

JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE 2026 RECOMMENDATIONS (FINAL)



Final JJPOC 2026 Recommendations in Brief

Note: The following recommendations reflect the language as amended and voted on at the Jan. 22, 2026, JJPOC meeting.

Recommendation	Draft Legislative Language	Policy/ Legislative Recommendation
JJPOC Education Work Group Recommendation #1	<p>A. It is recommended that the JJPOC Education Workgroup in consultation with the Commissioner of Education, Commissioner of Transportation, parents, and students may develop a plan and recommendations for a two-year pilot grant-in-aid program to provide funding to ten local and regional boards of education for the purpose of purchasing public transportation bus passes for students enrolled in grades nine to twelve, inclusive. Such bus passes shall be valid for use on state-owned or state-controlled public bus transportation services. The plan shall be delivered to JJPOC by July 1, 2027.</p> <p>B. The plan may consider the following factors to include a local or regional board of education to be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to this section: including, but not limited to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The district has a chronic absenteeism rate for the previous school year that exceeds the statewide average, as determined by the Department of Education. 2. The district has access to public transportation services during the two-hour period immediately preceding the start of the regular school day; and 3. The district has access to public transportation services during the four-hour period immediately 	Legislative

	<p>following the end of the regular school day.</p> <p>C. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, and to promote regional equity, the Commissioner of Education shall expand eligibility for the pilot program to three non-urban school districts out of the ten selected school districts that are served by established public bus routes, as determined by the Commissioner of Transportation.</p> <p>D. The plan may include a fiscal note on the cost per district included in the pilot program.</p> <p>E. A local or regional board of education receiving funds pursuant to this section shall distribute public transportation bus passes to high schools within the district based on demonstrated student demand, as determined by an application. The Department of Education may prescribe the form, content, and administration requirements of such survey.</p>	
<p>JJPOC Education Work Group</p> <p>Recommendation #2</p>	<p>1. The Education Workgroup of the JJPOC shall explore the use of the terms “truant” and “truancy” both nationally and in Connecticut and, in consultation with CSDE, DCF, CAPSS, CAS, CABE, CT Youth Service Association, parents, and students, develop recommendations by January 1, 2027 for the possible repeal of Connecticut statutes which refer to truants or truancy and the inclusion of appropriate provisions of such repealed statutes in existing Connecticut statutes which address the reduction in absenteeism from school. The recommendations shall include but need not be limited to transition supports for agencies and school districts affected by</p>	Legislative

	any recommended repeal or amendment of statutes.	
JJPOC CEW Work Group Recommendation #1	<p>It is recommended that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amend C.G.S. § 54-125a(g) to repeal the October 1, 2005 qualifying sentencing date. This ensures that all individuals who committed crimes while under age 21 are eligible for parole review based on their age at the time of the offense and their demonstrated rehabilitation, regardless of the calendar date of their sentencing. 2. Required Planning for Future Expansion (Report Due January 1st, 2027). The JJPOC shall convene a working group, including representatives from the Judicial Branch, Board of Pardons and Paroles (BOPP), the Department of Correction (DOC), the Office of Victim Services (OVS), the Office of the Chief Public Defender, the Division of Criminal Justice, as well as directly impacted representatives and community stakeholders, to develop a comprehensive plan for the responsible expansion of emerging adult protections up to age 26. <p>This plan shall be delivered to the JJPOC by January 1st, 2027 with an effective date of October 1, 2027. The plan shall include consideration for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Framework for Enhanced Victim Support and Engagement: The working group shall develop a detailed framework to ensure victims are fully supported, informed, and engaged in the parole review process for emerging adults, without compromising the integrity of the review. This 	Legislative

	<p>framework shall include recommendations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Statutory changes to mandate enhanced, trauma-informed notification processes that clearly explain the nature of emerging adult reviews. c. Designated advocates within OVS to provide dedicated, end-to-end support for victims navigating hearings. d. Processes to ensure victim statements are considered by the Board in a manner consistent with the principles of restorative justice and the overall goals of the policy. <p>3. Framework for Sentencing Considerations: The working group shall develop recommendations for statutory amendments to C.G.S. § 54-91g, requiring courts to consider "Miller" factors (brain science, maturity, capacity for change) at the time of sentencing for all defendants under age 26 facing serious felony charges, ensuring upstream alignment with the parole reforms.</p> <p>4. Framework for Presumptive Release: The working group shall develop a detailed framework for implementing a rebuttable presumption of suitability for parole release for eligible emerging adults. This framework shall specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The evidentiary standard required to rebut the presumption (e.g., clear and convincing evidence of current unreasonable risk). b. The specific criteria and risk assessment tools that will be used to evaluate current risk, ensuring they are developmentally appropriate and validated for this population. 	
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	<p>c. The procedural mechanisms for how the burden shift will function in practice during parole hearings.</p> <p>5. Comprehensive Study to Inform Future Expansion (Due January 1st, 2028) The JJPOC, shall conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation and outcomes of existing statutes expanding parole eligibility for individuals under age 21 (pursuant to P.A. 23-169).</p> <p>The study shall include, but not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parole grant vs. denial rates for the under-21 population since implementation. b. Recidivism outcomes for individuals released under these provisions compared to the general population. c. An analysis of the administrative capacity required by the BOPP to process these reviews. d. Recommendations and a projected timeline for the responsible expansion of these protections to emerging adults up to age 26, incorporating findings on brain development and public safety. e. The findings and recommendations shall be delivered to the JJPOC by January 1st, 2028 and shall inform the planning for emerging adult protection under Part 2 inclusive of subsections 1-3 	
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