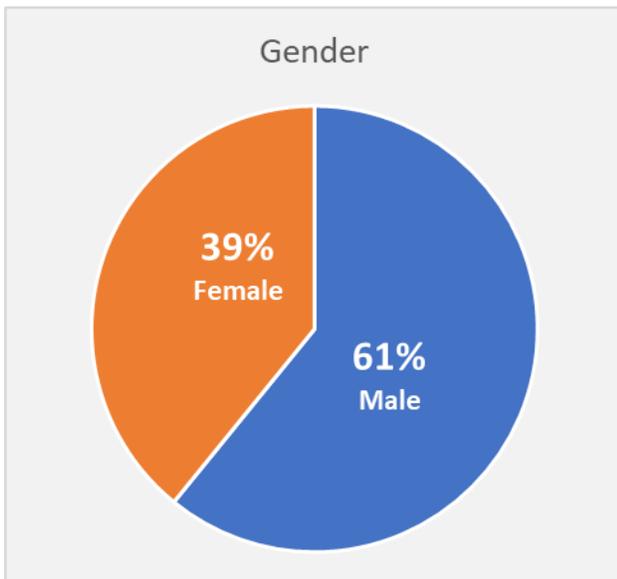
The first year of the Macon-Bibb's School-Justice Partnership also involved a variety of encounters with students and their families. Information about the SJP protocol, Notice of Offense graduated response ladder and community-based services were provided during initial encounters. When possible, an SJP introductory packet was mailed to each family. Each packet contained an introductory letter, individual service plan (for the student) and SJP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). Subsequent encounters often focused on inquiring about the status of referrals, providing support and addressing issues the family experienced.

- 143 SJP Introductory Packets were mailed to students and their parents.
- 512 calls were made to reach students and/or their families.
- 163 text message conversations were initiated to request contact, etc.
- 44 visits were made to students' homes to initiate contact with parents, discuss student's progress, etc.

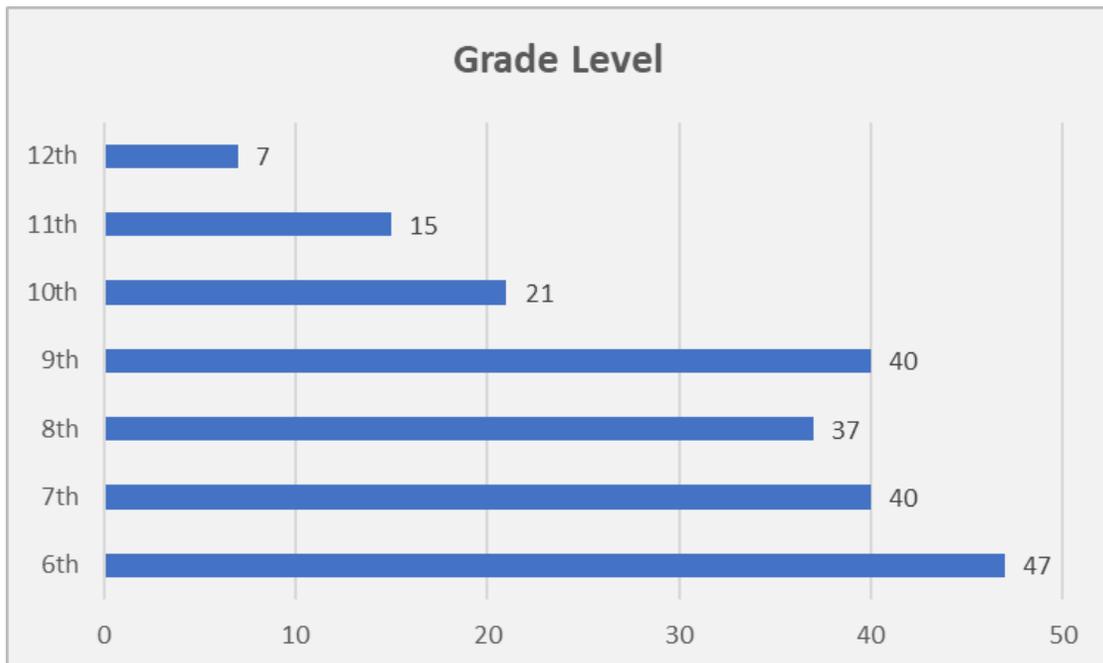
## II. PARTNERSHIP PARTICIPANT DATA

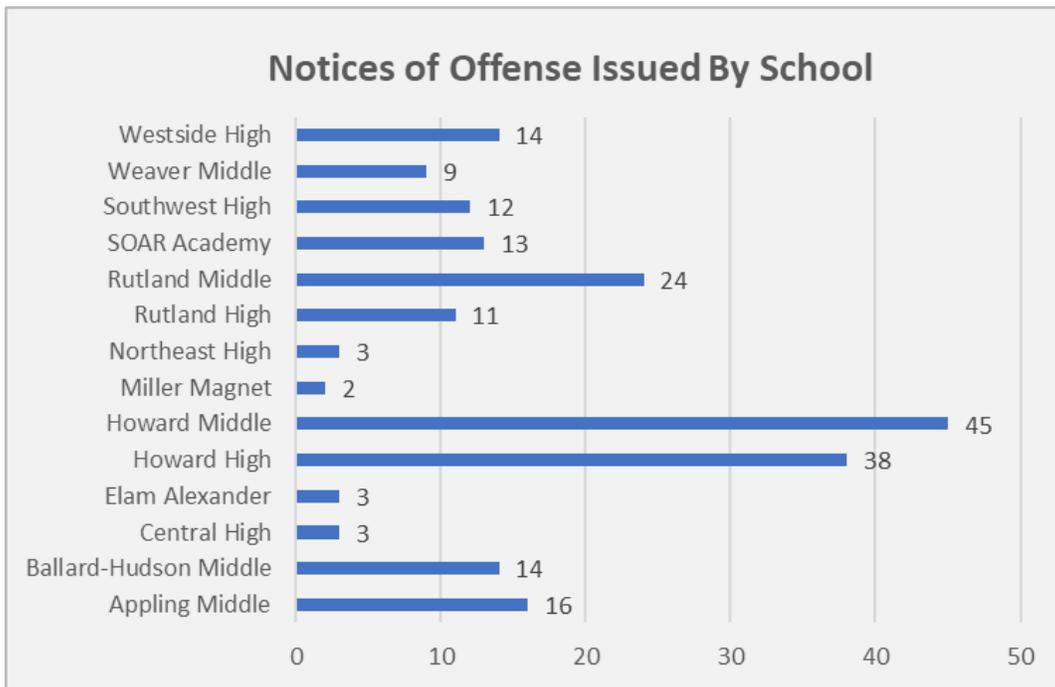
This section includes graphical depictions of the demographic information collected from Bibb County School District students who were issued a Notice of Offense during the 2018-2019 school year.

**Number of SJP Participants:** 207 middle and high students  
(non-duplicated; 217 Notices of Offense Issued)

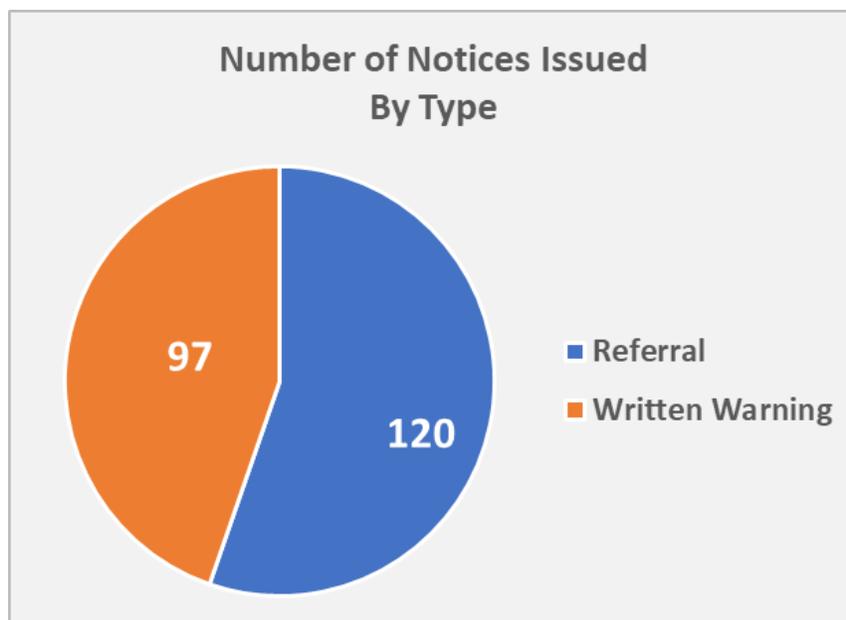


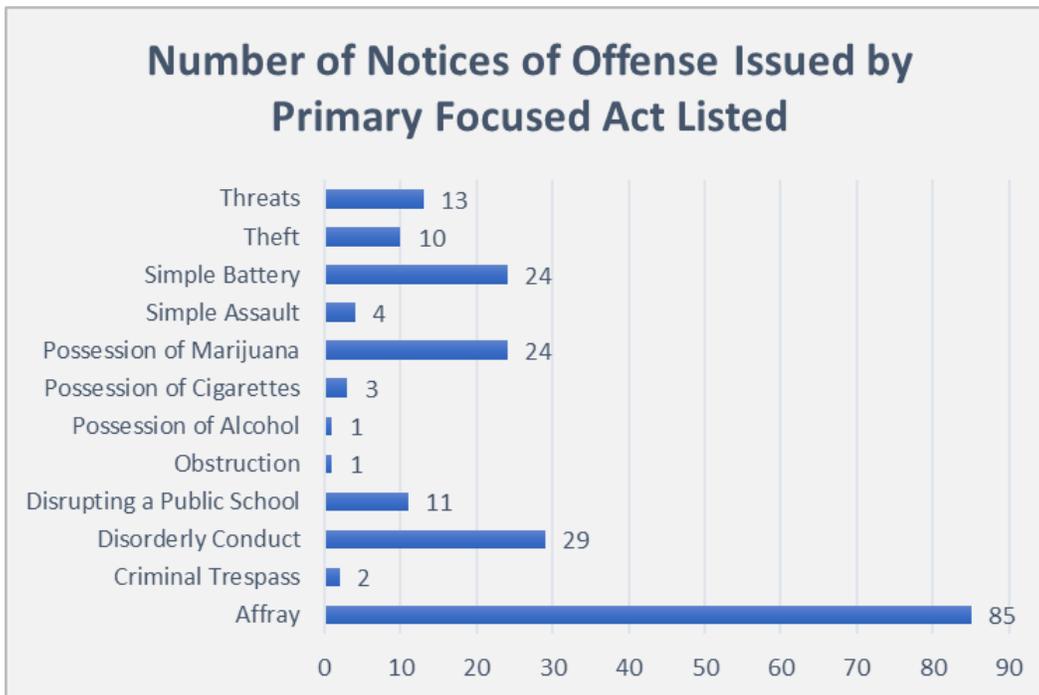
9% White; 3% Hispanic; 3% Other



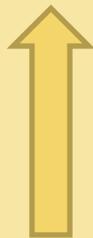


Notices of Offense were issued to students as either a “Written Warning” or “Referral”. Each Notice of Offense documented at least one of 12 possible focused acts. Ten students were issued more than one Notice of Offense during the 2018-2019 school year. Fifteen students were issued a Notice of Offense for committing more than one focused act within the same incident. Notices of Offense issued as a “Referral” were used to specify the types of services needed to address various student needs or risks.





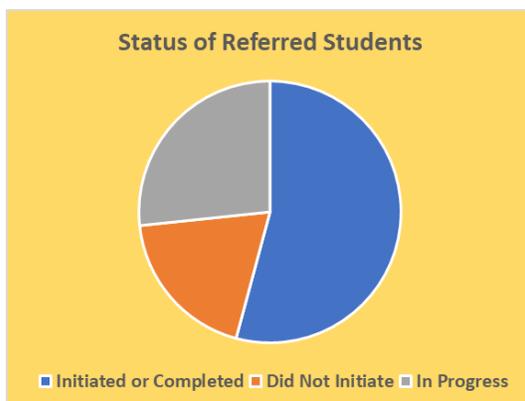
#### Frequency of Referral Options Selected by SROs



- Counseling (most frequently selected - 64% of the time)
- Community Service
- Mediation
- Counseling + Community Service
- Community Program
- Community Workshop

Of the 120 students who were referred for services:

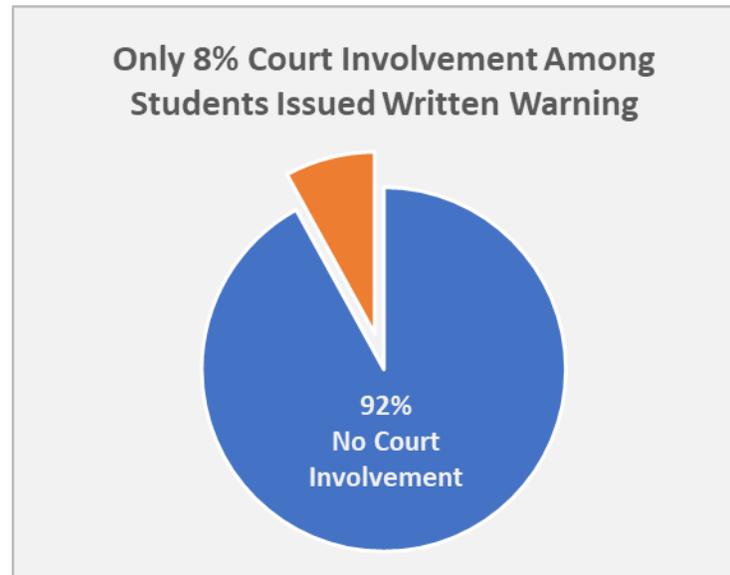
- 65 initiated or completed services by May 31, 2019 (follow-up is ongoing)
- 23 did not initiate referred service by May 31, 2019
- 32 referrals were still open and in progress on May 31, 2019 (appointments scheduled, etc.)



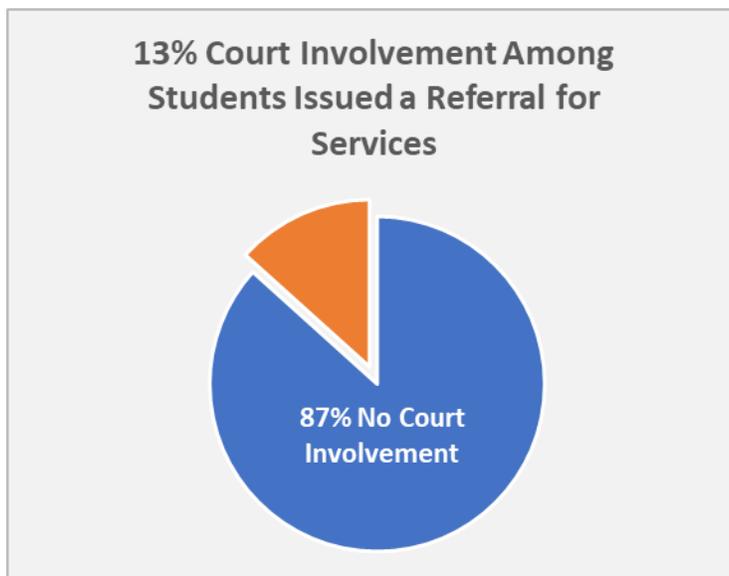
Some factors involved with students who did not complete referral include:

- Student already enrolled in services
- Student relocation
- Inability to locate student

92% of students who received a written warning did not have any court involvement during the remainder of the school year (following the initial SJP warning).



87% of students who received a referral did not have any court involvement during the remainder of the school year (following the initial SJP warning).



Of the 13% who had court involvement:

- 10 of these students had initiated or completed their SJP referral at the time of the new offense.
- 3 of these students were in the process of initiating services (appointments scheduled, etc.)

### III. PARTNERSHIP PROJECT NARRATIVE

Macon-Bibb SJP is a formal agreement between the Bibb County School District (BCSD), Macon Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office, Macon Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office, Bibb County Sheriff's Office, Bibb County Juvenile Court, Bibb County Solicitor General's Office and the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice. The agreement is based on a model launched in Clayton County, Georgia in 2006 that has since been replicated across the nation. The Macon-Bibb SJP Agreement was signed on July 17, 2018 with the goals of increasing graduation rates, reducing the amount of crime that occurs at school and addressing potential causes of student delinquency.

The Macon-Bibb SJP project employs one full-time School-Justice Partnership Coordinator whose position is funded by the Macon Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office and the Bibb County School District. During the 2018-2019 school year, the project focused on the following strategies:

1. Implementing the Notice of Offense graduated response protocol
2. Increasing knowledge and awareness of SJP through outreach, training and support
3. Facilitating the referral and completion of identified services
4. Engaging SJP partners and families
5. Addressing additional risks/needs identified among students and families (case management)
6. Tracking SJP student offenses

SJP relies on a special network of community-based providers to serve SJP youth. Enhance Behavioral Health, Community Development Systems, The Family Counseling Center of Central Georgia and On the Path Children & Family Services are organizations who have committed to providing counseling and support services to SJP youth. In addition, the New DMA, Inc. provides mediation services to youth who need assistance resolving ongoing conflict at school. The Mentors Project of Bibb County, Boys & Girls Club of Central Georgia and Bibb County Sheriff Office Outreach Section are among the programs that have been willing to serve SJP youth.

Since October 2018, the SJP Coordinator and BCSD Campus Police (SROs) have worked closely together to utilize the Notice of Offense graduated response protocol when responding to students who commit a focused act at school. This practice has diverted juveniles away from the court system. In addition, youth have been connected to various programs and services that were already in existence within the community.

Various barriers to service completion were identified during encounters with students and their families. These issues include the stress and trauma associated with bullying, neighborhood crime, poverty, homelessness, divorce, incarceration and disease. Additional discussion and effort are needed to identify SJP's role in considering and addressing the challenges faced by numerous SJP students and their families.

Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, SJP stakeholders were involved in reviewing the project's progress. These conversations have resulted in a plan to further develop and improve SJP with the following:

- Increasing parent and youth involvement in SJP planning and evaluation
- Improving efforts to evaluate SJP activities (meetings, services, etc.)
- Incorporating "screening" as a transition into counseling and other services
- Expanding outreach to include additional audiences
- Focusing on workshops as a worthwhile resource (and transition into other services)

Overall, Macon-Bibb's first year with SJP has resulted in positive experiences for those who were involved with the project. A significant increase was noted in the perception of the project's purpose among SROs from October 2018 to February 2019. In addition, service providers continue to offer positive remarks regarding the project's effort to connect youth to needed services. So not surprisingly - "thank you" is the most common sentiment that families use when they approach the end of a SJP encounter.

Macon-Bibb youth are so worth it!

**Tajalyn Woodruff**  
**School-Justice Partnership Coordinator**  
**June 12, 2019**