



JJPOC Education Workgroup MEETING

MARCH 25TH, 2024

9:30 am- 11:00 am

Web-Based Meeting – Zoom

THIS MEETING DOES CONTAIN A PRESENTATION- DISCUSSIONS AND UPDATES

Attendance

Rep. Robyn Porter	John Tarka	Tina Mitchell	Emily Leen	TYJI Staff
Julie Dougherty	Glen Worthy	Amy Vatner	Brianna Cyr	Brittany LaMarr
Laura Furr	Marisa Halm	Kristen Mongillo	Joanne Tremblay Jackson	Paul Klee
Kelly Orts	Andrew Feinstein	Erica Bromley	Brianna Cyr	Erica Nowakowski
Gavin Craig	Virginia Brown	Yecenia Casiano		
Agata Raszczyk-Lawska	James Mandracchia	Nancy DeCrescenzo		

Meeting Summary

1. Legislative Update

- TYJI reported that HB5339 is in Office of Fiscal analysis on 3.25.24. Additionally, TYJI reported that SB380, which covers issues like school suspensions and reporting of arrests has been filed with Legislative Commissioner's Office.
 - Workgroup members then raised questions about the origin of the bill and its support because it came as a shock to many members of the JJPOC and the workgroups. Concerns are also voiced about disciplinary records affecting high school admissions.

2. Suspension and Expulsion Workgroup

- The committee discussed integrating the suspension and expulsion work group's tasks into the larger education work group.
- TYJI informed workgroup members what work was completed by the Suspension and Expulsion workgroup



- PA 23-167, Section 76-78. Department of Education shall provide support, on site monitoring, and oversight of schools that are implementing strategies to reduce number of ISS, OSS and expulsions. Does not need to report to JJPOC
- PA 23-167, Section 81. Department of Education shall submit a report to JJPOC reporting educational experiences of youth who are expelled and placed an alternative educational opportunity. Report to JJPOC by January 1, 2025
- PA 23-167 Section 82. Connecticut school discipline collaborative shall: develop guidance to reduce OSS/Expulsions in grades pre-K to 2nd and provide evidence based and developmentally appropriate definitions and examples of “conduct violent or sexual in nature” in context that may allow for OSS of a pre-K to 2nd grade recommend developmentally appropriate interventions for students pre-K to 2nd grade as an alternative for OSS
- Suicide Risk Assessment. PA 23-167, Section 79. Department of Education will provide Board of Education a list of recommended suicide risk assessments (may include but not limited to Columbia suicide severity rating scale). No later than January 1, 2024.
- School Policy for Suicide Prevention. PA 23-167, section 80. Each local and regional Board of Education shall adopt A written policy and procedure dealing with youth suicide prevention and youth suicide attempts. Establish a student assistance program to identify risk factors based on the statewide strategic suicide prevention plan developed by the Connecticut suicide Advisory Board, procedure of intervention, referral services, training for teachers and school professionals. No later than July 1, 2023
- The suspension and expulsion workgroup was unable to provide monthly updates on the previously mentioned and hopefully the education workgroup will take over the updates
- The proposal suggests structurally embedding suspension and expulsion under the education work group while maintaining a subgroup to delve into specific issues. The recommendations from this subgroup would then be vetted by the larger committee and eventually presented to the JJPOC. The process ensures transparency and allows for thorough examination of recommendations before finalization. The chairs of work groups are also meeting to set the work plan for 2024, although there is uncertainty about the composition of the suspension and expulsion subgroup's leadership.

3. Center for Children Advocacy's Report Presentation

- Report on Missed Cues and Lost opportunities a look at Connecticut's youth incarcerated in DOC



- 10 Male youth from Connecticut's largest cities who ended up in the adult correctional system under the age of 18 the purpose of the report is to facilitate systemic change based on patterns and lesson learned from their individual cases
- Based on findings the Educational recommendations are:
 - Connecticut's largest urban centers and alliance districts the state should require:
 - The use of a trauma screening tool to inform services delivered through MTSS (CATS)
 - The use of an in-depth assessment of acute and complex trauma as a part of a comprehensive special education evaluation
 - The state should develop multiple mechanisms to monitor the fidelity of the child find process for kind of gets largest urban/Alliance districts to ensure the needs of students with disabilities are being met as follows
 - At the district level, the state should also require these districts have their own child quality assurance process in place to make timely referrals when child find criteria are present
 - At the state level, develop auditing process of these districts during middle school grades requiring random review of students meeting either truancy or discipline child finding criteria
 - To increase the comprehensive nature of evaluations, the state should renew and update guidance around the requirement for evaluations to be inclusive of assessment of language, consistent with Child find,
 - State should provide guidance around the use of restorative alternatives to harsh discipline (OSS and expulsion for non-significant behaviors)
 - Use Discipline Collaborative and other means to highlight best restorative practices and incentivize districts
 - For students with disabilities, monitor fidelity of manifestation process, use of FBAs and development of BIPs by auditing identified special education students in alliance districts for discipline and requiring reporting around MDRs and FBA
 - Require districts to report detailed information around expelled special educational students including programming received
 - State should require professional development for all staff in juvenile justice settings to receive training:
 - On functional impact of trauma on learning, social, and emotional development, and implications of justice system involvement for youth with trauma histories



- On implications and manifestations of underlying communication and language disorders related to problem behaviors and learning disorders
- Justice System recommendations:
 - Increase and expand access of educational advocates and attorneys in a program like ESS to youth had the following decision points:
 - upon initial arrest
 - upon referral to community based diversion system upon referral of a youth to adult court
 - enhance existing ESS referrals from juvenile probation by establishing an internal educational expert to prioritize/qualify referral
 - Enhance the role of the JJEU staff to support students with disabilities (condition upon parental consent)
 - Provide training to JJEU staff to do comprehensive educational record reviews and screen students for child fine
 - Make JJEU staff stakeholder and special education process
 - Remove minors from Department of Corrections and place them in juvenile justice system
- Q&A
 - Workgroup member asked how will these recommendations be funded.
 - Presenter reported that they hope that out of these recommendations' legislation can be written to provide funds.

Next Meeting: