

Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee Meeting

Thursday, October 16, 2014 2:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Legislative Office Building, Room 1E Hartford, CT

Members Present: *Rep. Toni Walker (Co-Chair), Secretary Ben Barnes (Co-Chair), Sen. Gary Holder-Winfield, Sen. Eric Coleman, Sen. Beth Bye, Sen. Rob Kane, Rep. Craig Miner, Judge Patrick Carroll, Erica Bromley (CYSA), Judge Lisa Wexler, Hector Glynn, Martha Stone (Center for Children's Advocacy), Joseph D'Alesio (Superior Court Operations), Christine Rapillo (Chief Public Defender), Francis Carino (Chief State Attorney's Office), Dr. Linda Dixon (DCF), John Alves (Warden DOC), Sergio Rodriguez (State Department of Education), Chief Eric Osanitsch (CT Police Chiefs Association), Derrick Gordon (Yale University), Mark Zeck, Esq., Sarah Eagan (Child Advocate), Brian Hill (CSSD), Cathy Foley-Geib (CSSD), Julie Revaz (CSSD), Andrew Clark (CSSU), William H. Carbone (UNH TYJI), Jeanne Milstein (UNH TYJI), Kendell Coker, PhD (UNH TYJI) Kitty Tyrol (UNH TYJI), Francis Olive (UNH TYJI), DiJonee Talley (UNH TYJI)*

MINUTES

Representative Walker called the meeting to order at approximately 2:10 P.M.

I. WELCOME

Representative Walker welcomed everyone to the inaugural Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee meeting. She explained the evolution of juvenile justice reform in Connecticut, from the establishment of the Juvenile Justice Planning and Implementation Committee in 2006, followed by the Juvenile Justice Planning and Operations Committee, the implementation and success of the Raise the Age effort of 2007 which mandated that youth ages 16 and 17 be handled in the juvenile justice system. She also emphasized the value of research-based programs and practices, protecting public safety, holding youth accountable, reducing correctional costs, and positively impacting families in Connecticut as a continuous focus of this committee. She also indicated that these efforts successfully reduced the number of youth involved in the juvenile justice system and highlighted that the major motivation of this committee would be to identify and make recommendations for gaps and services that still exist, and sustain the reforms that have already been made in the state.

II. PRESENTATION: Tow Youth Justice Institute Presentation

William H. Carbone of the Tow Youth Justice Institute (TYJI) and also lecturer and director of experimental education at the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Science at the University of New Haven introduced TYJI staff including:

- Jeanne Milstein, former Child Advocate for CT and now staff researcher at the Tow Youth Justice Institute

- Dr. Kendell Coker, PhD, J.D., Professor at the University of New Haven, former post-doctoral fellow at Yale
- Kitty Tyrol, Chief Curriculum Development Specialist
- Dr. Jim Isenberg, Practitioner is Resident, University of New Haven
- Francis Olive, PhD candidate at the University of New Haven with experience in corrections; working on a dissertation on solitary confinement
- DiJonee Talley, Masters level student at the University of New Haven who has completed an honors thesis on the school-to-prison pipeline

Overview of Public Act 14-217 which created this committee:

1) Tasks to Complete by January 1, 2015

- Recommend statutory changes
- Recommend common definition of recidivism to be shared among all state agencies
- Review existing reports and identify short, medium, and long term goals
- Evaluate Raise the Age impact including the relative changes in age of youthful offenders, what services youth receive by age and their outcomes, the types of offenses committed by age, and gaps in services
- Identify barriers and strengths in education

2) Plan to Comply

- Requesting relevant reports, studies, and evaluations from state and other related agencies to identify opportunities for change and outline goals
- Inviting agencies to come make presentations to identify place where each respective organization sees legislative improvements that are needed, report observed trends that indicate success and failure, and report any impact of Raise the Age
- Agencies and organizations asked to designate JJPOC members to participate in work groups including recidivism, review of submitted reports, review of recommended statutory changes, and establishing short, medium, and long range goals, education and impact of Raise the Age legislation
- Committee to identify 3 most significant issues
- National experts will be consulted to give feedback

3) Tasks to Complete by July 1, 2015

- Complete examination of diversion programs and assess quality and accessibility
- Assess community-based systems of services
- Evaluate congregate care
- Assess collaboration between state agencies and local education
- Identify practices contributing to disproportionate minority contact
- Assess integration of results-based accountability throughout the Juvenile Justice system
- Assess delinquency that occurs after DCF supervision
- Assess overlap between Juvenile Justice and Mental Health

Mr. Carbone emphasized the necessity of work groups to be able to comply with the demands of the statute by deadline and also reiterated the need to focus in on most significant issues for the second part of the year due to scope of the statutory requirements that need to be addressed. Mr. Fran Carino (Chief State Attorney's Office) recommended that victim advocates be added to the work groups. Rep. Walker indicated that she would also like to add police chiefs from cities to participate in the work groups.

III. Presentation: Judicial Branch on Juvenile Justice Outcomes and Challenges

Cathy Foley-Geib (CSSD) presented a historical overview of juvenile justice policy in Connecticut over the past 15 years including the emergence of family support centers, legislative changes, programs that address gender responsiveness and gang-affiliation among youth. In January 2010, 16 year-olds moved into the juvenile system and in July 2012, 17 year-olds as well. There was an anticipation that there would be a doubling effect in offenses, arrests, and commitments. In fact, there was an overall 8% decrease in the number of youth in the system, and a 40% decrease in youth under age 16. In 1999 there were 700 commitments compared to 256 in 2014 (this includes 16 and 17 year-olds), and recidivism among youth measured at 66% in 2007 and is currently about 60%.

Julie Revas (CSSD) reported on the types of programming that have been developed for reform including education and vocational services, programs that provide life skills to youth, therapeutic programs and other services. As a result of these programs, family functioning, social supports, educational success, and the overall well-being of youth and families has increased. She also reported that this progress has, and will continue to be, achieved by collaboration among state agencies, service contract providers, local communities, Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee, advocates, schools, law enforcement, and a commitment family-focused intervention investment. Challenges include disproportionate minority contact, school-based arrests, suspensions, expulsions, educational needs, domestic violence treatment, the range and availability of substance abuse intervention, and the transitional needs of clients aging into adulthood.

Ms. Revas (CSSD) gave an overview of initiatives and other tools being used in Connecticut to combat these challenges including Raise the Grade, school-based diversion initiative, and child and family support centers.

Rep. Walker emphasized that the accessibility of such services need to be publicized by those who provide them and other partners so children and families have access. Information sharing among agencies was also discussed as a vital part of this juvenile justice effort. There is one guide available on the website of the Judicial Branch that summarizes services that are available.

IV. Presentation: CT Results First Project

Andrew Clark of the Institute of Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) at Central Connecticut State University introduced members of the Results First Working Group and presented a historical overview of the initiative since 2011.

The Pew-MacArthur Results First initiative employs a cutting-edge approach to evidence-based policymaking and an innovative cost-benefit model that helps policymakers make informed decisions about allocating limited resources by estimating the long-term costs and benefits of investments in public programs, allowing policymakers to compare options and invest in those that most effectively achieve intended outcomes with the best value for taxpayers.

Mr. Clark reported that the model, which was originally developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP), applies the best available national rigorous research on program effectiveness to predict the public safety and fiscal outcomes of each program category in Connecticut, based on our unique population characteristics and the costs to provide these programs in the state. Connecticut's Adult and Juvenile Justice programs have been matched to programs in the database are proven to be effective. The model reports the return on investment for a particular program if implemented (as long as proper training, program fidelity, etc. are consistent).

Mr. Clark emphasized the need to invest in programs that are appropriate for specific populations. Representative Walker reiterated that the program offered should match the needs of the children and families being served, as not everyone in a given population is suited for the most cost-effective programs.

V. Next Steps

- Each agency and organization is to designate at least one point of contact for the Tow Youth Justice Institute
- Each organization is encouraged to designate members for each work group
- Individual members of the JJPOC are also invited to participate

- Next meeting scheduled for November 13, 2014. Time to be determined.

VII. MEETING ADJOURNED

Representative Walker adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:45 p.m.

**Minutes taken by DiJonée Talley of TYJI