



JJPOC Meeting Minutes

October 17th, 2019

2:00PM

1E

Attendance:

Abby Anderson	Hector Glynn	Derrick Molden	Rep. Toni Walker
Sen. Dennis Bradley	Derrick Gordon	Marc Pelka	Michael Williams
Erica Bromley	Rep. Robin Green	Maria Pirro-Simmons	Sen. Gary Winfield
Francis Carino	Susan Hamilton	Chief Marshall Porter	TYJI Staff:
Hon. Judge Patrick Carroll	Brenetta Henry	Gary Roberge	William Carbone
Hon. Judge Bernadette Conway	Brian Hill	Macklin Roman	Rashanda McCollum
Rollin Cook	John Holland	Gwen Samuel	Erika Nowakowski
Sarah Eagan	Sen. George Logan	Stacy Schulman	Kelly Orts
John Frassinelli	Eleanor Michael	Martha Stone	Catherine Parafati
			Alex Scranton

Representative Toni Walker called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Rep. Walker thanked Marc Pelka, who was filling in for Secretary McCaw as the co-chair for the meeting. Rep. Walker then welcomed the youth and families who were participating or in audience for the meeting.

Rep. Walker asked for a motion to accept the minutes for the September 19th, 2019 meeting. The motion to accept the minutes was moved, seconded and passed unanimously.

Update on Progress

William Carbone, Executive Director of the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) at the University of New Haven, welcomed Macklin Roman, Brenetta Henry, Desi Nesmith and Gwendolyn Samuel as the newest members of the JJPOC. Mr. Roman was appointed by Senator Kevin Kelly, Ms. Henry was appointed by Senator Catherine Osten, Mr. Nesmith was appointed by State Department of Education Commissioner Miguel Cardona, and Ms. Henry was appointed by Senator Len Fasano.

Mr. Carbone also informed the members of the Committee that the TYJI is currently accepting applications for the 2020 cohort of its Transforming Youth Justice Leadership Development Program. The program meets monthly from March-November and seeks mid-level professionals from state, local and non-profit/private organizations. Mr. Carbone then reviewed the agenda for today's meeting.



Mr. Carbone introduced Erica Bromley, co-chair of the Diversion Workgroup, to share the new Truancy brochure with the members of the JJPOC. The brochure was designed by the Workgroup as a tool for parents and families in response to legislation previously passed by the JJPOC that removed truancy referrals from the juvenile court system. The document explains the importance of school attendance and lists possible services that may be provided to those in need.

Preliminary Presentation on Improving Educational Services for Youth in Justice System Custody

Mr. Carbone introduced Joshua Perry, co-chair of the Education Committee. Mr. Perry gave the JJPOC members a background of the current system of educating juveniles in out-of-home placement as well as the recent history that has paved the way for the Education Committee's work. Mr. Perry identified 5 specific challenges that the Committee is looking to address in regard to the education of Connecticut's juveniles. These challenges are fragmentation, inefficiencies, quality control, inadequate specialization and expertise, and a lack of transitional supports. In order to address these challenges, the Tow Youth Justice Institute contracted Dr. Peter Leone for consulting.

Mr. Perry then introduced Dr. Peter Leone, a Professor at the University of Maryland, for his preliminary presentation on Improving Educational Services for Youth in Justice System Custody. Dr. Leone first cited examples of several states that have model educational programs. In Oklahoma, there is a charter school that serves 2 of the 3 facilities and operates through a contract with the Oklahoma Department of Education. In California, county offices of education operate schools in detention centers and other commitment facilities. In Oregon, local school districts operate schools in detention centers and commitment facilities with oversight from the Oregon Youth Authority.

While working alongside the Education Committee, Dr. Leone and the members established principles they want to model their work on. Dr. Leone presented preliminary recommendations and options in the areas of infrastructure, funding, quality control, accountability and transition/re-entry being discussed by the Education Committee. It is noted that any consensus reached in some of the following recommendations is only within the Education Committee, not the JJPOC.

- Infrastructure and Funding preliminary recommendation options:
 - A special school district should be created for education programs serving incarcerated and court-involved youth. An independent school board for this district should also be created.

In addition, the members of the Education Committee came up with the following options:

- Expansion of Unified School District #1 for all justice-involved youth. This would require USD#1 to become independent of the DOC
- A collection of providers continues to provide educational services with oversight by a newly formed legislative commission. Executive responsibility will be vested in the State Department of Education.



- A single agency or non-profit would provide educational services with oversight by a newly formed legislative commission. Executive responsibility will be vested in the State Department of Education.
- Enable the school district to receive CT average per pupil costs in addition to supplemental support for the high-need population.
- Require the special school district to achieve accreditation from an association of colleges and secondary schools within 36 months of its creation.
- Quality and Control preliminary recommendation options:
 - Develop a framework for education accountability that includes educators, the courts, custody and security, sending/receiving schools districts and SDE.
 - Consensus was reached within the Committee. Additionally, the DOC recommends all classroom personnel receive DOC training in regard to classroom management.
 - Require education providers to no less than semi-annually provide student performance data to the administrators of the special school district and its board. The reporting should be tailored to experiences of students in short and long-term placements.
 - The Committee questioned the theoretical definition of “educational success” and how it is measured.
 - Require education providers to develop partnerships and programs with local education agencies, non-profit cultural groups, local industries and businesses.
- Transition preliminary recommendation options:
 - Establish explicit expectations and roles for key players in the transition of youth in and out of court placements.
 - Through the special school district, create mechanisms to ensure that sending and receiving schools and programs provide services and supports that maximize youth’s success.

Other remaining areas of discussion include ensuring youth who qualify for special education services receive education until their 22nd birthday, and how the ongoing recommendations concerning MYI/YCI housing alternatives will have an impact on this work.

After the presentation, the members of the JJPOC thanked Dr. Leone for his time and engaged in a lengthy discussion. Some topics discussed include how mental health issues would be addressed in this new educational setting, ensuring the continuity of education for juveniles in special education up until their 22nd birthday, and the possible use of Unified School District #2 for educational services of the juvenile population. Members of the Committee voiced the importance that any diploma comes from the student’s home district to avoid negative stigma associated with a diploma received from a correctional institution. Budgetary concerns were also brought up and the potential costs associated with changes in the educational system.

Presentation: Educational Services at Manson Youth Institution

Rep. Walker then introduced Maria Pirro-Simmons, Superintendent of Unified School District #1, for her presentation on Educational Services at Manson Youth Institution. MYI currently offers



high school diplomas through local districts, a credit diploma through the State of CT Unified School District #1, GEDs, college programming, special education and literacy programs such as ESL. The curriculum is aligned with Common Core and College/Career Readiness Standards.

In addition to the regular coursework, MYI also provides juveniles with several options for vocational programs. These include autobody technology, automotive technology, graphic arts, and culinary arts. MYI employs school officers who act as mentors to the students in the classroom. The officers are committed to ensuring the success of the juveniles that they oversee. MYI celebrates success of their students through graduations as well as certificates of achievement and advancement.

Also included in the presentation were multiple student and parent quotes on their experience with USD#1, student achievement data, as well as a copy of a State Department of Education walkthrough of the facility on 9/12/18.

After the presentation, the members of the JJPOC thanked Ms. Pirro-Simmons. There was discussion on areas related to the presentation. Some of the topics discussed were the importance of juveniles completing their education to reduce rates of recidivism as well as establishing viable community supports to ensure that transition results in successful job placements, etc.

Next Meeting: November 21st, 2019 2:00pm

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

*Audio and/or video of the meeting can be found on
https://www.cga.ct.gov/app/taskforce.asp?TF=20141215_Juvenile%20Justice%20Policy%20and%20Oversight%20Committee