Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

October 17th, 2019

Legislative Office Building
2pm Room 1E
Progress Report

• New JJPOC Member Introductions
• TYJI Transforming Youth Justice Leadership Development Program Application
• Truancy Brochure by the Diversion Work Group
• Preliminary Presentation on Improving Educational Services for Youth in Justice System Custody by Dr. Peter Leone
• Department of Correction Presentation on Education at Manson Youth Institution by Superintendent Maria Pirro-Simmons
Preliminary Presentation on Improving Educational Services for Youth in Justice System Custody

Peter Leone, Ph.D., Professor
University of Maryland
Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education (CHSE)
Look Back

• PA. 16-147 Sec. 14 “An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the JJPOC”
  • “DOE, DCF, DOC, JB-CSSD to develop a plan no later than August 2017 for assessing and addressing the individual educational needs and deficiency of children in the JJ and those re-entering the community…”

• TYJI subcontracted with Josh Perry to provide technical assistance to the Recidivism work from Jan. 2017 - Jan. 2018.

• Report was produced and submitted to JJPOC “Transforming Education for Youth in CT’s Justice System, by Josh Perry Jan. 2018.

• PA 18-31 (q): “[D]evelop a detailed plan concerning the overall coordination, oversight, supervision, and direction of all vocational and academic educational services and programs for children in justice system custody, and the provisions of education-related transitional support services for children returning to the community from justice system custody.”
Education Committee Timeline

• PA. 18-31 Sec. 7(q) Effective July 1, 2018: JJPOC shall convene a subcommittee to develop a detailed plan concerning overall coordination, oversight, provision, and direction of all vocational and academic education services and programs for children in justice system custody

• July 2018 Education Committee formed:
  o Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch designee
  o Bridgeport School District designee
  o Hartford School District designee
  o Department of Correction designee
  o An expert in state budgeting expert - Office of Policy and Management
  o Experts in education in justice-system settings - Juvenile Justice Policy & Oversight Committee
  o Advocates
  o Education Committee Chairs: Rep. Robyn Porter and Josh Perry
  o TYJI subcontracted with Dr. Peter Leone
“Transforming Education for Youth in Connecticut’s Justice System”
by Josh Perry

HOME
District Board of Education

DETENTION
Bridgeport or Hartford Board of Education

SECURE CUSTODY
Detention Judicial USD#1: MYI/YCI

COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL FACILITY
SDOE approved private special education program

PROBATION
District Board of Education
We Don’t Have a System for Educating Youth in the Deep End of the Justice System…

Problem 1: Fragmentation

- COST: The absence of economies of scale hurts more as the justice system shrinks. In a fragmented system, each responsible provider pays for its own supports, services, and oversight…
- ACCOUNTABILITY: No single entity is responsible for strong outcomes
- TRANSITIONS: Youth cycle through multiple providers – which increases the odds of dropped transitions

Problem 2: Inefficiencies

- It costs $35K / year to educate a child in detention and detention centers can’t always afford a teachers in each classroom

Problem 3: Quality Control

- We haven’t defined what quality education looks like for youth in the justice system
Problem 4: Specialization and Expertise

Our fragmented system can’t deliver:

- A customized curriculum (high-interest, modular) for youth in custody
- Robust and specialized professional development for teachers of youth in custody
- Multiple pathways to opportunity – including rapid credit recovery, vocational education, and post-secondary options

Problem 5: Transitional Supports

- We have no specialized capacity to support transitions from detention centers into school
- Too frequently, youth fall through the cracks during transitions
- There are no pathways from custody into the state’s Technical High School system
Peter Leone, Ph.D., Professor

• University of Maryland

• Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Special Education (CHSE)
Consultant Timeline
(see handout)
Dr. Leone’s Prior Involvement in Connecticut

- Dr. Leone Bio (see handout)
- Evaluator w/ M. Krezmien & M. Wilson, youthful offender education programs at York and Manson Correctional Institutions, Connecticut Department of Correction, Summer, 2007.
- Consultant w/ M. McLaughlin, Bridgeport public schools, special education service delivery, 1996.
Examples from Other States

Oklahoma
• The Oklahoma Youth Academy Charter School (serves 2 of 3 sites; a local district serves the third site). State Dept. of Ed has a sponsorship contract with the Office of Juvenile Affairs to operate the charter school.

California
• County offices of education operate schools in detention centers and commitment facilities. (County offices of education operate like RECs or NY’s BOCES.)

Oregon
• Local school districts operate school programs in detention centers and commitment facilities. The Oregon Youth Authority provides oversight and support to school districts.
Education Committee Principles

• Standards for education services for incarcerated youth should be consistent with those for public school children in the state.

• Funding for services and supports for the education of incarcerated youth should be driven by a formula that takes into account the mobility, academic disadvantage, and the considerable number of youth who are English learners and who are eligible for special education services.

• One agency or division within an agency should have primary responsibility and authority for education services all incarcerated youth in the state.

• Transition of youth from local schools to state agency placements should be seamless. Expectations, responsibilities, and outcomes for agencies and personnel responsible for entry and reentry should be explicit and measurable.

• The agency or division within an agency should report annually on the operations of the education programs serving youth in the justice system.
Preliminary Recommendations by Dr. Peter Leone: Infrastructure & Funding

Create a special school district for education programs serving incarcerated and court-involved youth. Create an independent school board for the special school district.

Discussion by Committee:

Alternative options provided by the committee:

- Expansion of USD#1 for all JJ-involved youth in out-of-home placement. However, this would require USD#1 to become independent of DOC
- Existing providers continue educational services with oversight by a newly formed legislative commission, which would include all affected state agencies. Executive responsibility will be vested in SDE with legislative commission having oversight and accountability
- A single agency or single non-profit provider would provide all educational services with oversight by a newly formed legislative commission, which would include all affected state agencies. Executive responsibility will be vested in SDE with legislative commission having oversight and accountability
Enable the special school district to receive CT average per pupil costs in addition to supplemental support for a high need population.

*Discussion by Committee:*

- Committee reached consensus
Preliminary Recommendations by Dr. Peter Leone: Infrastructure & Funding

Require the special school district to achieve accreditation from an association of colleges and secondary schools within 36 months of its creation.

Discussion by Committee:

- Some committee members were in agreement, other committee members questioned the need for accreditation
Quality Control and Accountability
Develop a framework for education accountability that includes educators, the courts, custody and security, sending and receiving school districts and programs, and the SDE.

Discussion by Committee:
• Committee reached consensus regarding above recommendation
• DOC recommends all classroom personnel receive DOC training regarding 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 school board. Ensure that reporting measures are tailored to experiences of students in short and long-term placements.

**Discussion by Committee:**
- Committee questioned the theoretical definition of “educational success”, how this is measured, and how to ensure every child receives it
Preliminary Recommendations by Dr. Peter Leone: Quality Control & Accountability

Require education providers to develop partnerships and programs with local education agencies, non-profit cultural groups, local industries, and businesses.

Discussion by Committee:
- Committee reached consensus
Transition >
Entry & Reentry
Preliminary Recommendations by Dr. Peter Leone: Transition

Establish explicit expectations and roles for key players in the transition of youth into and out of court placements.

Discussion by Committee:

• Committee reached consensus regarding above recommendation
• Committee recommends that SDE provide the current list of re-entry coordinators and that this list be publicly available on SDE’s website and be distributed to detention centers, school districts, and parents.
Preliminary Recommendations by Dr. Peter Leone: Transition

Through the special school district, create mechanisms to ensure that sending and receiving schools and programs provide services and supports that maximize youths’ success.

Discussion by Committee:
- Committee reached consensus regarding above recommendation
- Committee expressed concerns regarding the disparities in how partial credit is accepted and who is responsible for awarding it across the state. Classroom hour to credit conversion should be standardized across school districts.
## Key Problems & Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOLUTIONS</th>
<th>Fragmentation</th>
<th>Inefficiencies</th>
<th>Quality Control</th>
<th>Specialization &amp; Expertise</th>
<th>Transitional Supports</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create a special school district</td>
<td>Fund services at CT average per pupil costs in addition to supplemental support for a high need</td>
<td>Framework accountability with a range of stakeholders</td>
<td>Achieve accreditation from an assoc. of colleges and sec. schools within 36 months</td>
<td>Education providers develop partnerships and programs with range of agencies, groups, and industries</td>
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<td>Create an independent school board</td>
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<td>Providers issue semi-annual reports on student performance</td>
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<td>Explicit expectations and roles for key players in transition</td>
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**Key**
- **Green** = Consensus
- **Yellow** = Some Consensus
- **White** = No Consensus

Create mechanisms to ensure that sending and receiving schools and programs provide services and supports.
What Other States Did

- Legislation
- Litigation
- Policy & Practice
Table 1
States with Class Action Litigation Alleging Failure to Provide Special Education Services in Juvenile Corrections (including the Dist. of Columbia and Puerto Rico), 1975–2014.

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<tr>
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Remaining Areas of Discussion

- Expanding age limit from 18 to 22 years old in order to take into consideration the state’s requirements regarding special needs students

- Location of educational services will largely be impacted by the recommendations regarding the MYI/YCI housing alternatives
Resources

1. Blueprint for Change: Education Success for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System, The Legal Center for Youth Justice and Education (2017) Available at: https://www.jjeducationblueprint.org/

2. Education and Employment Training (EET, King County, WA), Juvenile Justice, Benefit Cost Analysis (2018). Available at: http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost/Program/616


Questions and Discussion