



Making connections. Informing solutions.

JJPOC Monthly Meeting Agenda

Date: April 17, 2025

Time: 2:00PM-3:30PM

Location: LOB Room 1E / Via Zoom

Viewing Options [YouTube](#) or [CT-N](#)

Welcome and Introductions

Representative Toni Walker
Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz

Overview of Meeting and
Announcements

Brittany LaMarr

Discussion over HB 1243

Sean Tomany, Principal, University High
School of Science and Engineering;
Oluwaseyi Oluborode, Student,
University High School of
Science and Engineering

CCA: RED Presentation

Martha Stone, et al. (See PowerPoint for
full list of presenters)

CCA: Report on Connecticut Youth
with Disabilities in the Justice System

Sarah Eagan, Executive Director, CCA;
Dr. Andrea Spencer; Attorney Marisa
Halm

JJPOC 2025 Workplans

Brittany LaMarr

Next Meeting: May 15, 2025

University of New Haven



Making connections. Informing solutions.

University of New Haven

Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee

April 17, 2025

2:00PM – 3:30PM

Legislative Office Building, Room 1E

Zoom Option available

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Rep. Toni Walker/Undersecretary Daniel Karpowitz

Overview of Meeting & Announcements

Brittany LaMarr, University of New Haven, TYJI

Presentation of HB 1243

**Sean Tomany, Principal, University High School of Science and Engineering;
Oluwaseyi Oluborode, Student, University High School of Science and Engineering**

CCA RED Presentation

**Martha Stone, Founder and Special Counsel, CCA; Kristina Baldwin, DCF, CYSA of Hartford;
Lt. Sean Michel, Special Investigations Division, Hartford Police Department;
Noelia Dondele, Juvenile Matters Supervisor II, JBCSSD;
Brittney Jackson, Project Administrator, Clifford Beers Community Care Center;
Abby Olinger Quint, Senior Director of Data and Accountability, Hartford Public Schools;
Kathy Nazario, Family & Community Engagement Supervisor, Capitol Regional Education Council;
Sarah Gibson, Systems Program Director, DCF;
Peter Kochol, Consultant, Center for Children's Advocacy.**

CCA Report: Missed Cues & Lost Opportunities

Sarah Eagan, Executive Director, CCA; Attorney Marisa Halm; Dr. Andrea Spencer

2025 JJPOC Workplan

Brittany LaMarr



Tow Youth
Justice
Institute

Making connections. Informing solutions.

HB 1243: AN ACT CONCERNING BUS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR VETERANS AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

To provide fare-free bus public transportation services for high school students, veterans and low-income passengers.



Making connections. Informing solutions.

CCA: Local Racial and Ethnic Disparities Work

Presentation to the JJPOC by Racial and Ethnic Disparities Reduction Committees

April 17, 2025

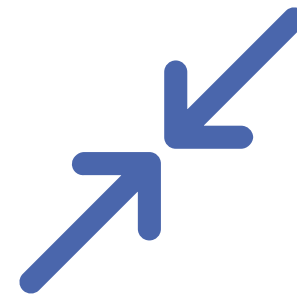
What is the RED Committee?

The Center for Children's Advocacy Racial Justice Project co-chairs Racial and Ethnic Disparity **(RED)** Reduction Committees in:

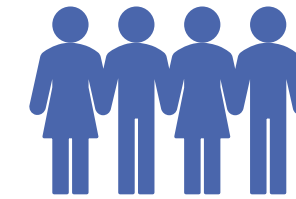
- Bridgeport (in partnership with Catalyst CT)
- Hartford (in partnership with City of Hartford)
- Hamden (in partnership with CT VIP)
- New Haven (in partnership with Clifford Beers)
- Waterbury (in partnership with Waterbury Youth Service Bureau)



Goals of Work to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities



Reduce over-representation of youth of color at key decision points



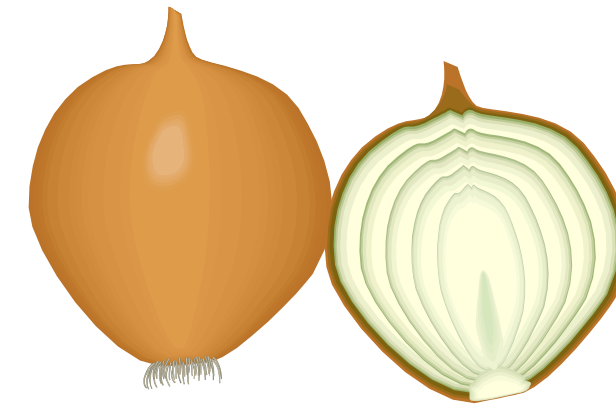
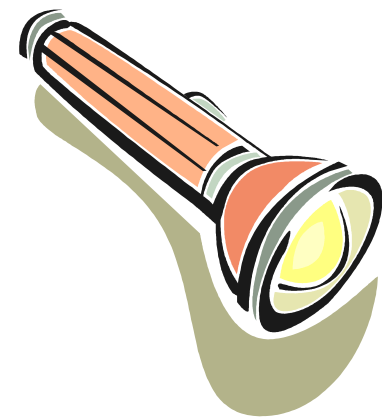
Reduce the disparate treatment of youth of color at key decision points



Prevent youth of color from unnecessarily entering and moving through the juvenile justice system

Effective Use of Data

- Examine baseline data at key decision points, disaggregated by:
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Ethnicity
 - Geography
 - Age
 - Offense
 - Referral Source
 - Reason for Referrals
- Identify points of disparity for deeper analysis
- Use data to select sub-populations for targeted reductions



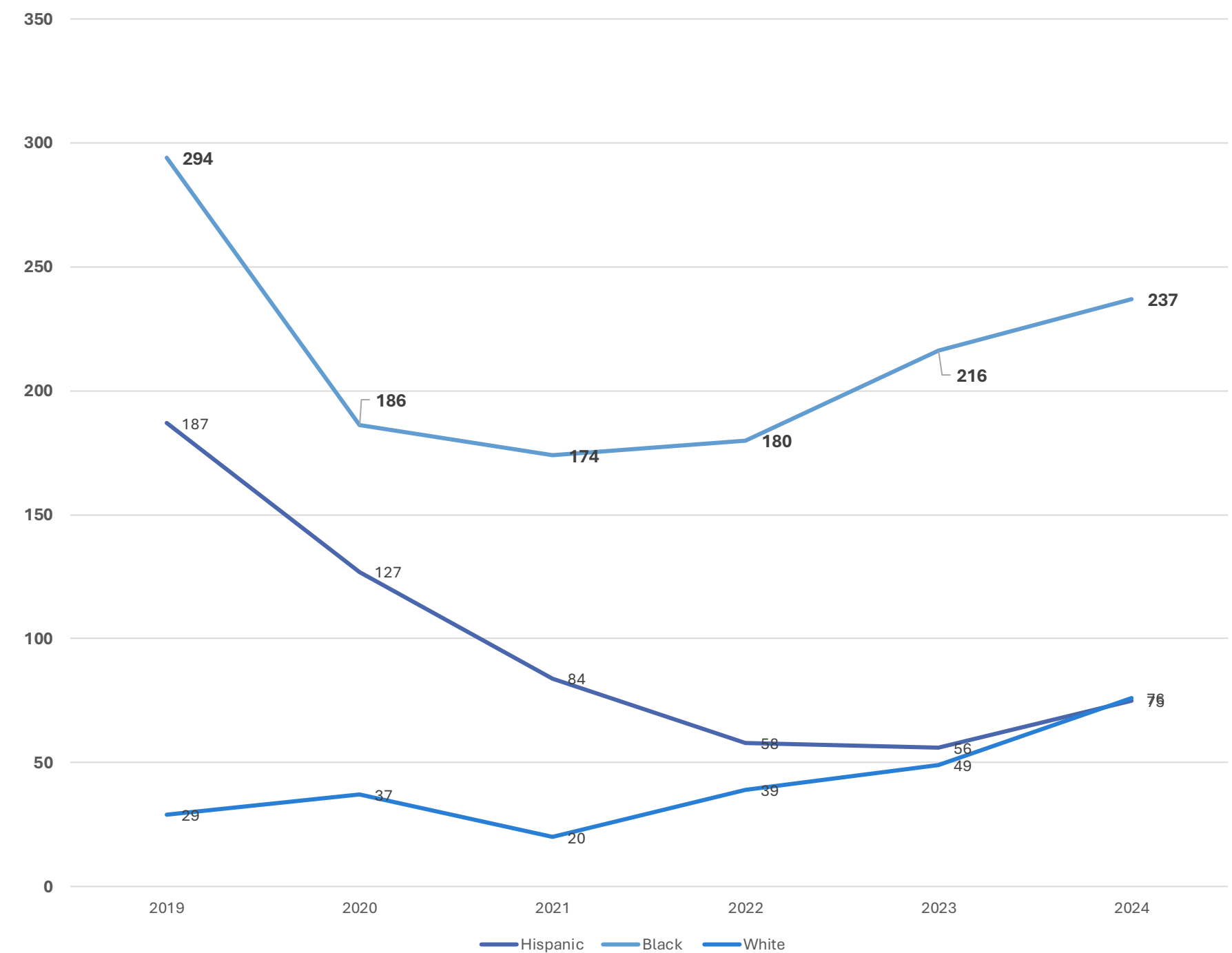
School Demographic Data

NEW HAVEN DISTRICT ENROLLMENT TRENDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY: Fall 2019 through Spring 2024

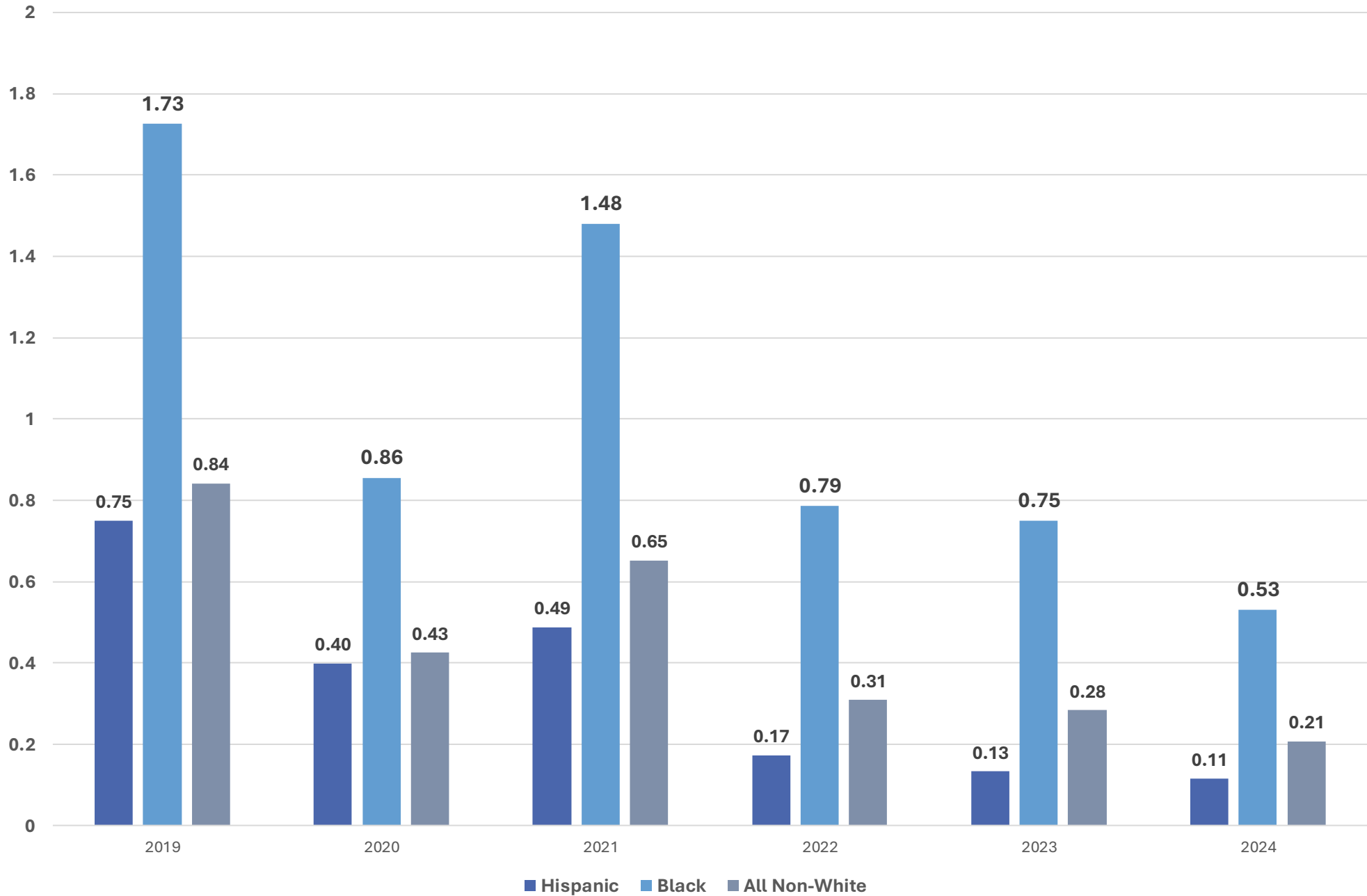
YEAR	Total Student Enrollment	American Native or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two or More Races	White
2019 - 2020	20,675	40	522	7,529	9,649	11	367	2,557
2020 - 2021	20,051	40	569	7,145	9,502	11	460	2,324
2021 - 2022	19,420	42	545	6,829	9,326	10	538	2,130
2022 - 2023	19,150	39	622	6,587	9,286	9	597	2,010
2023 - 2024	18,966	39	740	6,287	9,355	6	668	1,871
		.0021%	3.90%	33.15%	49.33%	.0003%	3.5%	9.87%

Bridgeport Delinquency Data

Bridgeport Referrals By Race and Year
Equity Dashboard

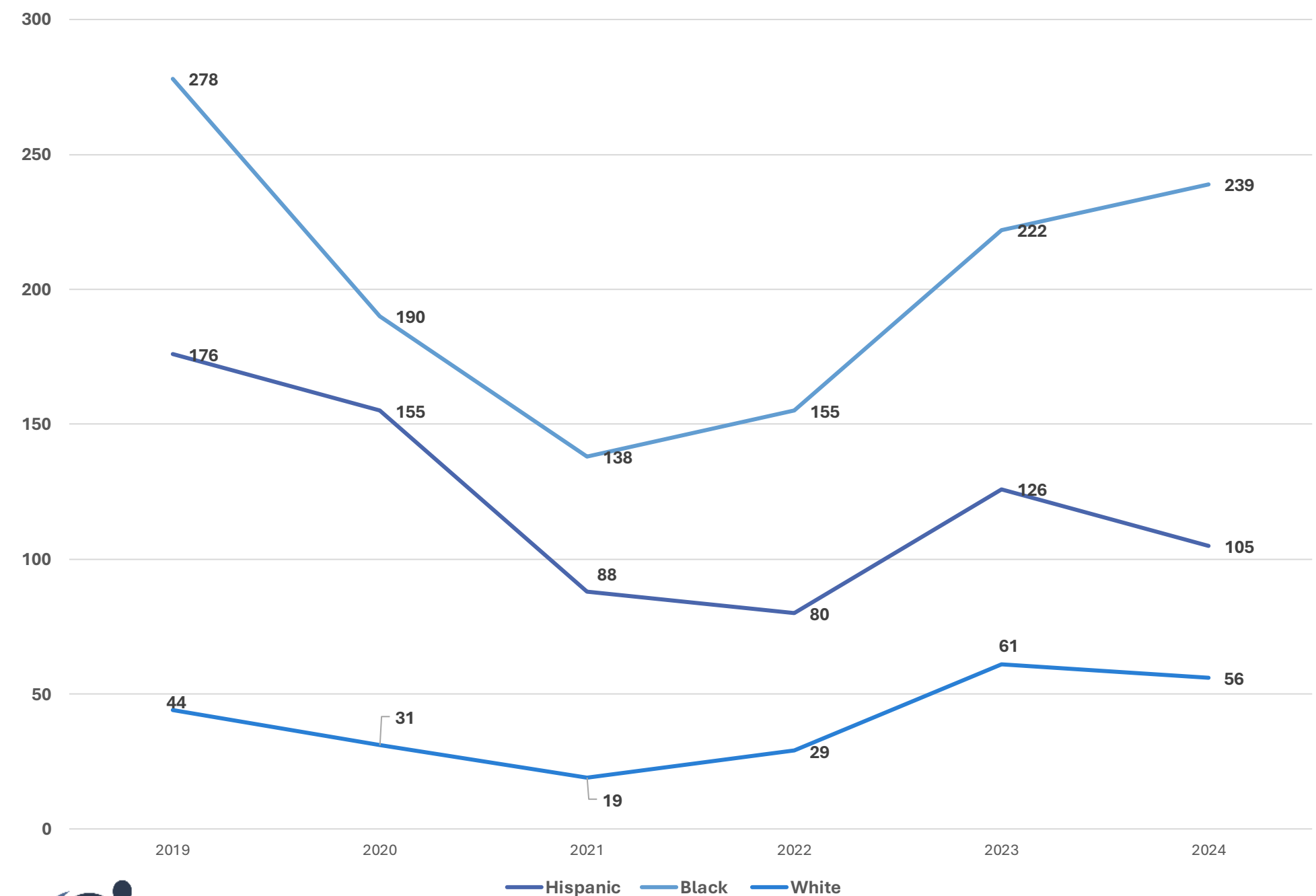


Bridgeport Relative Rate Index (RRI) By Year
Equity Dashboard

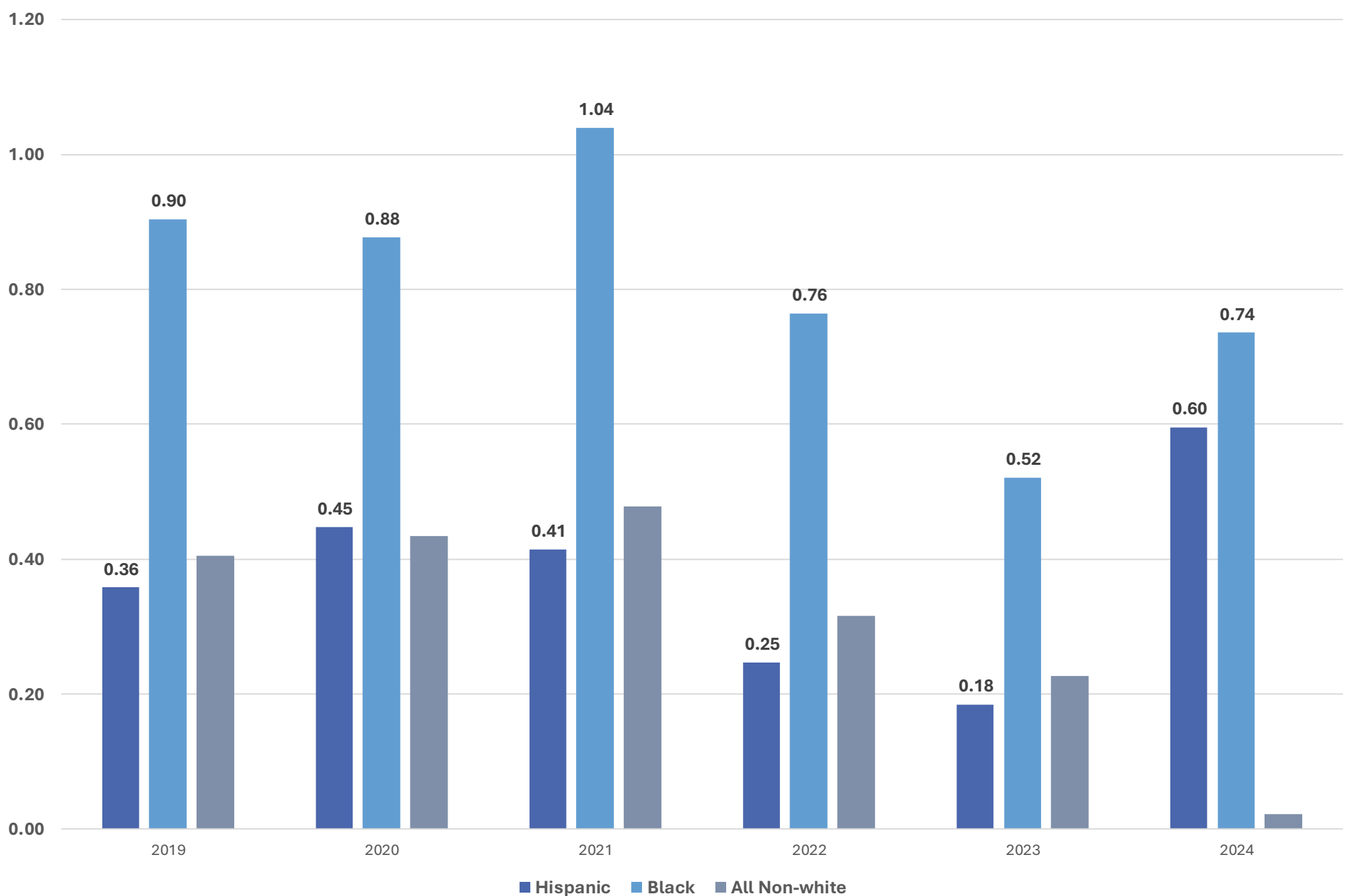


Hartford Delinquency Data

Hartford Referrals By Race and Year
Equity Dashboard

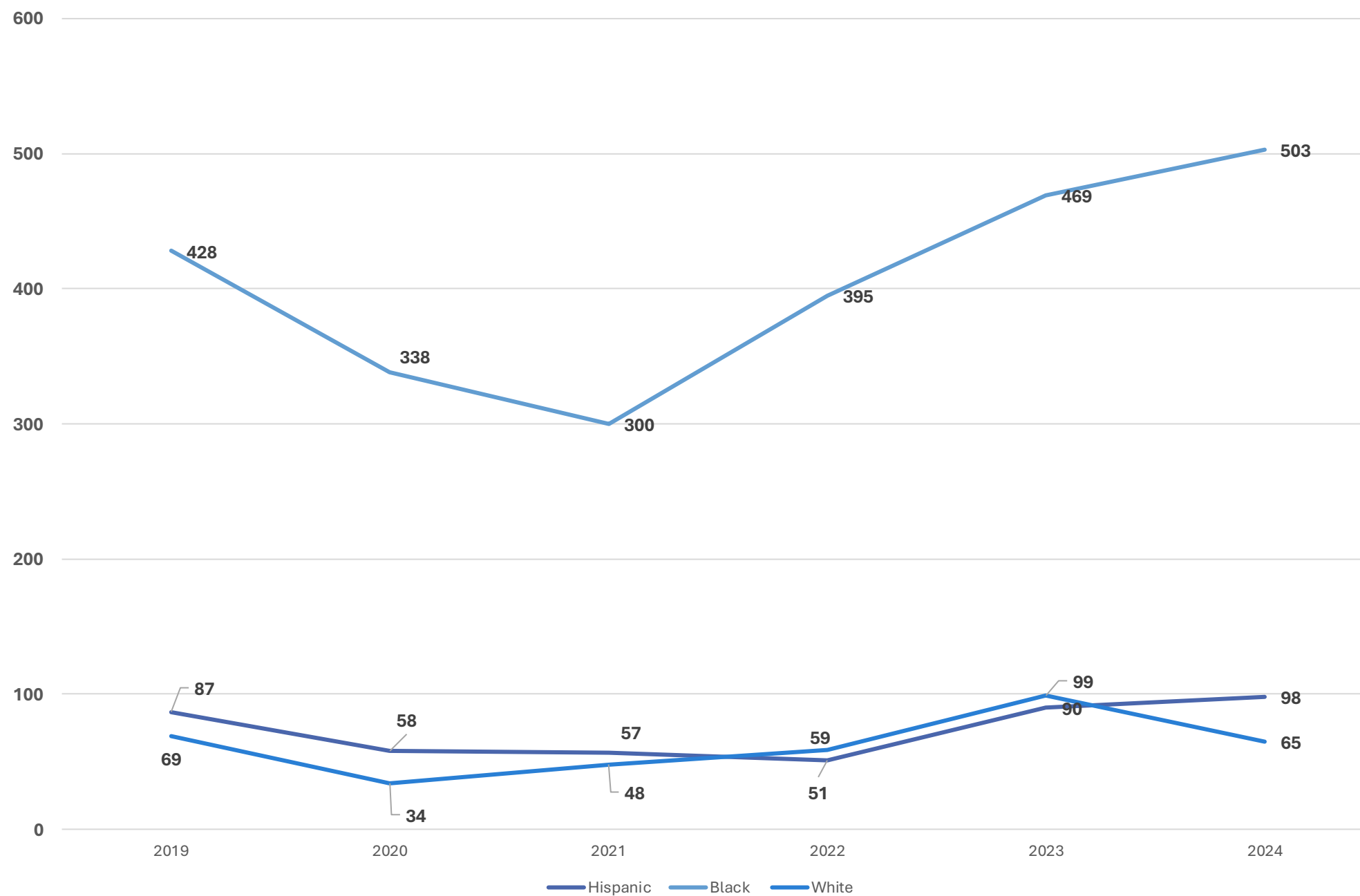


Hartford Relative Rate Index (RRI) By Year
Equity Dashboard

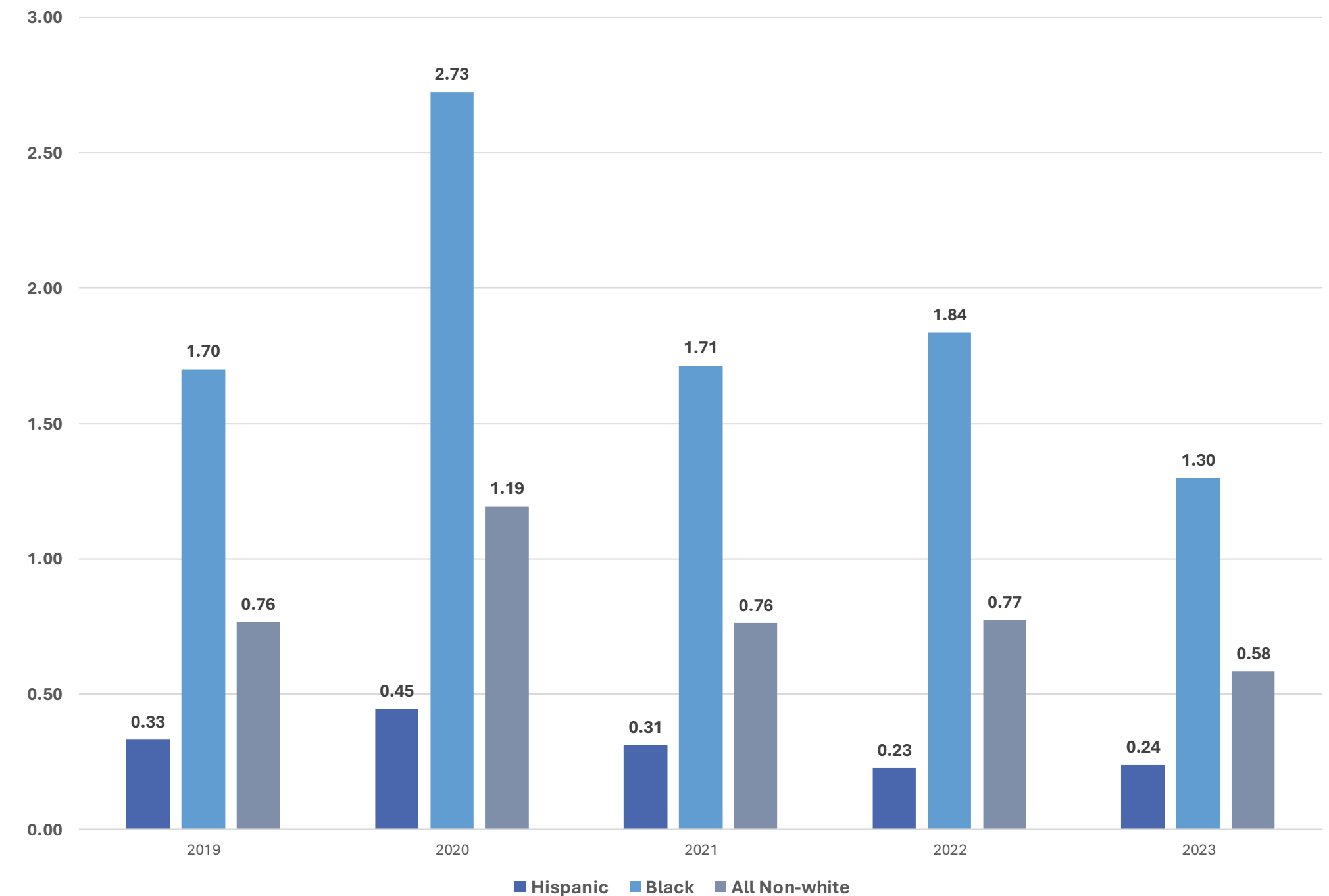


New Haven Delinquency Data

New Haven Referrals By Race and Year
Equity Dashboard



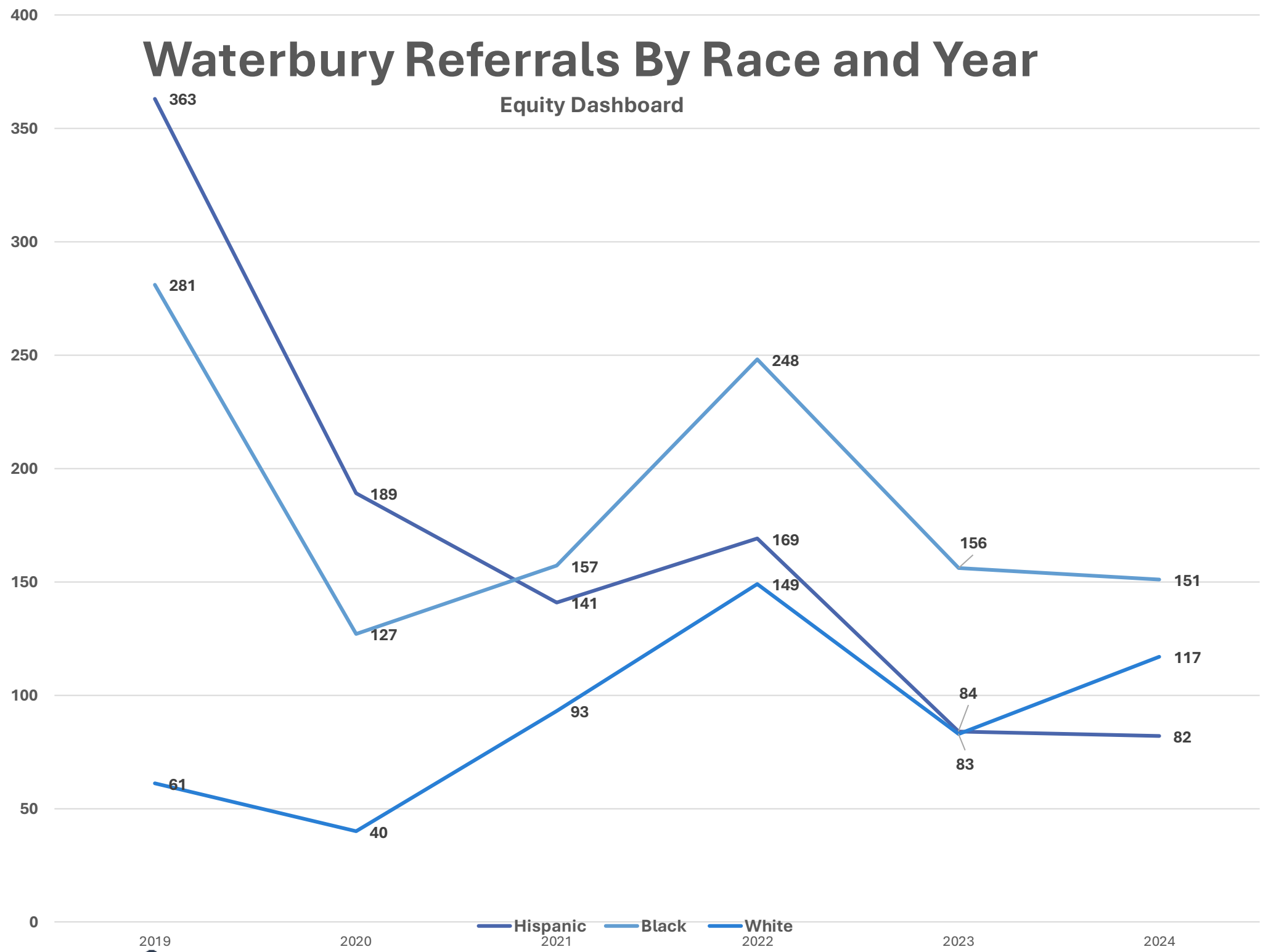
New Haven Relative Rate Index (RRI) By Year
Equity Dashboard



Waterbury Delinquency Data

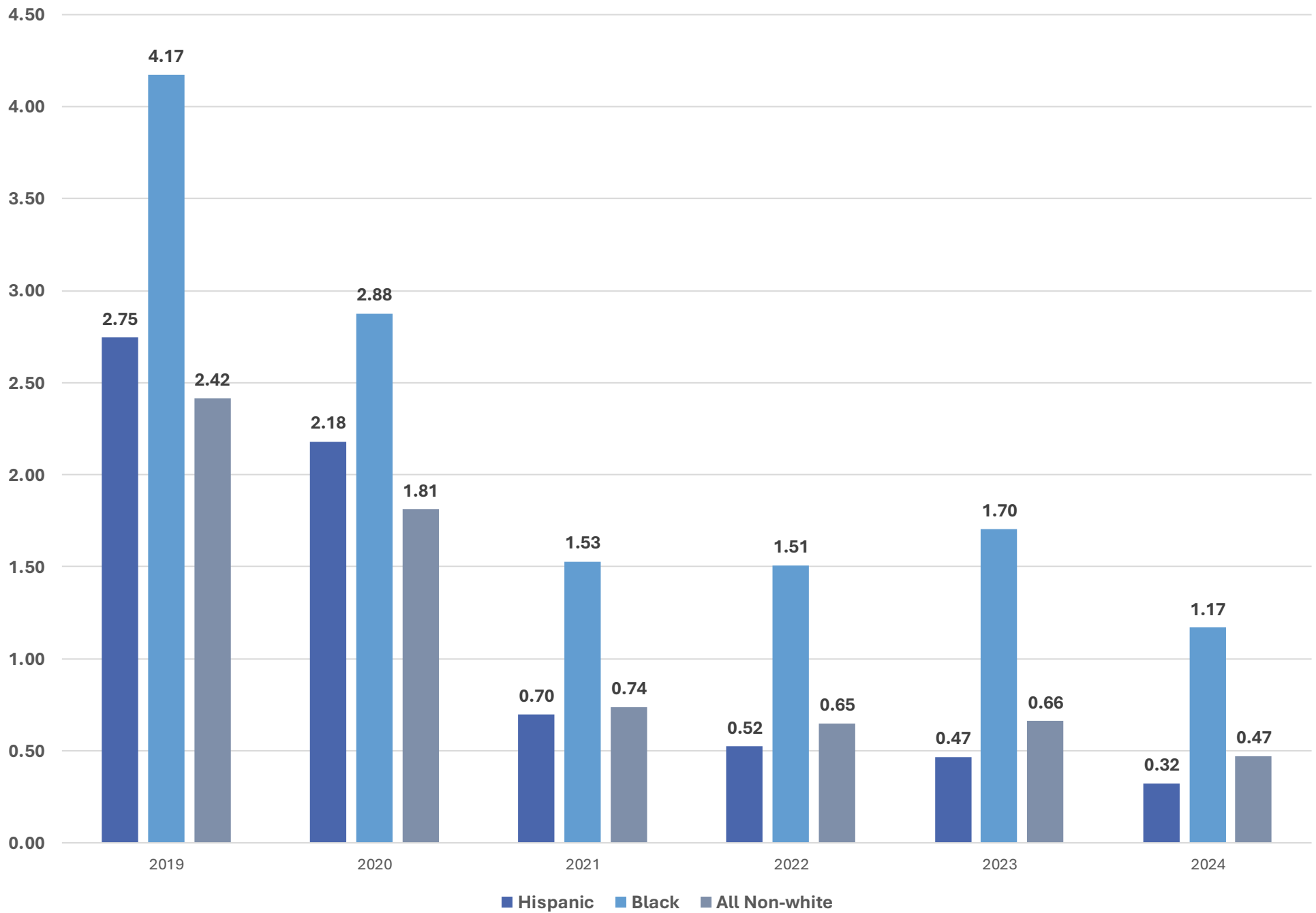
Waterbury Referrals By Race and Year

Equity Dashboard



Waterbury Relative Rate Index (RRI) By Year

Equity Dashboard



Standard RED Meeting Agenda



[Hartford Agenda Example](#)



Presentation of Juvenile Justice Statistics along the continuum



How the Statistics are used by the RED Committee



Benefits/Accomplishments of RED Committee Collaboration

Benefits of RED Committee Collaboration

Creates collaborative partnerships to cohesively discuss systemic issues around disparities in youth care coordination.

Allows for quicker identification of readily emergent or continually emerging issues.

Identifies both gaps in system coordination and programmatic supports.

Elevates best practices and new strategies for service delivery to support youth.

Allows for a deeper dive into data across multiple systems to recognize patterns and areas of improvement.

Diversion

How the Statistics are Used

- Analysis of data to inform program improvements
- Analysis of the effectiveness of JRB programs
- Identification of additional restorative justice options

Benefits & Accomplishments

- Increased access to diversion programs for youth
- Stronger community partnerships
- Reduction in misdemeanor referrals to court

School-based Arrests

How the Statistics are Used

- Identification of schools with highest arrest rates
- Analysis of trends and root causes

Benefits & Accomplishments

- Significant decreases in school-based arrests
- Informing Policy and Disciplinary Practices
- Strengthening School-Community Collaboration
- Increase Accountability and Transparency

How the Statistics are Used

- Analysis of data to reduce arrests and increase referrals to the JRB
- Sharing of data with commanders across HPD
- Analysis of repeat offenders and identification of gaps in services

Benefits & Accomplishments

- Elimination of information silos
- Valuable feedback from group to improve policing practices
- General decrease in community-based arrests

How the Statistics are Used

- Analysis of youth arrested by race and type of placement

Benefits & Accomplishments

- Increased collaboration between DCF area offices and probation

How the Statistics are Used

- Identification of truant and chronic absent students by school, race, grade, and disability

Benefits & Accomplishments

- Sharing of interventions to address truancy and chronic absenteeism ,e.g. Project Prevent, and LEAP
- Strengthening of collaboration between probation and the school system

Next Steps

- Increase direct referrals from the police departments to the JRB
- Address data sharing barriers
- Develop case studies to analyze and plan for repeat offenders
- Address service gaps identified

Next Steps Continued

- Establish RED committees in the jurisdictions showing the most significant RRI “e.g. ”

Top Three Relative Rate Index (RRI) by City for 2024

City	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic Black	All Non-white
Hamden	1.06	6.84	3.17
Meriden	1.08	5.54	1.10
Norwalk	3.65	3.82	3.17

RRI values are sorted by Non-Hispanic Black descending



Making connections. Informing solutions.

CCA Report: Missed Cues & Lost Opportunities



Fighting for the legal rights of Connecticut's most vulnerable children

Connecticut Youth with Disabilities in the Justice System

**Missed Cues and Lost Opportunities: Briefing for
the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight
Committee (JJPOC)**

**Presented by
The Center for Children's Advocacy,
with support from Dr. Andrea Spencer**

CCA's Work with Justice Involved Youth

"Know your Rights training"

Speak Up! Youth Project— meeting with detained and incarcerated youth

Individual legal representation of incarcerated and re-entering youth

Individual legal representation of children with disabilities, and children in the child welfare system

Report Purpose

Examine school
and justice system
responses to 10
incarcerated youth
with disabilities

Identified (missed)
opportunities for
early support

Develop specific
recommendations
for systemic reform

CCA Report. Methodology

- Review educational, developmental and social histories for 10 incarcerated young adults in DOC custody.
- All youth had received educational advocacy from CCA.
- Each participant provided consent for their involvement.
- Youth Interviews
- Records reviews conducted by Dr. Andrea Spencer, Phd.—Faculty St. Josephs
- IEPs reviewed dated from 2015 to 2022, as available per youth.

CCA Report

“I am almost 21 years old, and I have spent 8 years of my life locked up, starting when I was 12. I really hope that what you are doing with this report can change things for the kids who come after me.”

- Report Participant

Incarcerated youth at MYI

All of the youth who participated in CCA's Report are Black, Latino, or Multiracial males

All youth were incarcerated before age 18 in adult facility

Youth records revealed a variety of disabilities: ADHD, learning disorders, autism, schizophrenia, PTSD

All youth were from major urban centers

CCA Report. Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Violence. 100% of youth self reported exposure to violence in their childhood

- One youth witnessed the shooting death of a close friend.
- One youth was a gunshot victim.
- Two youth reported being a victim of child abuse, verbal and physical.
- Two youth reported witnessing domestic violence.
- Six youth reported witnessing/impact of community violence and death/death of family members

CCA Report. Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Multiple youth reported previous injuries, surgeries (gun shot, dog attack, altercations)

One youth reported history of homelessness

Two youth reported a history of multiple psychiatric hospitalizations

One youth reported a history of multiple foster care placements.

Two youth reported child abuse

Six youth had an incarcerated parent

Family economic challenges; parental separation; parental disability; immigration concerns; parental m/h and s/a challenges.

Anthony's Story

Anthony had Birth to Three services due to a developmental disability but did not receive special education services upon entering school

His father was incarcerated when he was a baby and Anthony was close with his mother. He witnessed his mother victimized by interpersonal violence.

As he entered school, Anthony exhibited behavioral outbursts. He was retained in the first grade. No referral for a special education evaluation took place.

By middle school he was placed in an alternative program, where his struggles continued and he became further dis-engaged.

He was incarcerated at MYI by age 16. His mother and legal advocate helped get Anthony identified for special education services due to a language-based disorder.

Anthony reported his goals and aspirations. He wants to work with his hands and learn a skilled trade.

Missed Cues. Youth Education records

- 8/10 education records indicate no documentation of ACEs in early childhood.
- Most youth (7/10) IEPs did not indicate a confirmed psychiatric or clinical psychological evaluation and diagnosis (consistent with research findings regarding clinical diagnosis for minority youth).

Lost opportunities from an early age.

1. The majority of youth did not meet academic goals from **early elementary grades** but were not referred for special education and evaluation timely.
2. The median age at the time of youth's referral for special education was 13.5, with a range of age 3 to age 18.
3. 6/10 youth were successfully referred for special education by their legal advocate, and in one case, DCF. **Most referrals were initiated *after* youth's incarceration.**
4. **Youth described increasing levels of disengagement from school** in relation to academic difficulties and increasing feelings of anxiety and isolation/not belonging/academic failure began to seem inescapable.

It all got worse in middle school..." Participant 3

"I never felt like I belonged in school..." Participant 8.

Jayden's story

Jayden reported not feeling safe in his neighborhood and reported including being mugged when he was 12. He didn't feel safe walking to school so sometimes he didn't go.

Jayden reported school getting extremely hard in middle school, and he felt overwhelmed

Jayden reported multiple traumatic injuries to his head (two car accidents and being kicked in the head).

He was referred for special education in high school, but because he was "in and out of jail/detention" the referral did not get completed until he was incarcerated.

Jayden eventually received a diploma, and at the time of the conclusion of this Report was taking a college course. He aspired to be a mentor for kids like himself one day.

(Jayden is now re-incarcerated in adult prison)

Youth Educational Records

- 8/10 youth's records indicated attentional concerns (ADHD/OHI/"Distractibility")
- All youth below grade level in reading
- 4/10 records indicate grade retention. One youth was retained 3 times. One youth was promoted by exception in 9th grade

Missed Cues/Language Impairment

- Multiple youth's records indicate language impairment– strongly correlated with development of “problem” behavior, particularly as children get older.
- Lack of language-related assessments in youth's records, with only a single exception in this group.
- Deficits in pragmatic language have been linked to behavior problems, mostly commonly hyperactivity and lack of prosocial behavior.

Lost Opportunities/Discipline and Incarceration

- **8/10 youth received multiple suspensions and/or expulsion from school.**
- 8/10 youth were either placed in an in-district alternative school or an “out placement,” due to behavior challenges.
- ***4/10 youth were incarcerated for the first time before 9th grade.***

Leo's Story. CCA Report

Leo grew up with an incarcerated father.

His mother had many personal struggles that led to legal and child protection system involvement.

Leo had trouble focusing from an early age and was a late reader. He was retained in elementary school.

In 7th grade Leo was expelled for a full year due to an altercation with a peer in the school cafeteria. Records do not indicate that he received schooling during this time.

Leo repeated 7th grade but wound up on a downward trajectory.

Leo stopped going to school until he was sent to detention.

He was given an educational advocate and attorney. Leo was ultimately identified for special education due to a reading disability in what should have been his third year of high school.

His teachers described him as “diligent,” and “engaged,” “respectful,” and wanting to do well. Leo was able to complete high school while incarcerated. At the time of this report, Leo remained incarcerated, with a goal of becoming a barber and a good father upon release. Leo is now living in the community.

Lost Opportunities/Inadequate education in Justice System

- Youth records reflected minimal special education service hours
- Transition serves were very limited, typically one hour per month
- Median IEP service hours/week for the ten youth were 2.75 hours, with a range of 1.5 hours to 5.5 hours
- Most youth, 6/10, had no LEA representation at PPTs

Recommendations. Qualitative Oversight of Self-Contained and Alternative Settings

LEA Reporting on Education in Self Contained/Alternative/Secure settings.

- LEAs must have effective monitoring of quality of self-contained and alternative programs, including their individual contracts with private special education programs.

CSDE Enforcement.

- CSDE should strengthen oversight of the timely delivery of comprehensive special education evaluations of children to ensure assessment of trauma/ACES and language disorders by qualified staff, particularly in the face of persistent academic failure, emerging problem behavior, and chronic absenteeism.

CSDE Enforcement.

- implementation of research-based and evidence-based positive behavioral support interventions
- qualitative oversight for all programs where children spend less than 50% of their time with non-disabled peers (e.g., self-contained settings, alternative schools, private special education schools, including **secure settings**)
- Progress monitoring/corrective action (publicly available) for programs with high rates of school-based arrests, suspensions, restraint/seclusion

Secure Settings.

- Ensure JJEU can initiate special education referrals; Require reports re Child Find; Evaluations; Special Education Hours; Related Service Delivery; Transition Services.

Recommendations. Prevention/Prevention/Prevention

Professional Development.

- Facilitate professional development on relationship between language-based disorders and externalizing and problem behavior, often overlooked in boys.
- Training on impact of ACES and trauma on cognitive abilities, including executive functioning.

Reform use of Exclusionary Discipline.

- Phase out suspension and expulsion in elementary school, oversee implementation of research-based interventions, and ensure social work supports and trauma-responsive supports in elementary programs.

Expand Access to Educational Advocacy

- Expand Educational Success model to include JRB
- Increase funding for peer support for families who have a child with a disability (e.g. FAVOR)



Making connections. Informing solutions.

JJPOC 2025 Workplans

Strategic Plan Timeline:

Draft Sent to JJPOC Members in May

Voting on JJPOC Strategic Plan in June

JJPOC Member In-Person Summit in September



Tow Youth
Justice
Institute

Making connections. Informing solutions.

Diversion

Statewide Uniform Diversion Policy in
collaboration with POSTC

Updates to ensure all municipalities have
access to diversion

Municipal Guidebook

Community Expertise (CEW)

2026 Youth Report

Appointing Youth to JJPOC



Tow Youth
Justice
Institute

Making connections. Informing solutions.

Incarceration

Conditions of Confinement

Gender Responsive Systems' Landscape

Reentry Support and Development

Education

Review and work through Alternative

Education Opportunity Report

Review and analysis of absenteeism, ISS, OSS,
and expulsions



Tow Youth
Justice
Institute

Making connections. Informing solutions.

Cross Agency Data Sharing

Building out Equity Dashboard Analysis and
municipal engagement

Annual System Trend Report

SAG

Creating the group per statutory requirements

Next Meeting – May 17th, 2025

March JJPOC Meeting Minutes

March 20th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Legislative Office Building Location

Zoom Option Available

Attendance

Charles Hewes

Christina Ghio

Christina Quaranta

Daniel Karpowitz

Erica Bromley

Gary Roberge

Gary Winfield

Hector Glynn

Jodi Hill-Lilly

Martha Stone

Michael Pierce

Renee Cimino

Sharmese Walcott

Toni Walker

TYJI Staff

Andrew Zhebrak

Brittany LaMarr

Erika Nowakowski

Paul Klee

Welcome and Introductions

Toni Walker and Daniel Karpowitz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Overview of the Meeting

The March monthly meeting consisted of a report by DCF on the JJPOC Gender Responsiveness recommendations, a report by DOC on the JJPOC reentry recommendations, and a report by JBCSSD on the JJPOC reentry recommendations. There were young people also present at the meeting in continued collaboration between them and the JJPOC.

Acceptance of JJPOC Meeting Minutes

Toni Walker asked for a motion to accept January and February meeting minutes. The motion was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Updates

A motion was made to have a youth-led JJPOC monthly meeting quarterly.

DCF Report on JJPOC Gender Responsiveness Recommendations

University of New Haven

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was designated to report to the JJPOC. This requirement is the result of the passage of the related JJPOC Gender Responsiveness Workgroup recommendations in January 2025. The report given by DCF included incidents during the 2024 calendar year (January through December).

The number of abuse/neglect allegations to the DCF Careline totaled 65,127 with 30,318 accepted. The number of sexual abuse allegations (SAA) to the DCF Careline totaled 1,893 with 1,495 accepted, which represents roughly 5% of all accepted reports for abuse and neglect. “Accepted” refers to allegations that meet the requirements for a report.

The accepted reports with an SAA were then more closely analyzed. Out of the 1,495 accepted reports, 89% had an SAA against a family member or other entrusted adult, 2% had an SAA against a DCF Licensed Provider, and 9% had an SAA against another provider. Of the 34 allegations of a DCF Licensed Provider, 19 were regarding a DCF foster or adoptive home, 4 were regarding a Child Placing Agency (CPA) home, 5 were regarding a DCF facility/cottage, 4 were regarding a private agency, 1 was regarding a business, and 1 was regarding another governmental agency. Of the 133 allegations of another provider, 114 were regarding a school, 12 were regarding a daycare, 4 were regarding a medical provider, and 3 were regarding an unidentified provider.

A question was then asked by a JJPOC member regarding how many of the accepted SAA cases were subsequently confirmed, or substantiated. This information was then provided. 24% of the total number of accepted SAA reports were substantiated. 91% of these reports were regarding a family member or other entrusted adult; 8% were regarding another provider, and 1% were regarding a DCF Licensed Provider. Of the substantiated SAA reports regarding another provider, 26 were from a school (both private and public), 1 was from a daycare facility, and 1 was from a medical provider. Of the SAA reports that were substantiated regarding a DCF Licensed Provider, 2 were from a DCF foster or adoptive home and 2 were from a CPA home.

A question was then asked if information about the specific substantiated SAA is available compared to the SAAs that were not substantiated, providing more insight as to why those allegations were not substantiated. Those that are substantiated, it was further explained, were those SAAs that were found to have occurred through extensive evidence, interviews, and interventions. Another question was then asked whether there were different charges towards the abuser based on the severity of the sexual abuse committed, to which it clarified that the only “charge” in the DCF

system would be that of sexual abuse, but further information will be provided regarding the type of sexual abuse that occurred in each of these substantiated cases.

Another question was asked whether the substantiated SAAs in schools occurred in private or public schools. While both types are included in these allegations, further information will be provided to the JJPOC regarding the number of private and public schools involved.

The presentation was then shifted to present on the DCF referrals to Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) based on annual data from The Connecticut Children's Alliance (CCA) during the same calendar year. In Connecticut, there are 17 MDTs which work to provide a comprehensive response to various forms of child abuse, including (but not limited to) sexual abuse, trafficking, severe physical abuse, and exposure to violence. These teams are comprised of law enforcement, DCF, various providers, child advocacy center staff, specialized forensic interviewers, medical providers, and prosecutors. Law enforcement personnel work with the MDTs to bring criminal charges against the abusers, but this occurs on a case-by-case basis. This data will be provided to the JJPOC at a later date.

During the 2024 calendar year, there were 1,808 referrals to MDT from DCF in which 1,410 of them were referrals of SAAs and 398 of them were referrals of other abuse and neglect. Child Advocacy Clinics (CAC) care was provided to 1,291 of these cases, and other services (outside services) were provided to 1,400 of these cases. Each CAC is subject to both a national accreditation every five years and a state accreditation every three years. It was suggested that data is provided in the future regarding the follow up procedure to ensure that the JJPOC understands the steps that are being taken to protect these children.

The gaps in the access to and the capacity of the MDT system to meet the needs of this system were presented as well, which include a lack of resources to support forensic interviews for other forms of violence that youth experience, difficulties with reimbursement for forensic interviews as the reimbursement rate has not been updated by the Office of Victim Services in over a decade, a need for additional resources while the funding for CACs has not been changed in 15 years, and the need for standardized referrals from all MDT partners across Connecticut. A question was posed whether a request was submitted regarding the need for increased reimbursement and resources in which it was explained that a request was submitted but mainly in anticipation of the upcoming federal funding cuts.

A question was asked whether the sexual abuse allegation cases data that was presented includes the cases of trafficking allegations as well, in which it was suggested that it does, but further clarification will be given.

A question was then posed whether increased case substantiation would occur as a result of standardized referral processes. It was explained that although that question is difficult to provide an answer to, it would be assumed that this would be the case.

DOC Report on JJPOC Reentry Recommendations

The Department of Corrections (DOC) reported on their reentry efforts and needs to support JJPOC reentry recommendations. It reported first on the population of Manson Youth Institute (MYI) in which there are a total of 296 individuals there with 258 individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 and 38 individuals who are between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Of the youth, 33 are accused and 5 are sentenced.

The youth and their families were surveyed regarding potential reentry support, including financial and transportation support. 38 youth and 26 families completed the survey with all participants indicating that Uber cards would be beneficial since some visitors do not have reliable transportation. 12 youth and families reported that support funds for six months would be beneficial for needs including housing, groceries, employment, and vocational training. Funds regarding relocating for safety reasons were indicated as being needed by 12 youth and 19 families. The survey questions will be added to the MYI Re-Entry Intake Assessment, Family Engagement Meeting Survey, and will be shared with York Correctional Institution.

A JJPOC member asked for the importance of incarcerated youth being connected with their support system to be highlighted, in which a DOC representative explained that the youth have shared how visitation is difficult because it is upsetting to have their family member leave and how they do not want to hear about life outside of the institution. Therefore, it is even more important for the youth to be continuously connected with their families and support systems to make the transition back into mainstream society more manageable.

During the 2024 calendar year, there were 103 admissions, 13 releases and discharges, 45 unsentenced discharges, and 1 remand from MYI. Roughly half of the youth were being discharged directly from court and the other half aged out of the institution. Being discharged from court usually occurs without notice or time to plan and the need for further communication regarding these discharges is needed for DOC.

When the youth were asked about their interest in a Transitional Living Program, 10 answered yes, 25 answered no, and 2 answered maybe. When they were asked if they would like to relocate, 20 answered yes, 13 answered no, and 4 answered maybe. Regarding vocational and employment support, MYI currently uses Reentry Intake Assessment Surveys a Partnership with Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board and Justice Education Center, MYI Connections as an email point of contact to allow discharged youth to reach out to MYI staff, extensive reentry/discharge planning, and a continuous Re-Entry Group. The barriers that have been recognized as being faced by the youth are as follows: there lacks a driver's education testing site; MYI does not currently have their own set of VR goggles for vocational training; some youth struggle with VR learning; and many of the youth are discharged directly from court with little communication to MYI staff.

All students at MYI will be entered into the high school program upon arrival unless signed out by a parent where they will be exposed to numerous vocational courses, including a graphics course, a culinary course with ServSafe certification, automotive training, OSHA 10 certification, etc. The MYI staff is working to advance the certification possibilities for the youth and for them to gain some college credit during their time at MYI. In terms of current transitional instruction, when an instructor is unable to teach a given day, a Correctional Transition Instructor (CTI) will come into the class and provide education regarding skills for the students' reentry. Interagency collaboration continues to be increased and highlighted by the MYI staff. MYI has also partnered with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services which will follow the MYI youth with disabilities to assist them as they enter the job market.

JBCSSD Report on JJPOC Reentry Recommendations

The Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JBCSSD) was tasked with reporting on the re-entry supports regarding what is needed and what is available for the youth in their care. During the 2024 calendar year, JBCSSD served 245 youth across nine residential programs with 91.7% being discharged on community supervision and 8.3% were discharged at the end of their sentence.

57% of families received transportation to the program for visitation, 73% of families received reintegration support at the discharge of the youth, and 9% of families received relocation support for safety reasons. On the other hand, 24% of youth and their families did not receive the needed assistance or were only partially served. In terms of the youth that are currently in the care of JBCSSD, 63% of families reported needing transportation assistance to visit their child; 59% of families would utilize an Uber/Lyft-style gift card to visit their child twice a month;

and 24% of families would utilize a bus pass or gas card to visit their child twice a month. These families also shared that they need assistance with basic needs, including groceries/food, past-due utility bills, transportation to outpatient services for either themselves or their child, transportation to employment for either themselves or their child, basic furniture for their child, clothing for their child, rental assistance, vocational training support, and relocation for safety reasons.

A variety of challenges exist for these youth and their families, including, poverty/low income, disenfranchised and chaotic neighborhoods, struggling schools, and limited time. Despite these challenges, there are existing resources such as case managers, juvenile probation officers, and reintegration mentors that assist them with reentry. Additionally, the Connecticut Justice-Involved Medicaid Waiver Plan, if approved and funded, could address these needs. Despite these resources, they are not enough to provide adequate assistance to the families and the youth.

Five strategies have been identified for these unmet needs, which are as follows: (1) Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth; (2) transportation funds for family visitation for 100 youth; (3) Uber-type transportation for 50 youth to/from appointments/work; (4) flex funds for basic needs for 110 youth; and (5) rental assistance for 10 families to relocate for safety.

Regarding vocational and employment support, many limitations restrict access, including the eligibility of the youth, funding, space, time, security, and available support. With that being said, there are still a wide variety of opportunities to implement additional programs. As for strategies designed to meet the vocational and employment support needs of these youth, five strategies have been identified: (1) in-program internships for 100 youth annually; (2) tuition for 210 youth to earn Industry Recognized Credentials (IRCs); (3) career exploration augmented virtual reality technology for three hardware-secure REGIONS programs; (4) Reintegration Mentor and Family Support Specialist services at Bridgeport and Hartford REGIONS hardware-secure programs for 40 youth; and (5) continued interagency relationship building. JBCSSD then concluded their presentation and opened for questions.

It was emphasized how influential vocational courses are for these youth. A question was asked whether a metric exists to determine whether these youth are advancing vocationally after reentry, where it was explained that this information is unknown currently but can be determined in the future.



Making connections. Informing solutions.

Although funding concerns continue to be a barrier, there was an emphasis on not allowing this barrier to drive the conversation around these youth, their families, and their needs. The meeting then came to a close.

Next Meeting:

Hybrid Model Option (In person and available over zoom)

April 17th, 2025

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM