



JJPOC Suspension and Expulsion Workgroup Meeting

JUNE 16TH, 2023

11:00 AM- 12:00 PM

Web-Based Meeting – Zoom

THIS MEETING DOES NOT CONTAIN A PRESENTATION- DISCUSSIONS AND UPDATES

Attendance

Amy Vatner	John Frassinelli	TYJI Staff
Andrew Feinstein	Kathryn Meyer	Paul Klee
Fran Rabinowitz	Sharmese Walcott	Brittany LaMarr
Jennifer Lussier	Steven Hernandez	Danielle Cooper

Meeting Summary

1. Youth Focus Group Updates:

- Two focus groups have been conducted to gather the youth perspective and insights regarding suspension and expulsion.
 - The outreach efforts have been extensive, targeting both community and school-based groups.
 - Focus groups were held both virtually and in-person to accommodate participation.
 - The participants included students who have direct experience with exclusionary discipline and those who have only observed it in their peers.
- A report and presentation will be prepared for the suspension and expulsion workgroup in the fall.
- Challenges have been encountered in gathering a significant number of students in one place at the same time and obtaining parental consent forms. However, the voices of 13 children have been heard so far.
- Data collection for this project will continue until July 1, with plans for three focus groups. Additional collaborations are welcomed if interested parties wish to participate.



- It's noted that the Tow Youth Justice Research Team currently lacks approval through the University of New Haven IRB to collect information from children under the age of 13 and their parents. This may be pursued in the upcoming year, pending approval and interest from the workgroup.
- The focus groups aim to understand young people's perspectives on suspension and expulsion, as they may have different insights from adults regarding exclusionary discipline and its acceptability.

2. Legislative Updates - Senate Bill 1:

- Education legislation put forward by this workgroup and JJPOC was integrated into Senate Bill 1 as an amendment.
- Originally, the workgroup and JJPOC put forth four legislative recommendations, but there were alterations, including changes to who conducts the study and the creation of positions for monitoring.
- Key components of the bill include:
 - Monitoring of implementation plans by the Department of Education for schools with higher rates of disproportionate suspensions and expulsions.
 - The School Discipline Collaborative advising the Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education on reducing overall suspension and the disproportionate use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions.
 - A report to JJPOC by the Department of Education on the educational experiences of youth placed in alternative educational opportunities within about a year and a half.
 - The School Discipline Collaborative developing guidance to reduce school suspensions and expulsions in grades PreK-2, providing evidence-based definitions and examples of conduct considered violent or sexual in nature.
 - The Department of Education to provide a list of recommended suicide risk assessments by no later than Jan. 1, 2024.
 - Each local and regional board of education to adopt a written policy procedure for dealing with youth suicide, prevention, and suicide attempts by no later than July 1, 2023.
- There was a discussion regarding the exact interpretation of the bill's provisions.
- The bill addresses school climate and aims to reform the handling of exclusionary practices.



- It replaces the previous due process, retribution, and anti-bullying law with a recognition of a wide range of actions considered abusive. Services are provided to both the perpetrator and the victim of these actions.
- The bill emphasizes addressing the behavior of the child engaging in bullying actions and providing mechanisms for behavioral change.
- Efforts are focused on encouraging school leaders and districts to implement restorative practices and engage in conversations with students and families to create inclusive and welcoming school environments.
- The bill introduces restorative practice language, emphasizing that adults are responsible for fostering a restorative school climate.
- The goal is to ensure that students receive a rich education while developing social skills and emotional regulation.
- The meeting concluded with a commitment to stay updated on the progress of these initiatives and to continue collaborative efforts in collecting information about youth experiences with suspension and expulsion.