



## **JJPOC Truancy Subgroup Meeting Summary**

January 15, 2019 9:30 – 11:00 AM

450 Columbus Blvd, Hartford, State Department of Education

### **Update on the DCFs response to educational neglect**

DCF has created a new online referral system that they are piloting with “non-emergency” school referrals. What people are seeing is that DCF is not accepting educational neglect referrals. On the new DCF referral form online it clearly states that educational neglect for 12 years old and above is when parents are not trying to get the kids back into school. What we have seen is that DCF is not accepting these referrals for educational neglect cases nor voluntary services. A discussion ensued about the problems with DCF not accepting these referrals because they are not helping families who can be reaching out for help or need resources to help them get their child into school.

### **Research**

Dr. Danielle Cooper presented on the current research that she is doing. Currently she is working on a project with a grant of OJJDP tackling systems reform and administrative advocacy. End product of this study is to create a profile of 6-8 cities in CT. The research is looking at youth who have been involved in either or all of the following systems; the juvenile justice system, the adult correctional system, or the DCF behavioral health system. Dr. Cooper is looking at health information, educational information, and justice involvement data and creating a profile of what is happening to these youth when they come into the system. She also wants to gather what JRBs are collecting and would like to share the profile information with them once it is collected so they can see what is happening in their areas. This may help them with creating appropriate interventions.

A second research project Dr. Cooper is conducting is an administrative advocacy project. Currently she has launched a survey to 750 people through the four major cities in CT. This survey is targeting youth, parents who have youth, and older population who currently have adult children. This survey is looking at what the population knows about the juvenile justice system, the recent FWSN changes and what they think should be happening with status offenders.

Both projects are currently being worked on.

### **Definition of Truancy**

The group began to discuss the issues with the definition of truancy and how a child is labeled truant and even if they then increase their attendance, they are still labeled as truant. This was a brief discussion on beginning to think if we should be looking at the definition and trying to change it due to the recent court changes.

The group discussed that they want to better support schools. They want to work towards finding out what the schools need as support and begin to do that for them. One idea was a toolkit to provide to them, that has different truancy interventions, but also all the information they need to make a referral to



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their local YSB. This toolkit should also include information on what services YSBs can offer to youth and their parents. \*Michelle Hamilton and Dana Forry both provided PowerPoints via email for review.

### **Next Steps:**

Review powerpoints

Discuss what group would want to see in the toolkit

Continue discussion on definitions of truancy, Dr. Cooper will provide information she has gathered on definitions used throughout the country.

**\*Next Meeting: February 25, 2019 from 1:00-2:30pm at State Department of Education**