MEETING MINUTES
CT Kids Report Card Leadership Committee
Thursday, July 21, 2016 Quarterly Meeting
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.   LOB Room 1A

1. **Welcome and Opening Remarks by Co-Chairs**
   a. The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair David Nee at 1:10PM.

2. **Quarterly Report: Future Success Domain**
   a. Discussion of Strategies and Program Drill Downs
      i. Assistant Clerk Steve Jones provided a brief overview of the current data and disaggregations that correspond with the Future Success domain indicators.
      ii. Sheryl Horowitz highlighted the disaggregations within the Childhood Poverty indicator. Steven Jones provided the disaggregated breakdown of this indicator.
      iii. Rep. Urban indicated disaggregations are a key part of the CT Kids Report Card, as they explain the story behind the curve beyond the baseline. She added that based on these glaring gaps among minority and high needs youth, it is crucial we look at state funded programs and figure out whether these programs are making a positive impact where it is needed the most. If we realize what is working and what is not working, Rep. Urban concluded that we can better prioritize limited state dollars for the betterment of Connecticut's children.
      iv. Ellen Shemitz and Steven Hernandez agreed that the achievement gap is a crucial element towards understanding the wellbeing of children in our state.
      v. Co-Chair Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman noted the importance of having access to employment for youth across the state. She provided a story of meeting with youth at the Mason Youth Correctional Institute, who indicted if he had access to employment in his community, he would not have ended up in prison.
      vi. As an example of program drill down, Rep. Urban provided two Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs currently funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS). Rep. Urban summarized the two sets of program narratives and status reports that were included in the meeting packet.
      vii. Ellen Shemitz raised concerns about targeting specific contracts due to the small sample size. Rep. Urban responded that despite the size of these two examples, DSS has over a dozen towns engaged in this program, and the story behind the data for an RBA report card would explore specific contracts.
      viii. David Nee encouraged the group to consider what aspects of this report piqued their interest and if any of the data surprised or concerned them. He indicated the percentage of parents in both contracts that had earned college degrees stood out to him and asked how much balance there is when choosing high-risk children for the program.
      ix. Sheryl Horowitz inquired as to whether this was an ongoing program. Steve Jones responded that the program had concluded on June 30, 2016.
      x. David Nee noted that money had been put aside for evaluation and developing these reports. He found these examples to be both thought provoking and thorough. He also added that he was pleased to see the dollars that were set aside for technical assistance for both DSS staff and the organization staff contracted to implement these programs. Rep. Urban thanked David Nee for his comments, noting that this program was not specifically targeted, but found as a first and easy example of a program that could impact an indicator. She also reiterated that while it is good to identify programs and celebrate those that do work, current budget constraints require the consolidation, which can be done efficiently and fairly through a Results Based Accountability model.
      xi. Rep. Gail Lavielle gave her thoughts on what the data signifies in the grander scheme of evaluating programmatic success. She cited the knowledge-based questions as an example of improvement and then the behavioral questions, which seemed to not see as much improvement. She then asked what measures are taken to provide behavioral education that could control the tendency towards self-bias. Rep. Lavielle added that it should be understood that now that these youth are more knowledgeable, are they more likely to give acceptable behavioral answers and whether that information could be evaluated.

xii. David Nee discussed how this group worked with SDE to develop long-term data points and establish an understanding for their analysis. He indicated it would be great for this group to invite representatives from DSS, the organizations that implement the programs, and perhaps even representatives of the schools or youth who were in these programs to get an understanding of story behind teen sexual behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge in our state.

xiii. Rep. Cathy Abercrombie indicated she is strong supporter of the RBA model and expanding its presence in other agencies for program evaluation. She added that she also agreed with David Nee's remarks about getting representatives from the agencies and funding recipients to elaborate on the enrollment gaps and bring a personal touch to their program reports. Rep. Abercrombie added though that non-profits have had some struggles with the RBA reporting requirements, which could be mitigated if there is room for flexibility or more concise training on gathering data for outcome measures. She cited as an example the Family Resource Centers, the groups had difficulty measuring how successful their English as a Second Language (ESL) programs were when the clients were no longer enrolled or connected to the center. Rep. Abercrombie reiterated the need to understand why there is a drop-off in program enrollment and if action is being taken to improve the program models so every student can complete the program 'start to finish'.

xiv. Charlene Russel-Tucker highlighted the Young Parents Program, which uses state dollars to leverage federal dollars. This program, which has become an established model, supports pregnant and parenting teens to improve their outcomes and the outcomes of the child. She added that this program could be a part of a collective impact with programs that attempt to prevent teen pregnancy occurrence. She believes if there is greater access towards programs sharing their information and data, as well as meeting to coordinate how each program plays a part and that would create more holistic outcomes. Charlene Russel-Tucker went on to invite John Frassinelli to discuss the Young Parents Program at greater depth.

xv. John Frassinelli indicated they started their exploration by researching current programs that were school specific or district specific. They leveraged that funding in addition to the Young Parents Program funding to receive $2 million in program funding from the federal level to support this program initially, but has since been reduced to $1.5 million. He goes on to describe the staffing and program materials involved with those schools/districts that receive funding. John Frassinelli then provided brief demographic information regarding the youth enrolled in this program and the types of services they and their infant children receive within the school and their community with an overall goal of successfully graduating high school and seeking out higher education or professional employment. He then discussed the metrics laid out for the program and how they measure those metrics. He highlighted statistics that indicate the children of these teen mothers are meeting their developmental milestones and are up to date at a rate of 97%, as well as the repeat pregnancy rate among those mothers served is only 1%-2%.

xvi. Charlene Russell-Tucker reiterated the need to consider these programs which are either fully funded by federal dollars, funded by matching dollars, and those fully funded by state dollars have the opportunity to pool their information and resources towards a common goal.

xvii. Marilyn Calderon highlighted the importance of the youth voice in this process and ensuring that their voice can be incorporated in the story. She appreciated the amount of student engagement and evaluation of the program included in the report. Marilyn Calderon added that regardless of where a teen lives, access to employment and volunteer opportunities reduces the likelihood those youth will engage in risky behavior.

xviii. Lt. Governor Wyman highlighted that regardless of the geographic location, the programs should ensure transportation does not become a primary impediment towards every at risk youth having the opportunity to enroll.

xix. Ellen Shemitz inquired as to the role the youth voice would play in RBA process. David Nee indicated that the youth voice, as Marilyn Calderon and Steven Hernadez stated, would help ground the story behind the curve on why the data is the way it is and, why we are seeing improvements and why ethnic/geographic gaps persist.

xx. Department of Children and Families Commissioner Joette Katz added that when it comes to RBA, two of the three key questions asked are 'how well are we doing?' and 'is anyone better off?' to understand if the program is working. In the case of teen pregnancy prevention programs, Commissioner Katz stated these programs have an extended period of contact with at risk youth

discussing a very personal topic that impacts their lives. Getting youth input on how they felt the program worked informs these contracted organizations and DSS. She believes it informs these groups and us as a state in whether the youth is better off. Commissioner Katz added that on a deeper level, programs should go beyond the notion that these children who become their clients are attempting a 'busy hands are happy hands' approach. She stated that for the youth, it is about the endgame and the light at the end of the tunnel from their youth and into adulthood. She went on to explain that unfortunately for some youth, having the ability to create life establishes a connection to another human being that loves them and is theirs goes beyond ownership and into belonging, which is one of the deepest threads of connection to the world.

   xxi. Ellen Shemitz thanked everyone for the clarification and agreed with the intention and application of youth voice to the RBA model.

   xxii. Lt. Governor Wyman indicated that it is encouraging to see how widespread this program is throughout the state. She stated the variety of programs allows not only for a comprehensive understanding of each region in the state, but also allows for comparison and perhaps healthy competition to showcase strategies that could become a statewide standard of practice. Being able to have the data, strategies, and stories cross agency lines and even into the private organizations creates a more complete story for the state.

   xxiii. Rep. Urban went on to discuss programs that had been drilled down into by the Appropriations subcommittee on Results Based Accountability in 2013 and documents that highlight the changes in funding for the 2016-17 fiscal year. She explained these documents were provided not only to showcase examples of other programs that could be revisited, but also provide background to what these report cards look like at the end of this whole process. Rep. Urban highlighted that these report cards are kept to a maximum of two pages so the data, story, and contextual information are concise for decision makers in the legislature. She asked if the group feels these 2013 programs should be recommended to the RBA Subcommittee to be reevaluated with updated report cards. Rep. Urban went on to explain the process of the RBA document as a catalyst for conversation among key agencies and stakeholders to get a more in-depth picture of the story that, ideally would influence the legislature's decision on whether a program's funding is increased, decreased, kept level, or eliminated entirely.

   xxiv. Ellen Shemitz and Rep. Urban discussed the Report Card's function in regards to explaining resources and defining disparities and outcomes.

3. Priorities for Action
   a. Rep. Urban indicated that a group would investigate the future success programs mentioned at today's meeting that had 2013 Report Cards and provide an update at a future meeting. David Nee concurred with this action being taken.

4. Other Business
   a. Rep. Urban indicated that the next meeting would cover the annual update including revisions to the stories behind the curve and the most recent data available added to indicators. She added that now that we have concluded drill down sessions for all four domains, it is now up to the leadership committee to begin active dialogue with the Appropriations Committee RBA Subcommittee select programs to develop RBA report cards.

5. Adjourn
   a. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30PM