



JJPOC Education Workgroup MEETING

MAY 20TH, 2024

2:00 pm- 3:30 pm

Web-Based Meeting – Zoom

THIS MEETING DOES NOT CONTAIN A PRESENTATION- DISCUSSIONS AND UPDATES

Attendance

Kim Traverso	John Tarka	Amy Vatner	TYJI Staff
James Mandracchia	Erica Bromley	Chlo- Anne Bobrowski	Brittany LaMarr
Tina Mitchell	John Saccu	Andrew Feinstein	Paul Klee
Vin Duva	Jennifer Lussier	Rep. Toni Walker	Erika Nowakowski
Dr. Glen Worthy	Andrew Ferguson		
Yecenia Casiano	Rep. Robyn Porter		

Meeting Summary

1. 199K Commission Update

- The 119k Commission was sent out along with the meeting agenda to all workgroup members, so they were asked to follow along during the presentation.
- 119K stands for 119,000 young people in Connecticut who are currently at risk of not graduating or are experiencing disconnection from education or employment
- Goal of commission is to create a strategy on how to address this crisis and get young people in Connecticut back on track
 - The commission intends to publish a strategy by October 2024
- Since March, the committee is gathering input from various state agencies to inform their strategy.
 - There are eight different ways that stake holders are engaging with this commission



- Monthly Regional Public Meetings have gotten the most attention. Topics have included/will include
 - Evaluating current Systems meant for young people and planning to better coordinate them
 - Causes of Homelessness, Housing Insecurity and Poverty
 - Child welfare and justice system involvement
 - May 29th, 2024, at 6pm at the Town Council in Trumbull as well as live streamed on the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) Facebook Page
 - These meetings accept public testimony as well as panelists who can bring ideas and hold discussions and question and answer sessions with the commissioners
 - Meeting dates are available on <https://www.119kcommission.org/news>
- The commission is also hearing from young people about their experiences and recommendations
- They are also taking idea submissions through the 119k Commission website.
- They are holding local forums
- They are hosting other communities' (e.g. Chicago) to share their ideas and experience as far as how they have handled this issue
- Research is being conducted
 - Will be shared in April 2025
- Is the 119k Commission working with the Dalio Report in any way?
 - Yes
 - Dalio inspired this commission
 - However, Dalio is not the only information source being used, the commission is considering all information.
- Is there any funding coming from the Dalio Foundation? If not, how is this goal going to be accomplished?
 - The commission would like to first figure out what their strategy is and then figure out how to fund it.
- Key Players in this issue need to align their efforts instead of going in different directions
 - Come to Regional Meetings
 - Submit ideas through the website
 - Attend Connecticut State Quarter Meetings
 - Update 119k Commission on Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee Strategic Plan



- How do we coordinate all 169 Boards of Education in Connecticut?
- How will newly passed legislation on efforts to compile data tie into this plan?
 - Legislation defined Disconnected Youth
 - There is a requirement that the state annually release a report on who is at risk of disconnection
 - There is a requirement that the state release a plan to better connect P20 Win with non-profit service providers who are supporting this population.

2. CSDE

- SB380 did not move forward, as such it will not be discussed
- New focus will be on House Bill 5437 and Public Act 24-45
 - There is new language regarding Preschool-2nd Grade
 - In School Suspension cannot last longer than 5 days, used to be 10 days
 - Out of School Suspension still has a limit of 10 days
 - The word “serious” was removed
 - Serious replaced “violent or sexual in nature”
 - New language is “behavior that causes serious physical harm”
 - Manifestation and Determination is the same as before
 - When a child is given Out of School Suspension, the school district has 10 days to determine if that student needs any services according to an Individualized Education Plan.
 - Basically, was the behavior a result of a disability?
 - If the behavior was because of a disability, legislature outlines processes for the schools to take
 - Is there an appeal process for suspension and expulsion?
 - The district may issue a policy allowing an appeal process, but the state does not mandate it.
 - Ideally, at a suspension and expulsion hearing, the student and their family have every right to review evidence before hand, present witnesses to dispute the school’s claim or present mitigating factors.
 - They can reschedule the hearing to have more time to prepare an attorney or advocate
 - Connecticut Judicial is representing 500 students with pending suspensions/expulsions free of charge
 - How can we make the suspension/expulsion process more uniform across independent districts?
 - Parents are afraid of challenging an action taken by the school district because they are concerned the Department of Children and Families will come to their home



- In one instance, a parent tried to advocate for her daughter, and she was banned from her daughter's school. When her daughter had an emergency that required a parent to come to the school, the mother was arrested.
- The committee was urged to review these pieces of legislation
- 2023 Statutes Regarding the collaborative and the COP
 - Connecticut State Department of Education has partnered with The Strategic Education Research Partnership (SERP) to present on disproportionality based on race and ethnic background (Tier 3 & 4)
 - They have been using 2 formulas
 - Relative Risk Index
 - Suspension Rate (In school, out of School, and Expulsions)
 - They are highlighting districts with high disproportionalities to work with
 - They have updated their Equity Series to align with race and ethnic backgrounds
 - Aim to help people understand EdSight data and use it to inform their decisions
 - School Discipline Agenda
 - Internal outline of a report regarding school discipline practices and the benefits of not involving students in the justice system that is due to the CT General Assembly on July 1, 2024
 - Alternative Education Update
 - Working on Report of The Number of Students who have been expelled and placed in alternative education over the prior school year, types of alternative education, and engagement and outcome management for those students, which is due to the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee on January 1st, 2025.
 - They are planning on sending out surveys to Alternative Education Facilities, the Local Education Agents that are sending students to Alternative Education, and the superintendents of students who were not sent to Alternative Education Settings
 - They are hoping to send out a memo to the superintendents informing them of this survey and then send out the survey by the end of May 2024. Survey results are expected by August 1, 2024.
 - Discussion
 - Data in report should be by district



- Students who are expelled for the most part are entitled to these Alternative Education Opportunities (AEOs).
- Have members of the education workgroup visit and evaluate Alternative Education Opportunities (AEO) facilities.
 - Maybe not a great idea because districts don't have enough resources to run a reputable Alternative Education Opportunity
 - Regardless of budget, we need to redefine what we are looking for in Alternative Education Opportunities
 - The state can help the districts reallocate funds they already have
 - Evaluation is required by statute, so the money is there no matter what
- Suicide Assessments
 - Memo has been sent out to Superintendents and Student Support Services regarding the state's usage of the Columbia Scale as well as the new language regarding suicide prevention

3. DCF-JJEU Update

- STAR Program
 - Universal screener to assess reading and math abilities of students to instruct better and better meet their needs
 - Working on second round of testing to measure student growth
 - STAR Data has been helpful for clinicians during NBT
 - Helps determine what lessons are developmentally appropriate for students
 - Gives schools a common language to assess students
 - Still providing professional development as far as how to use STAR data to help support students
- Learning Walks
 - Going through classes and analyzing quality of teaching and giving teachers timely feedback
 - Common findings so far include
 - More professional development is needed around teaching multi-lingual learners.
 - Will be doing professional development at Manson regarding teaching multi-lingual learners



- Not trying to redo existing professional development, but rather incorporate new professional development based on data
- Update on Collaboration with Court Support Services Division of the CT Judicial Branch
 - Juvenile Justice Education Unit is now included on multidisciplinary team meetings for students in Bridgeport
 - Allows Juvenile Justice Education Unit to discuss students educationally, socially, emotionally, clinically, and create a success plan to administer to the districts
 - Juvenile Justice Education Unit and Court Support Services Division are discussing including juvenile detention officers in schools and how they can work collaboratively with teachers to promote student success
 - In Hartford, the Juvenile Justice Education Unit is introducing themselves and the work of their Pupil Service Specialists (PSS) to the Juvenile Detention Officers (JDO) and teachers.
 - Also working on helping staff and develop wrap around programming for Community Diversion Respite Center (CDRC)
- Update on Reentry work of Pupil Service Specialists (CDRC)
 - Facilitating reentry across all districts
 - Reentry circles
 - Ensuring students are back in school as fast as possible and are in the correct environment as determined by a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting
 - Juvenile Justice Education Unit is in the Mental Health meetings that happen weekly
 - Main purpose is to provide support to students reentering school after hospitalization that don't have a Pupil Service Specialist (PSS)
 - Right now, they are working on notifying school districts of the return of these students
 - Right now, students have just been returning to school without the schools being notified.
- Discussion
 - JJPOC needs to regroup on strategic planning day in July to assess what has been done and establish what still must be done to reach JJEU goals.
 - Learning walks happen at Aces, Manson, and the Hamden CSSD location, not Bridgeport CSSD location yet.
 - Should districts who don't have support services in place for students reentering be charged?



- No, only larger schools districts are statutorily obligated to have services in place, and they have been compliant with JJEU's efforts
- Does CSSD have their own AEO institutions?
 - No, these institutions are private, but JJEU hopes to expand these programs so they're available all over the state
- Can we have an exact definition of youth that JJEU is serving individually?
- Need to do more for communication with families.

4. Subgroup Updates

- Just reconvened meetings under the Education workgroup umbrella.
- Have a workplan
 - Review 2016-17 legislation around the removal of truancy and defiance of school rules from court jurisdiction and statutory requirements for schools with a high truancy rate
 - Inquire of SDE what schools are doing to deal with a higher truancy rate
 - Review an OLR report on truancy and chronic absenteeism
 - Coordinate with 199k Commission and attend monthly meetings
 - Continue to support the new data sharing language that stipulates that if a YSB enters a memorandum of understanding with the school district, the school will share data with the YSB and vice versa.
 - Redesign measurement of success and redefine truancy
 - Evaluate the LEAP program, specifically with older students
 - Discuss barriers, gaps in services, and capacity in the community
 - Schools making truancy referrals too late
 - Materials and marketing to promote attendance
- Discussion
 - Possibly use STAR testing as a measure of success?

Next Meeting: July 29th, 2:00 PM-3:30 PM