

Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

February 17th, 2022

2pm-3:30pm

Zoom Meeting

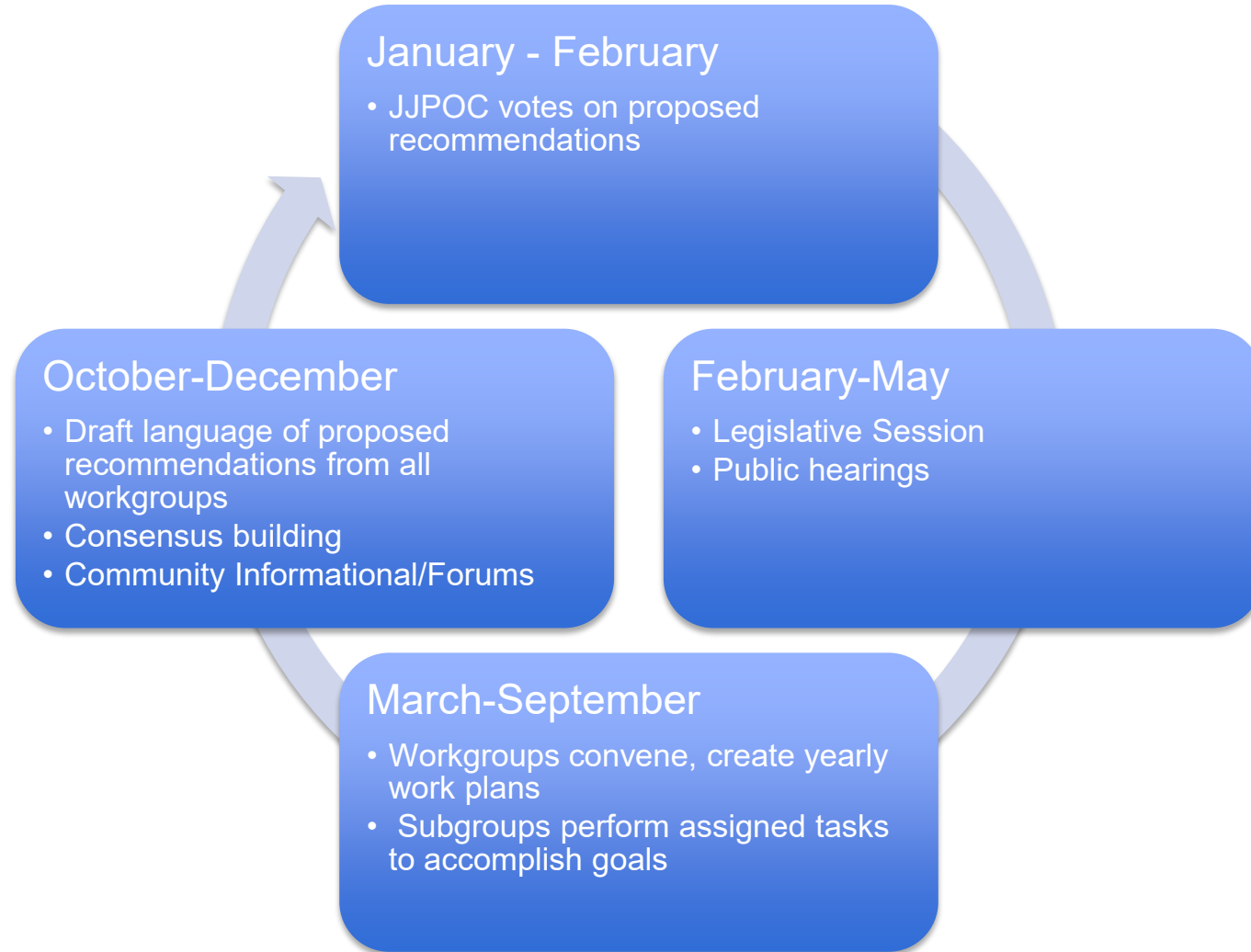
Opening Remarks

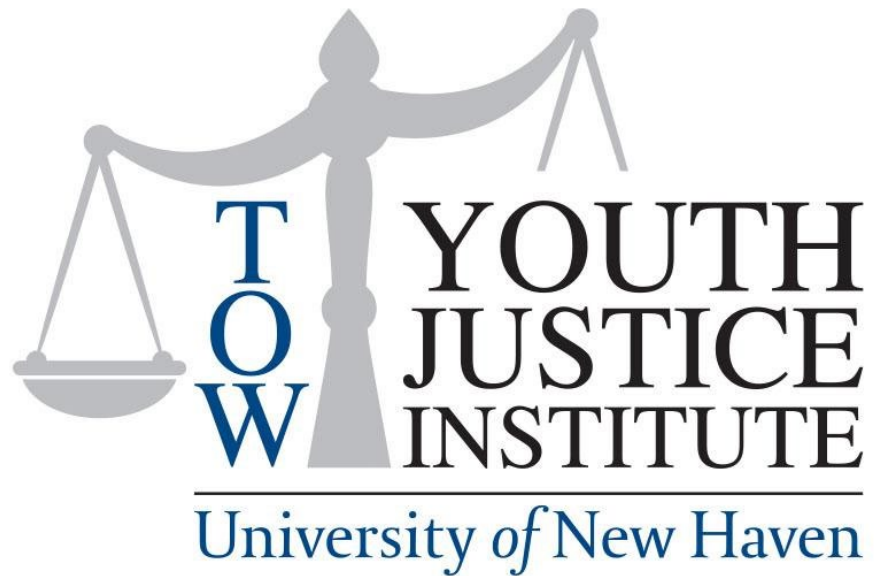
- Meeting facilitation
 - Meeting is being recorded
 - Remain “muted” on Zoom, unless speaking
 - Refrain from interrupting with comments or questions until each presenter is finished speaking
 - Questions and Comments will be limited to JJPOC members
 - Use the “Chat” and “Hand Raising” feature so TYJI can help monitor and facilitate the meeting

Meeting Overview

- Acceptance of the January Meeting Minutes
- Presentations and Voting on the 2022 JJPOC Draft Reports and Recommendations

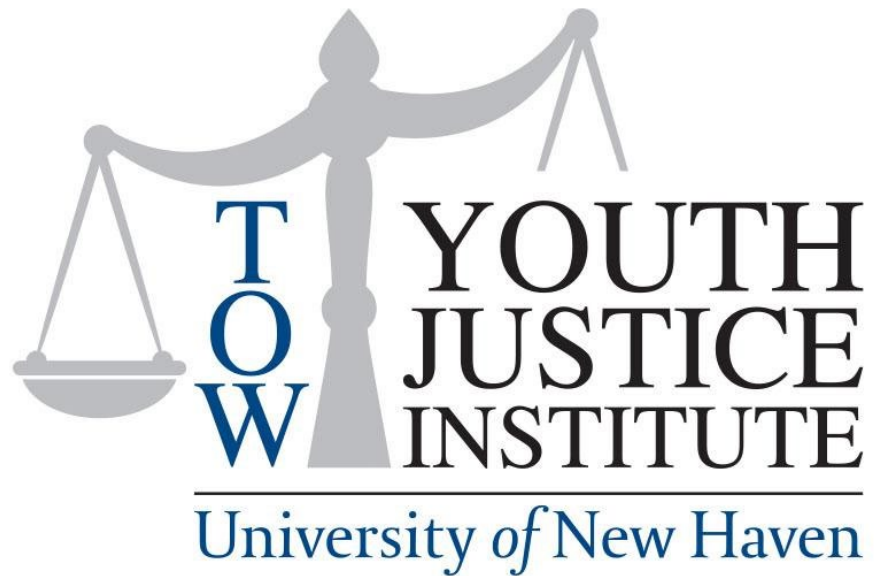
JJPOC Annual Timeline





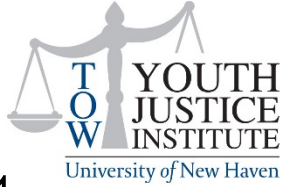
Presentation of Draft 2022 JJPOC Recommendations

JJPOC Workgroup Co-Chairs



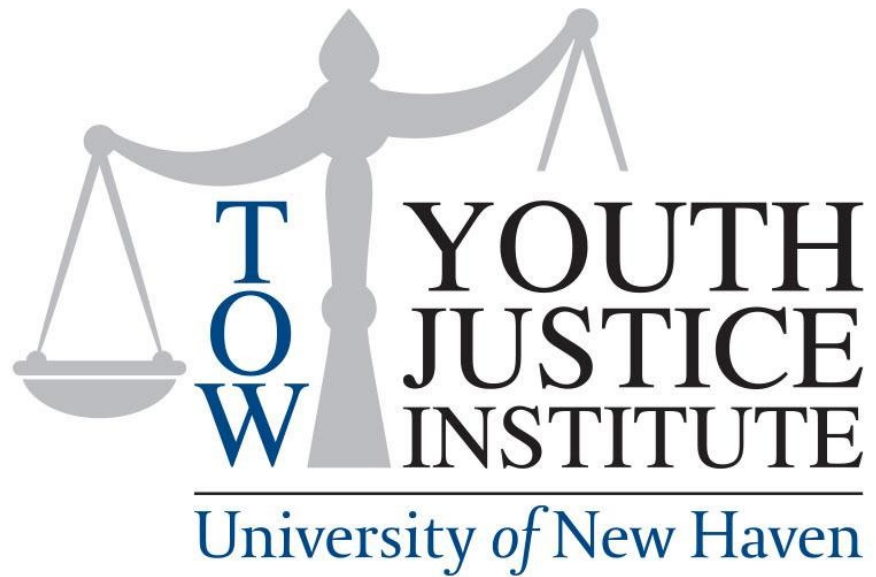
Education Committee Recommendations

911 / 211 Data Collection



- A pilot program be designed to review 911 calls from the 10 Opportunity School Districts to their local 911 jurisdictions in an effort to better understand for districts' utilization of police. Data should include the reason for the call, de-identified data related to the demographics of the child, including age, gender, race, and disability classification, similar to the existing documentation for other emergency interventions, such as restraint and seclusion, already codified in statute and regulation and the circumstances leading to less restrictive alternatives considered (if available). JJPOC and TYJI should partner to create an MOU with each 911 jurisdiction to receive, review, and analyze these data.
- JJPOC should collaborate with CHDI to review similar data collected on 211 calls made by public schools.
- All data analyses should be submitted for review by the JJPOC Education Committee on a bi-annual basis.

Full language can be found in the report.

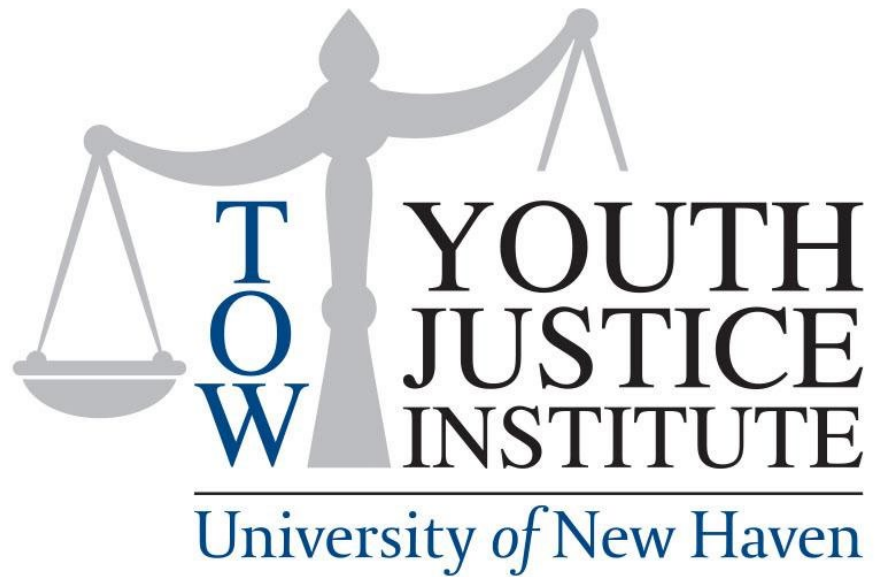


Discussion & Vote

DCF Operational Plan

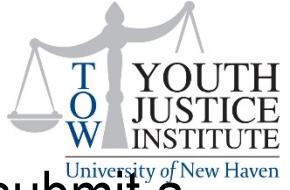


- Public Act 21-174 be amended to provide greater specificity regarding the way DCF will oversee educational services being provided to students housed in juvenile detention facilities operated by DOC and CSSD.
- Most of the edits clarify that DCF will be overseeing the education of these students and not directly delivering the education.
- It also makes several technical changes indicating that this is an administrative unit, not an education unit to distinguish it from USD #2. (Addendum C in the 2022 JJPOC Recommendation Document)



Discussion & Vote

Charge of the Suspension & Expulsion Committee



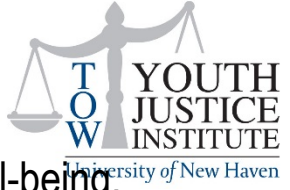
Substitute House Bill No. 6667 Public Act No. 21-174 11 of 16 called for the committee to submit a report on its findings and recommendations, if any, no later than January 1, 2022.

The committee shall complete a report concerning the effects of and alternatives to suspension and expulsion of students in preschool through second grade...

The committee shall include in reports written:

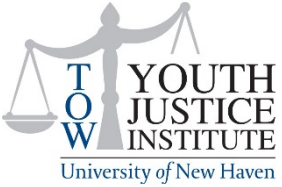
1. Funding recommendations for any proposed alternatives to suspension and expulsion.
2. Timelines for potential implementation of any such alternatives.
3. Individual school district needs based on data.
4. Training recommendations for school personnel.
5. Implementation procedures for alternative in-school disciplinary practice, strategies and intervention to support students and school personnel.
6. Strategies for family engagement.
7. Recommendations for screening for health and mental health concerns; and
8. Recommendations for strengthening connections to community-based services and supports including trauma-informed mental health interventions.

Committee Members As Identified in Legislation



1. **Co-Chair: Steven Hernandez (A)** One of whom shall be the chairperson of a collaborative group for social and emotional well-being.
2. **Co-Chair: Fran Rabinowitz (B)** One of whom shall be the executive director of a state-wide association of public-school superintendents.
3. **Desi Nesmith (3)** The Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee.
4. **Donald F. Harris Jr. (4)** A representative of the State Board of Education Accountability and Support Committee appointed by the Commissioner of Education; and
5. **Tony Gasper (C)** One of whom shall be the president of a state-wide association of public-school superintendents.
6. **John Frasinelli D)** One of whom shall be a representative of a state-wide school discipline collaborative.
7. **Tammy Raccio (E)** One of whom shall be the chairperson of a state-wide advisory council for special education.
8. **Kayle Hill (F)** One of whom shall be a representative of a disability rights organization.
9. **Andy Feinstein (G)** One of whom shall be a representative of a state-wide organization that advocates for special education equity.
10. **Tianna Hill, CHDI (H)** One of whom shall be a representative of an organization that is a catalyst for improvement of children's health and development
11. **Erica Bromley (I)** One of whom shall be a representative of an association of youth service bureaus.
12. **Rep. Robyn Porter-** Education Committee Co-Chair
13. **Amy Vatner-** Education Committee Co-Chair
14. **Kathryn Meyer-** Center for Children's Advocacy

Key Definitions



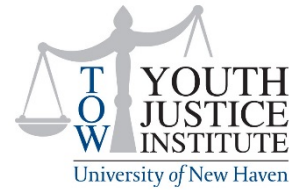
Removal: When a student experiences an exclusion from the classroom for part or all of a class period. However, this exclusionary period can not exceed 90 minutes.

In-School Suspension (ISS): An exclusion from normal classroom activities, but not school itself, and shall not be any longer than 10 consecutive school days.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): The student is excluded from school premises, privileges, and transportation for a time no longer than 10 consecutive school days.

Expulsion: A student is excluded from all school functions as the result of the student significantly disrupting the education process and/or has placed people/property in danger or caused harm.

Overview of PA 15-96 and Impact

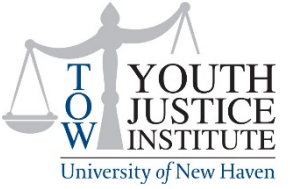


CT is a national leader in reducing suspensions and expulsions of young students.

- In 2015, CT became the first state to pass legislation banning the out-of-school suspension and expulsion of students in Pre-K through 2nd Grade, with some exceptions remaining based around ISS and pre-existing federal mandates.
- During the 2014-15 through the 2018-19 academic years, ISSs for this age group fell by over 45% and OSSs dropped by 72%.
- Early years of education are absolutely essential in a student's future trajectory.

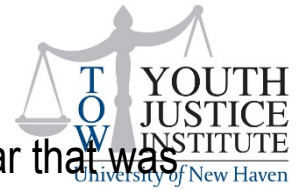
	2015-2016			2016-2017			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
Grade	EXP	OSS	ISS	EXP	OSS	ISS	EXP	OSS	ISS	EXP	OSS	ISS	EXP	OSS	ISS
PK	0	11	<6	0	<6	<6	0	8	<6	0	10	0	0	<6	<6
K	<6	278	315	0	157	263	0	194	229	0	203	162	0	132	129
01	<6	441	609	0	348	433	0	263	329	0	325	342	0	182	208
02	<6	597	985	0	473	770	0	326	592	0	356	528	0	261	323

Exceptions



- ISS is still allowed in instances where the student's behavior was of a violent or sexual nature.
- OSS is permitted if a local/regional BOE approves of the measure
- Expulsion can still occur when a student is in the possession of a deadly weapon on school grounds or at a school event; possession of a firearm while off school premises that is in violation of C.G.S. § 29-35 or possession and use of a firearm, instrument, or weapon in the commission of crime; and having/selling illicit substances on or off campus.

Why Updates Are Needed



- There were 670 students in Pre-K through Grade 2 suspended or expelled in the 2019-20 academic year alone, a year that was effectively shortened due to the switch of in-person learning.
- In the previous academic year, there were over 1,000 suspensions and expulsions issued to young students.
- Children of Color, English Language Learners, those with disabilities, and students living in economically disadvantaged communities are at a much greater risk of being suspended or expelled.
- Removal from the classroom and not providing adequate support to these students deprives them of the opportunities to learn, develop relationship building skills, and establish a positive mindset concerning their education.

Table 10: Number of Students Suspended/Expelled (Pre-K-2) by Race/Ethnicity

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	24	15	10	12	10	*
Black or African American	907	622	481	354	345	228
Hispanic/Latino of any race	863	576	446	349	330	221
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	0
Two or More Races	100	73	64	48	57	37
White	465	373	292	291	302	182

Special Note



- The members of the committee agree that excluding students from school, especially students in grade two and below, is not a good policy for the reasons stated in this report. We agree that there are times when students exhibiting challenging behavior need to be removed from the classroom and the regular school environment for their own safety and the safety of the whole school community. We also agree that a robust continuum of social-emotional supports, including a comprehensive system of support to help students exhibiting challenging behavior, needs to be established and supported in all schools.
- The committee did not come to a consensus on whether further legislation to limit or ban exclusionary discipline would be useful or counterproductive. The committee agreed more time is needed to continue this work. The following recommendations are where the committee reached consensus.

Suspension and Expulsion Committee Recommendations



Recommendation 1:

- The legislature and the Governor shall adequately fund school needs, alternative in-school disciplinary practices, strategies, and intervention to support students and schools' personnel as outlined in this report for the purpose of implementing Public Act 15-96 "An Act Concerning Out-Of-School Suspension and Expulsions for Students in Preschool and Grades Kindergarten to Two effective July 2022.

Recommendation 2:

- This committee shall work towards recommending strategies to reduce to zero all suspensions (in-school and out of school), expulsions, and out-of-school removals of students in Preschools and Grades Kindergarten to Two. Such strategies may include a recommendation to remove the current exceptions of “behavior of a violent or sexual nature” and replace with only those exceptions required by federal requirements under the Gun-Free Schools Act. Legislative recommendations shall be delivered to the JJPOC effective January 2023.

Recommendation 3:

Effective July 2022 provide funding to build on successful, existing models of reducing exclusionary discipline such as, but not limited to, the Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI).

- a. Expand the legislative appropriation to each of SBDI's current funding partners (CSDE, CSSD, and DMHAS) to support a 10% expansion of SBDI programming in each of the coming five fiscal years.
- b. Pilot CHDI's School-Based Diversion Initiative (SBDI) Elementary school model. Funding should be identified to support the implementation of SBDI-E pilots for elementary schools with high utilization of law enforcement and exclusionary discipline.

Full language can be found in the report

Recommendation 4:

CSDE shall, in conjunction with CHDI and other experts in the field, develop a program of training in effective methods of addressing within the school environment the underlying issues of students who present with disruptive or dangerous behavior as a means to reduce the incidence of exclusion of these students from school. For example, if students cannot read, they cannot be successful academically and disruptive behavior may follow. Such training should focus initially on students in Grade Two and younger and should include...

Full language can be found in the report.

Recommendation 4:

- 4A) CSDE should identify and or develop guidelines for a supportive framework for support and peer-to-peer coaching for the purpose of properly disseminating this content throughout each school. Such a framework could include the designation of a formally identified, district-level staff to oversee the diffusion of training, technical assistance, and the peer-to-peer coaching model.
- Districts should review its existing staffing capacity (i.e., school climate coordinator, SBDI Leader in Residence) to determine if additional capacity resources are needed to fulfill this responsibility. All available funding sources should be considered (i.e. Alliance funding, Recovery funding).
- CSDE should, primarily utilizing existing materials, promptly publish guidance on the implementation of alternative in-school disciplinary practices, strategies, and interventions to support students and school personnel.

Full language can be found in the report.

Recommendation 5:

- By July 1, 2023, the CSDE will develop a comprehensive systems approach to identify and support districts with high suspension rates in Pre-K to Grade Two and to help districts address challenging behaviors. The Pre-K to Grade Two structure shall include:
 - a. Methodology for identifying districts with high suspension rates in Pre-K to Grade Two (Collecting, analyzing, and monitoring school discipline data)
 - b. A continuum of integrated tiered supports for identified districts.
 - c. Policy Guidance and Professional Learning (Provide a decision-tree guide for addressing behavioral challenges)
 - d. Evaluating the effectiveness of school discipline policies and practices in districts
 - e. Costs per year \$450,000-\$500,000

Full language can be found in the report.

Recommendation 6:

The comprehensive system of support shall include providing parents and or caregivers a brief description of the precipitating incidents, what supports were provided to their child while exhibiting challenging behavior, and the outcome of those implemented supports and strategies.

- 6A) Link or refer the family and student as appropriate to the Community Based Diversion System, Children’s Behavioral Health Services System, and or community-based services provider for access to social, emotional, and mental health supports.
- 6B) CSDE shall work with districts and or schools in identifying community-based mentor programs to be implemented within districts/schools in Tier 4 or with high rates of suspension and expulsion.
- 6C) Implementation of “The SBDI Toolkit: A Community Resources for Reducing School-Based Arrests”

Full language can be found in the report.

Recommendation 7:

The legislature and the Governor shall adequately fund the expansion of the school-based mental health workforce/support staff and behavioral support programs and services.

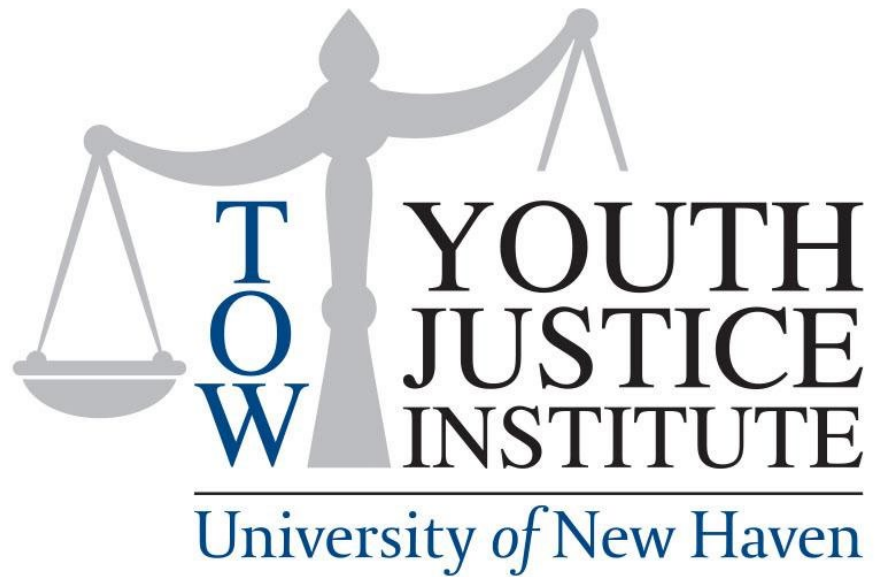
- a. In addition to the funds for the expansion of the school-based mental health workforce/support staff and behavioral support programs and services, all available funding sources should be considered to address the current crisis, including, but not limited to, utilizing time-limited federal funds until longer-term federal opportunities in prevention and diversion can be put in place.
- b. Reducing student to teacher classroom ratio to no more than 20 students and or propose plan that involves recruiting greater numbers of student aides from nearby colleges or partner with AmeriCorps and or other similar nonprofit to provide instructor support.

Full language can be found in the report.

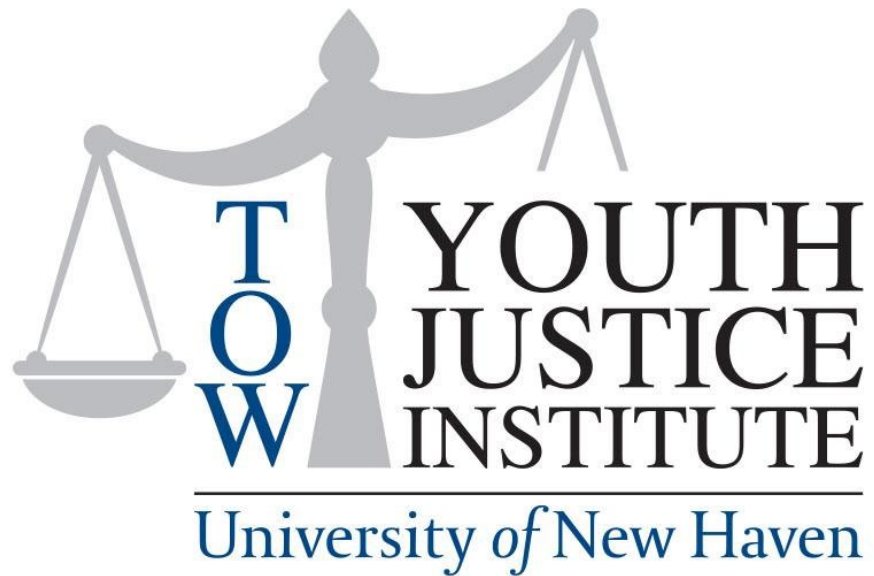
Recommendation 8:

Create a crisis prevention and response partnership in districts and municipalities.

- a. The directive should be recrafted to create an obligation for municipalities to ensure a comprehensive crisis response system of care that does not place the onus on law enforcement to manage children's behavioral health.
- b. Consideration should be made for co-located mental health interventions and or explore if portion of the Mobil Crisis Intervention Services (formerly EMPS) can be co-located in the schools that have higher rates of expulsions, suspension, police calls, and arrest.



Discussion & Vote



Incarceration Workgroup Recommendations

Commissary- Report and recommendations on commissary needs for all persons eighteen to twenty-one years of age who are incarcerated in Department of Correction facilities (Due to the Department of Administrative Services and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly January 1, 2022)

- What has been done:
 - Bi-monthly meetings
 - Created & Distributed Survey to incarcerated individuals
 - Reviewed current DOC commissary
 - Reviewed CSSD commissary and previous DCF CJTS commissary
 - Researched other state models

Commissary Recommendation 1:

Expanded commissary options

- Ensure weekly opportunities for commissary
- Increase healthy food options, this will promote positive purchasing behaviors and healthy living habits
- Important to remember lifestyle, health, and cultural needs; such as sugar free, gluten free, and Halal options.
- Other commonly asked for goods include products for acne, hair, dental health, and feminine hygiene.

Commissary Recommendation 2:

Decrease in mark-up on prices on commissary goods

- Federal law allows for a maximum of a 35% mark-up on commissary goods
- Current CT mark-up rate is 30%
- Any significant change to mark-up will impact CEC revolving fund and its support of the Inmate General Welfare Fun.
- DOC should review budget to develop strategies to lower the mark-up on products related to health and hygiene.
- DOC should work with JJPOC to explore options of a non-self-supporting commissary structure

Commissary Recommendation 3:

Improve options for feminine products

- Tampons and sanitary napkins are currently provided to women on a weekly basis, with the option to request more for free.
- DOC should expand options for feminine hygiene products, such as more brands and offering organic options.

Commissary Recommendation 4

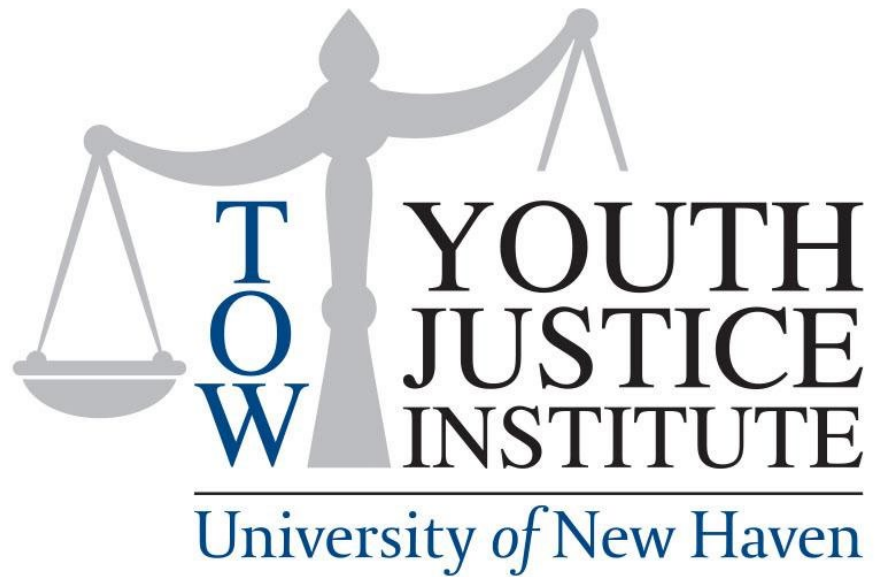
Enhanced quality control for commissary

- Special attention should be paid to the quality of hygienic products provided for free to individuals with limited finances
- DOC should continue to explore expanding the number of products offered for free to these individuals.
- Conduct annual surveys of inmates to ensure quality control.

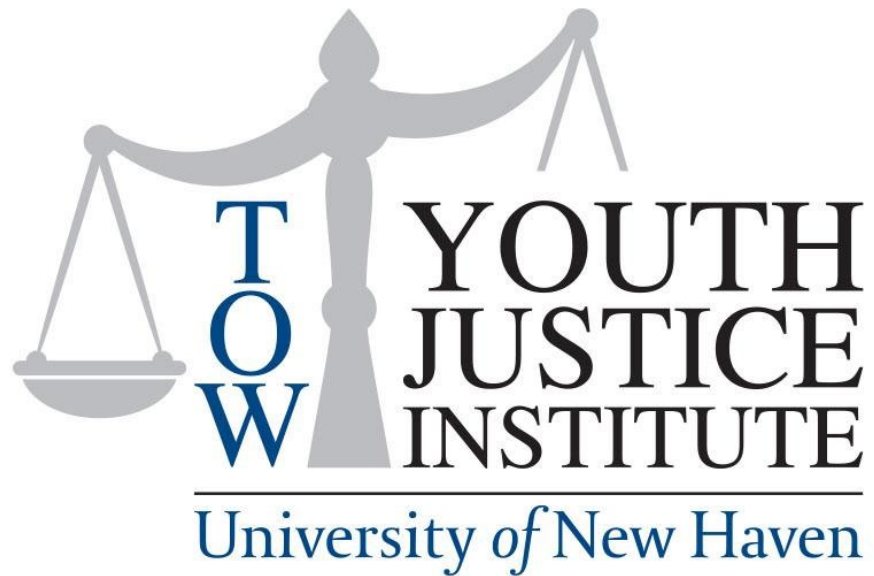
Commissary Recommendation 5:

Increased opportunities and incentives for education, employment, and programming

- DCF currently supports youth in their charge with a monthly \$50 bank deposit. It is recommended that the CT legislature formalize these payments in policy.
- DOC should consider making similar payments to youth with a disability, those without family supports, or any other vulnerable group.
- Pursuing an education yields less compensation than taking part in prison labor. DOC should continue to examine increased incentives for those wishing to expand their education.



Discussion & Vote



***Next JJPOC Meeting
March 17th, 2022
2:00-3:30PM***