

JJPOC Education Workgroup Meeting Summary
March 31st, 2025
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm
Web Based Meeting- Zoom

Attendance

Amy Vatner
Andrew Feinstein
Charles Hewes
Erica Bromley
Dr. Glen Worthy
John Cotton
John Saccu
John Tarka
Kristina Baldwin
Lisa Simone

Lydia Santiago
Nancy DeCrescenzo
Nancy Shasha
Nieka Thompson
Simone Harris
Tina Mitchell
Veron Beaulieu

TYJI Staff
Brittany LaMarr

Meeting Objectives:

For the March 31st, 2025, Education work group, there were two presentations. Before the presentations the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) reviewed and answered questions regarding the Alternative Education Opportunity Report. Department of Children and Family (DCF) then presented on the Juvenile Justice Education Unit, followed by Connecticut's Youth Service Association's (CYSA) presentation on the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) and truancy process

Meeting Summary:

- Review of the CSDE Alternative Education Opportunity Report
 - CSDE clarified the timeline on the discipline report, as the department is finalizing the report to be relative to all students in CT, no exact date has been set.
- DCF: Juvenile Justice Education Unit Presentation
 - The data-driven unit aims to make decisions that would improve educational outcomes for youth justice. There are four key elements JJEU tracks to form an accountability framework.
 - STAR assessments is the universal screener across all facilities and it provides teachers opportunities to make better decisions when planning lessons. The data collected from STAR assessment between September 2024 to February 2025 demonstrated a 5% increase in reading scores and a

4% increase in math scores in Court Support Services Division (CSSD) facilities.

- Manson Youth Institute (MYI) saw similar trends when assessing data from STAR assessments between Fall 2023 and Fall 2024. There was a 3% increase in reading scores and 2% increase in math scores.
- Credit recovery programs such as Virtual Academy is to help students who are under credited and give them an opportunity to retake previously failed classes. Between 2023 and 2024 there has been an increase in enrollment, senior graduates, and credits earned through this program.
 - The program is free as it is sponsored by DCF.
- To ensure students successfully transition back into the community, youth justice facilities follow a mandate that staff are the primary supervisors of the student.
- To ensure students and their families feel supported JJEU remains in contact with the student and school. Not just discussing the immediate effects, but also the long terms effects of reintegration.
- The program also accesses the classroom to collaborate with teachers to help professional development while acknowledging the great work.
- Connecticut Youth Services Association: Presentation on the Truancy Process
 - School rules were pulled out of youth court due to mental health issues. It was established that court was not the place to issue the needed services for youth charged with non-criminal offenses. In 2018, all superintendents received referrals for the new recommended process.
 - The current form from the Youth Service Bureaus (YSB) requires a parent signature. The youth is screened in. There was an emphasis on the importance of case management.
 - Big systems gaps within the Youth Service Bureaus include the lack of funding, in result there is little time spent on case management and programs such as education advocacy in inaccessible. There is also a lack of community-based practices, and a lack of measurement for success for youth.
 - Explained the next steps for the process; including, the MOU process, finding ways to track more data at the YSB level and state level, and that staff are adequately trained in handling cases.

Next Meeting: May 26th, 2025

