

April JJPOC Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Legislative Office Building Location

Zoom Option Available

Attendance

Amy Marracino	Heriberto Cajigas	Toni Walker
Anthony Nolan	Jodi Hill-Lilly	
Betty Ann MacDonald	Martha Stone	
Charles Hewes	Melanie Dykas	
Colleen Violette	Michael Pierce	
Daniel Karpowitz	Paul Cicarella	
Erica Bromley	Ray Dancy	
Elizabeth Bozzuto	Sarah Eagan	
Gary Roberge	Sharmese Walcott	
Gary Winfield	Tais Ericson	
Hector Glynn	Talitha Coggins	

TYJI Staff

Andrew Zhebrak
Brittany LaMarr
Paul Klee

Welcome and Introductions

Daniel Karpowitz and Anthony Nolan welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of the Meeting

The April monthly meeting consisted of a discussion regarding H.B. 1243, a presentation from the Center for Children's Advocacy on their municipal racial and ethnic disparities work, and an overview of the JJPOC 2025 workplans. The Center for Children's Advocacy's Report on Connecticut Youth with Disabilities in the Justice System will be moved to the May JJPOC monthly meeting.

Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

Anthony Nolan asked for a motion to accept the March 20th meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Updates

No updates were provided.

Discussion of H.B. 1243

The principal of the University High School of Science and Engineering along with one of his students presented H.B. 1243, which would allow for free bus transportation for high school students and veterans.

Transportation continues to be a barrier for students to access education and resources, but with bus passes being free of charge during the pandemic students were able to have more reliable, safer transportation to and from schools, medical appointments, extracurricular activities, and other beneficial resources. The principal determined that his students took 5,000 bus rides just within one month.

A student from the University High School of Science and Engineering further explained how advanced academic opportunities were limited to students due to a lack of reliable transportation. A JJPOC member inquired about how many students currently ride the public bus to school now because that is their only transportation option, and how many students would benefit from the implementation of this bus pass program on a wider scale. It was explained that significantly more students would be using public transportation through the city bus with this program due to a lack of or reduced personal expense. Currently, roughly 200 students at University High School of Science and Engineering are using these bus passes, as the pilot program of these free and reduced-price bus passes is currently in place at this school.

CCA: RED Presentation

Representatives from the Center for Children's Advocacy (CCA) presented the work being done by the organization and its committees to address racial and ethnic disparities. The Racial and Ethnic Disparity (RED) Reduction Committees are in Bridgeport, Hartford, Hamden, New Haven, and Waterbury. Each committee has a diverse governing body, including but not limited to youth, law enforcement, clergy, school systems, and community service providers. The goals of these committees are to reduce the over-representation of youth of color at key decision points, reduce the disparate treatment of youth of color at key decision points, and to prevent youth of color from unnecessarily entering and moving through the juvenile justice system.

The RED committees have found that there are the highest proportion of Hispanic or Latino youth school enrollment in each of the five cities. Regarding Bridgeport delinquency specifically, there continues to be a disproportionate number of Black youths compared to other racial and ethnic groups. In New Haven and Waterbury, Black youth are considerably more likely to be arrested and referred to court, according to the Equity Dashboard's Relative Rate Index (RRI).

An example of a RED committee meeting agenda was presented, in this case from Hartford. Each meeting usually consists of a deep dive into the data across several systems, including schools, the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and diversion.

The benefits of RED committee collaboration are fivefold: (1) creates collaborative partnerships to cohesively discuss systemic issues around disparities in youth care coordination; (2) allows for quicker identification of readily emergent or continually emerging issues; (3) identifies both gaps in system coordination and programmatic supports; (4) elevates best practices and new strategies for service delivery to support youth; and (5) allows for a deeper dive into data across multiple systems to recognize patterns and areas of improvement.

Diversionary efforts are a focus of the RED committees, which review related data. These data are analyzed to determine which diversionary efforts are available and whether diversion efforts are successful. Data around recidivism rates is lacking, though. Each RED committee also reviews school-based arrests to determine which schools have the highest rates of school-based arrests and which gaps in services need to be addressed within these schools. This aims to provide more services and resources to better equip the school to adequately address these issues.

Additionally, the committees review community-based arrests. Statistics reviewed include time of day of the arrest, age, race, and gender of the arrestee, district of arrest, location of arrest, day of the week of the arrest, type of offense, and whether a diversion referral or court summons was given. This data is used to determine efforts that should be taken to reduce the arrest of youth, increase referrals to juvenile review boards (JRBs), and to identify gaps in services. There has been a 19% decrease in youth, community-based arrests between 2023 and 2024 in Hartford. A JJPOC member asked whether youth interaction with law enforcement is included in the data as well, where it was confirmed that these instances are included.

Data regarding crossover youth is also included in the analyses conducted by the RED committees. Specifically, DCF arrest data across Connecticut was presented, including the legal status, age, race/ethnicity, gender, and placement type for current

crossover youth. This information provides a more holistic view of these youth and which services they may require. The RED committees also focus their attention on school disengagement and prevention, which include students' absenteeism, engagement and reengagement efforts, and discipline involvement. This data is separated by school, age, race, and disabilities of youth. In Hartford schools specifically, roughly 1 in 3 students are chronically absent.

As for next steps, the CCA would like to establish RED committees in the jurisdictions that are showing the most significant RRI, such as Meriden and Norwalk. It was suggested that additional clarification be given to the JJPOC regarding the definition of crossover youth. This is to be added to the next monthly JJPOC meeting.

CCA: Report on Connecticut Youth with Disabilities in the Justice System

This report will be moved to the next JJPOC monthly meeting in May.

Next Meeting:

Hybrid Model Option (In person and available over zoom)

May 15th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM