



JJPOC Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2021
2pm-3:30pm
Zoom Conference Call

Attendance:

Marc Pelka
Rep. Anthony Nolan
Sen. Gary Winfield
Christina Quaranta
Rep. Craig Fishbein
Erica Bromley
Macklin Roman
Janeen Reid
Hector Glynn
Marissa M. Halm
Rep. Greg Howard
Judge Patrick Carroll
Judge Bernadette Conway

Gary Roberge
Tais Ericson
Atty. Christine Rapillo
Brian Casinghino
Comm. Vanessa Dorantes
Angel Quiros
Desi Nesmith
Amy Marracino
Lisa Sementilli
Stacy Schulman

Chief Joshua Bernegger
Chief Fred Spagnolo
Sarah Eagan
Natasha Pierre
TYJI Staff:
William Carbone
Danielle Cooper
Sue Cusano
Kelly Orts
Donna Pfrommer

Welcome and Introductions

Undersecretary Marc Pelka filled in for Deputy Secretary Kostas Diamantis of OPM. He introduced Maurice Reeves, who will be joining the OPM team as a staff attorney aiding with grant applications and policy work.

Acceptance of Minutes of JJPOC

Senator Winfield asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the March 18, 2021 meeting. The motion to accept the minutes was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Update on 2019 OJJDP Form Grants Program, Title II, Part B

The Tow Youth Justice Institute presented an update on the OJJDP grant. The 2019 Cooperative Agreement addresses racial and ethnic disparities through local and statewide strategies, which started in January of 2021. The goal of partnering with the Center for Children’s Law and Policy is to develop a road map for the JJPOC’s RED workgroup. Their subcontract has been received as of April 1st and work is underway. RYASAP’s goal is to use restorative practices in the Bridgeport Public Schools; their contract will be finalized soon and work will begin in the fourth quarter of the first year. The 2018 Cooperative Agreement, which addresses achieving positive youth outcomes for safer and healthier communities, is going on its third year. CT Youth Services Association (CYSA) went on a virtual platform where they were able to provide Restorative Justice

101 and 201 training, but the advanced training needs to be done in person. However, they expanded their training and the virtual platform allowed for more participants. CYSA was able to provide a significant number of trainings and technological assist services. The Center for Children's Advocacy's goal was to reduce the number of minority youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. They were able to expand to Hamden and Norwalk and by going virtual, they also saw an increase in participants. CCA follows up with committee members, school systems, law enforcement, DCF, juvenile court personnel and juvenile probation department.

Dr. Danielle Cooper introduced goal 3 of the OJJDP grant, which is a chance to look at research at the intersection between goal 1, the front end and diversion, and goal 2, the work of racial and ethnic disparities. Goal 3 is what happens if we focus on cities in Connecticut based on data from racial disparities. This proactive approach will allow us to summarize what is being understood about JRBs, who is working and servicing the youth in our communities, and feedback through interviews.

Presentation of 2021 Work Plans

Diversion Work Plan: The Diversion Workgroup decided to re-engage the truancy subgroup on a monthly basis to try and identify and address some. The school-specific sub work for raising the minimum age, will continue to meet and make recommendations for handling behavioral issues and crisis situations so 911 does not need to be called. Dependent on the JJPOC bill, the IOYouth recommendation regarding alternatives to arrest will begin planning in terms of operationalizing alternatives to arrest and creating guidelines, procedures and recommendations. The other IOYouth recommendation regarding JRB/YSB pilot and landscape analysis are tasks that are still being discussed.

RED Work Plan: This work plan is very dependent on the JJPOC. The SRO Subgroup is interested in exploring a new system to train school resource officers. They will also look into what kind of data is out there regarding school resource officers and their interactions with students. As the workgroup continues to work with CCLP, they will focus on community engagement and produce a tool kit to help address issues of RED. They will also work with the racial profiling advisory board to define pedestrian stops.

Incarceration Work Plan: The current reentry and wraparound services subgroup is broken up into two parts; one focused on CSSD to strengthen the re-entry policies and another group focused on DOC to do the same in their facilities. Workgroup tasks will continue to focus on issues brought up in the report by OCA. These areas include mental health, programming education, isolation,

restrictive housing, and family contact available to youth. Additional related projects, dependent on the JJPOC bill, include banning the use of chemical agents under the age of 18 in correctional facilities and consolidation of services for pre-trial youth.

Community Expertise Work Plan: The workgroup previously separated the adult and youth meetings, but have decided to merge the two moving forward. The workgroup did not previously have specific tasks, but will work on identifying some in their work plan. In addition to continuous engagement with youth and families, they will work to identify community engagement events and training for JJPOC members, survey communities for feedback on the JJPOC work, and be responsible for JJPOC orientation. They will also formulize their workgroup organization and structure to be more efficient.

Cross-Agency Data Sharing Work Plan: The workgroup will finalize the data request form to help the other workgroups. They are also developing a tool kit for interagency data sharing and discussing the impact of COVID-19 on system data.

Education Work Plan: The education committee is focused on the transfer of responsibility for the oversight of education of all youth in the juvenile justice facilities to DCF. DCF is designing a new administrative unit and leading an implementation team to create a draft operational plan. Dependent on the JJPOC bill, the committee will also create an implementation team focused on the study and planning to eliminate expulsion and suspension in schools. Lastly, dependent on the JJPOC bill, the committee will work on a pilot program in 10 school districts for the collection of data on 911 calls that have been initiated by schools. It was observed that the data collecting effort with 911 and 211 can be helpful with RED's workgroup efforts with SROs.

2019-2020 Presentation on School Suspension CSDE and Expulsion Disciplinary Strategies

CSDE presented on school suspension and expulsion disciplinary strategies. They have been collecting this data for the state board of education since 2013. Suspension rate is a student-level metric, one student might have multiple incidents, but the suspension rate is actually the percentage of students who received at least one suspension or expulsion. School policy violations are the discretionary types of behaviors that can lead to a suspension or expulsion but they don't have to. Restorative practices can lead away from suspensions and expulsions. Overall, suspension rates have declined. The suspension rate is Black/African American students is 1 out of 10 suspended/expelled. Hispanic Latinx students 1 out of 14 suspended/expelled, white students 1 out of 34 suspended/expelled. A finding is that Black/African American and Hispanic/ Latinx students are more likely to be involved in more than one incident at a much greater rate than

white students. Black/African American and Hispanic/Latina students were more likely to receive a more severe sanction than white students for similar behavior.

Some districts have specified student behavioral challenges mid-morning, so a solution that was brought up was implementing school breakfast. Emphasizing that the remedies, the support, and the necessary actions that schools take in this regard are vital. CSDE is focused on 5 specific CSDE areas, data monitoring and support strategies, policy guidance and professional learning, charter schools and grades pre-K to grade two supports, Connecticut school discipline collaborative, and social-emotional learning.

In regards to data monitoring and school suspension, they found that removing students result in losing valuable instructional time, which can lower academic performance retention, increase dropout rates, and cause involvement with the juvenile justice system. The primary goal for the early indicator tool is to allow timely student interventions based on support levels if it is low, medium, or high. Core areas can be seen such as attendance, suspensions, mobility, achievement data, and course performance.

Some CSDE areas of focus are data monitoring and support strategies. They are developing a statewide tiered monitoring and support system for reducing suspension and expulsion. An early indicator tool, such as Edsight secure, would allow for timely intervention depending on the incident and student. The delivery system cannot be one department and has to be systemic. It is important to design a roadmap for coherency for the districts so they can align their efforts through the structure. The partnerships work very hard externally and internally to build collaborations.

There was further discussion on how to address the different treatment of two students for the same offense, partnering with the Department of Children and Families and CSSD, as well as professional learning supports for districts with outlier numbers. There was discussion on trying to get schools to move away from zero tolerance policies and toward more restorative practices. They have developed supporting alternative educational programs that help students if they are suspended or expelled from school. They also make sure that families are an important partner in a child's school experience. There is a mandatory webinar to help districts and classroom teachers to de-escalate situations and the skill set to work through the situation with the child so they feel supported and welcomed. One of the main key actions is the COVID 19 addendum 10 for people to rethink discipline tactics because of COVID.

JPOC Update Bill

The Substitute for Raised House Bill 6667 passed out of the Judiciary Committee. There were originally 20 sections, but only 13 sections remained. The sections are as follows:

1. Raising the age of jurisdiction from 7-10 years
- 2 & 3. DCF implementation team's operational plan is to create an education unit for oversight of education services in juvenile justice facilities
4. Re-entry Coordinators
5. Local, regional boards of education and the diplomas that a young person would get if they have the credits.
6. Develop a standardized system of conversion credits
7. Timeliness of educational record transfers for incarcerated youth
8. Exploring alternatives for suspension and expulsion
9. Automatic ratio of certain juvenile records and elimination of the petition requirement that existed in our current law
10. Committee to study telephone call rates and the commissary needs for persons 18 to 21
11. Banning chemical agents on incarcerated youth, with a delayed implementation date
12. Pre-arrest diversion
13. Consolidation of services for pre-trial youth

Next Meeting: May 20th, 2-3:30PM

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm

*Audio and/or video of the meeting can be found on CTN: <https://ctn.com/ctnplayer.asp?odID=18519>