

Agenda  
Child Poverty and Prevention Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 19, 2010  
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Legislative Office Building, Room 2B  
Hartford, Connecticut

- |      |  |           |
|------|--|-----------|
| I.   | Welcome and Introductions                          | 1:30 p.m. |
|      | A. New Member: Renee Coleman Mitchell, DPH         |           |
| II.  | Approve Meeting Minutes                            | 1:40 p.m. |
|      | A. Revised June 2010 Meeting Summary               |           |
|      | B. Draft September 2010 Meeting Summary            |           |
| III. | Update on the State Agency Prevention Report       | 1:50 p.m. |
| IV.  | Federal Funding Issues                             | 2:00 p.m. |
|      | A. McKinney-Vento Act                              |           |
|      | B. TANF Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF)           |           |
| V.   | Approve Priority Recommendations                   | 2:15 p.m. |
|      | A. Review Revised Priority Recommendations         |           |
|      | B. Review New Recommendations on Truancy           |           |
| VI.  | Summary and Next Steps                             | 3:15 p.m. |
| VII. | Adjournment  | 3:30 p.m. |
|      | a. Next Meeting- Tuesday, December 14 at 1:00 p.m. |           |

## Meeting Summary

Child Poverty and Prevention Council  
Friday, September 17, 2010

**Members Present:** Brenda Sisco (Chair), Paul Flinter for George Coleman (SDE), Lindy Lee Gold (DECD), Claudette Beaulieu (DSS), Christine Keller (Judicial), Mary Mushinsky (State Representative), Alice Frechette Johns for Mark Polzella (DOL), Dianne Harnad (DMHAS), Elaine Zimmerman (COC), Dennis King (DOT), Laura Amenta (CTF), Robert Brothers (CHRO), Renee Coleman-Mitchell for Norma Gyle (DPH) and Susan Hamilton (DCF).

**Members Absent:** Senator MaryAnn Handley (Senate Democrats), Michael Meotti (DHE), Faith Vos Winkel (OCA), Michelle Hayward (DOC), Representative Lile Gibbons (House Republicans), Gregg Cogswell (Senate Republicans) and, Peter O'Meara (DDS).

**Other Participants:** Anne Foley (OPM)

| Agenda Item                       | Action Taken  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Welcome and Introductions         | The meeting was convened at 2:06 p.m. Acting Secretary Brenda Sisco introduced herself and welcomed Council members. Members introduced themselves. Chair Sisco reminded members that today's council meeting would be brief and that no votes would be required out of respect for members unable to attend or stay due to the Jewish holiday.   |
| Review Minutes of June 17 meeting | Draft minutes of the June council meeting were reviewed. Elaine Zimmerman requested that the minutes be changed to reflect the tone of the council discussion regarding AAC Children in the Recession. Chair Sisco noted that the draft minutes would be modified. Regarding the "other business" in the June minutes, Elaine Zimmerman announced that Congress had enacted the emergency mortgage relief provisions contained in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and |

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|  | <p>Consumer Protection. She thanked and congratulated the council for the letter sent in June urging Senator Dodd to include these provisions in the final bill.</p>  |
| <p>Discuss Agency Prevention Report</p>                          | <p>Anne Foley announced that council staff will be contacting state agencies next week regarding submissions for the state agency prevention report and she explained the distinction between the prevention report and the prevention budget.</p>  |
| <p>Review Proposed Modifications to Priority Recommendations</p> | <p>The council reviewed a draft document incorporating the recommendations of the Children in the Recession Task Force into the priority council recommendations. The following changes will be made to reflect council discussion:</p> <p>Recommendation 2g will be removed, but the council will send a letter to the Connecticut congressional delegation urging additional federal funding for the McKinney-Vento Act.</p> <p>DOT will be added to recommendations 3d and the recommendation will be moved to become 6e Workforce Development.</p> <p>Add a recommendation 4c: Continue to target school districts with high dropout rates and assist their community planning for improving students' secondary school completion.</p> <p>Council staff will develop additional recommendations regarding truancy for council consideration based on suggested sources such SB 278 AAC Truancy, FWSN advisory board recommendations, and CTF's Family School Connection program.</p> |
| <p>Next Steps</p>  | <p>Elaine Zimmerman asked the council to consider sending a letter to the Connecticut congressional delegation urging reconsideration of an extension of the TANF emergency fund for one year. Council staff will work with DSS on this.</p>  |

Chair Sisco noted that council staff will work with state agencies to develop the prevention report. In addition, council staff will further refine the council's priority recommendations for a vote in October. The next meeting of the Child Poverty and Prevention Council will be on Tuesday, October 19 at 1:30 p.m.

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**DRAFT**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Child Poverty and Prevention Council**  
**Thursday, June 17, 2010**

**Members Present:** Brenda Sisco (Chair), Paul Flinter for George Coleman (SDE), Lindy Lee Gold (DECD), Heidi McIntosh, Rudy Brooks for Susan Hamilton (DCF), Dennis King (DOT), Michelle Hayward (DOC), Mary Mushinsky (State Representative), Mark Polzella (DOL), Peter O'Meara (DDS), Michelle Dumas Keuler for Robert Brothers (CHRO), Jeanne Milstein for Faith VosWinkel (OCA), Pamela Giannini for Claudette Beaulieu (DSS), and Elaine Zimmerman (COC).

**Members Absent:** Norma Gyle (DPH), Senator Mary Ann Handley (Senate Democrats), Representative Lile Gibbons (House Republicans), Gregg Cogswell (Senate Republicans), Christine Keller (Judicial), Laura Amenta (CTF), and Michael Meotti (DHE).

**Others Participants:** Anne Foley (OPM), and John Frassinell (DPH).

| Agenda Item  | Action Taken  |
|--|---|
| Welcome and Introductions                              | The meeting was convened at 2:10 p.m. Acting Secretary Brenda Sisco introduced herself as the new Chair of the Council. Council members introduced themselves.  |
| Approve Minutes of the January Meeting                 | Lindy Gold moved approval of the January 2010 meeting minutes and Dennis King seconded the motion. The motion was approved on a voice vote. Mary Mushinsky abstained and informed the Council that she was chairing another committee meeting and was unable to attend the January meeting.   |
| 2010 Legislation Impacting Child Poverty or Prevention | Anne Foley highlighted 2010 legislation impacting child poverty and prevention. The discussion focused on <u>several bills and budget expansions including:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="711 1717 1295 1894">• <u>Additional state funding for the rental assistance program, children of incarcerated parents, and domestic violence shelters.</u></li></ul> |

- A new \$1 million program for homeless youth.
- AAC the Educational Placement of Children (P.A. 10-160). This Governor's bill creates a presumption that it is in the best interest of a child to continue to attend the school s/he attended before DCF placement and the state budget provides over \$2 million for costs of transporting children from placements to school. Child Advocate Jeanne Milstein noted that this was a really important measure and a very collaborative effort that will truly help some of our most vulnerable children.
- P.A. 10-133 An Act Concerning Children in the Recession. The bill creates new responsibilities for state agencies and the Child Poverty and Prevention Council. The Council is designated as the children in recession leadership team to make recommendations for the state's emergency response to children in the recession. The bill also requires that the Council meet quarterly if the unemployment rate in Connecticut is 8% or greater for a three month period. Connecticut's current unemployment rate is 9% and as a result the Council will meet quarterly. Elaine Zimmerman noted that this legislation was the result of the work done by the Children in the Recession Task Force and is based on two pieces of national research and seven hearings held in urban, rural and suburban settings around the state. She noted that the bill strives to improve streamlining and access

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|                                 | <p><u>to services and is an effort to address a particular crisis just as our state did so well after 911. She noted that it would have been utterly redundant to create a new entity to do this work, so the legislation integrates the children in the recession recommendations with the Child Poverty Council work. Mary Mushinsky said that the collaboration is very important. She noted that the legislature was really trying to push a more aggressive attack on using federal funds and that we need to be extremely clever and extremely aggressive in collecting federal money.</u></p> <p>It was agreed that council staff would contact council members over the summer to: (a) assess the task force recommendations; (b) identify what is currently being done to implement them; and (c) whether and how they should be incorporated into the council's priority recommendations.</p> |
| <p>Priority Recommendations</p> | <p><i>Increase Enrollment in the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)</i></p> <p>Pam Giannini from DSS presented information on CEAP which receives its funding from the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program serves households with income up to 60% of the state median income and provides a basic benefit of \$580 to \$880 per household to subsidize their winter heating expenses. The state contracts with the 12 community action agencies to operate CEAP and there are approximately 120 intake sites including town halls and senior centers. In FY10 the program helped 113,300 households meet their heating costs, of which, 23% or 26,213 had children under the age of 6.</p>   |

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|                                     | <p><i>Increase Enrollment in WIC</i></p> <p>John Frassinelli from DPH presented information on Connecticut's Women Infants and Children Program. The program experienced close to a 7% increase in service level from FY08 to FY09 (56,000 to 60,000 monthly). Council members identified opportunities to increase enrollment by enhancing coordination in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Education (SDE) could collaborate with the WIC Program to conduct outreach to Young Parent, Teen Moms and Adult Education programs to increase awareness and participation.</li> <li>• The WIC program could work with the Nurturing Families Network located in local hospitals to ensure that eligible at-risk families receive services.</li> <li>• DSS and WIC could collaborate to increase outreach efforts between DSS programs and WIC programs/services.</li> <li>• Increase outreach for child nutrition programs such as school breakfast, summer feeding and after-school snacks.</li> <li>• Provide cross state agency training to increase awareness of services provided by other state agencies.</li> </ul> <p>At its September meeting the Council will develop specific action steps to increase enrollment in these two federal programs.</p> |
| <p>Supplemental Poverty Measure</p> | <p>Anne Foley updated the Council on the federal government's progress in developing a supplemental poverty measure. Mary Mushinsky moved to submit the Urban Institute's Economic Modeling Report to the U.S. Census Bureau and the motion was seconded by Dennis King. The motion was approved on a</p>   |



|                                  |   |
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|                                  | voice vote.   |
| Other Business                   | Elaine Zimmerman discussed a new federal program that would extend loans to help unemployed homeowners avoid foreclosure. The Council agreed to send a letter of support for the provision to Senator Dodd as a member of the conference committee that is drafting the legislation. The letter will be distributed to Council members.   |
| Update of State Fiscal Situation | Secretary Sisco stated that, although the state budget closed out FY 10 with a surplus, the FY11 budget relies on borrowing to meet our obligations and there is a significant deficit projected for FY12 and beyond. She recommended that the Council remain mindful of this deficit and focus on recommendations that require no expenditure or those that will represent savings to the state. |
| Next Meeting                     | The next Council meeting will be held on September 21, at 2:00 p.m.   |



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

June 29, 2010

Honorable Christopher J. Dodd  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Dodd,

On behalf of Connecticut's Child Poverty and Prevention Council, I am writing to urge your support of the emergency mortgage relief provisions contained in H.R. 4173. The creation of this loan program would help unemployed homeowners avoid foreclosure. Based on a successful model in Pennsylvania, this program would make loans to unemployed homeowners to help them pay their mortgage until they find new employment, at which time they would be expected to repay the loan amount in full.

As part of the Council's work, we recently completed an economic analysis which firmly demonstrated that enhanced housing stability is one of the most effective strategies to reduce child poverty in Connecticut. The creation of the new loan program as envisioned in H.R. 4173 will prevent foreclosure, preserve family housing, and provide security and stability for the state's children and youth at risk of homelessness.

Please support the inclusion of this provision as part of the final bill. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda L. Sisco".

Brenda L. Sisco

Chair, Child Poverty and Prevention Council



## **Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program – Summary**

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### *Overview*

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act provided \$1 billion to HUD to implement the Emergency Homeowners Loan Program (EHLPP) Program. The program will offer a declining balance, deferred payment “bridge loan” (non-recourse, subordinate loan with zero interest) for up to \$50,000 to assist eligible homeowners with payments of arrearages, including delinquent taxes and insurance plus up to 24 months of monthly payments on their mortgage principal, interest, mortgage insurance premiums, taxes, and hazard insurance. HUD will assist borrowers in Puerto Rico and the 32 states otherwise not funded by Treasury’s Innovation Fund for Hardest Hit Housing Markets program, based on their relative unemployment measures. It is HUD’s intention for the program to begin taking applications from eligible homeowners by the end of the year.

### **Program Administration**

There will be a dual delivery approach for program administration. The first approach will delegate some of the program administrative functions to designated third parties. The second approach will enable state housing finance agencies (HFAs) that operate substantially similar programs to engage in relief efforts on behalf of residents of their state.

- **Program Administration---Delegated approach:** HUD will delegate key program administration functions to separate external entities, while retaining program monitoring, compliance and long term note management functions internally (FHA and/or CPD). Delegations include:
  - Counseling Intermediary to Perform Intake, Eligibility Screening, and Outreach. HUD will enter into a cooperative agreement with NeighborWorks to have its network of housing counselors provide homeowner intake services.
    - Intake services shall include: (i) developing and disseminating program marketing materials, (ii) providing an overview of the program and eligibility requirements, (iii) conducting initial eligibility screening (including verifying income), (iv) counseling potential applicants, including providing information concerning available employment and training resources, (v) collecting and assembling homeowner documentation, (vi) submitting homeowner application, and (vii) providing transition counseling to explore with the

homeowner other loss mitigation options, including loan modification, short sales, deeds-in-lieu of foreclosure, or traditional sale of home.

- The counselors shall also be encouraged to conduct outreach to entities in local communities to provide information on assistance available to unemployed homeowners through this program and shall publicize the list of entities approved to assist potential applicants with applying to the program.,
- Fiscal Agent to perform funds control, payment distribution, and note processing functions. HUD will also to contract with an entity which has extensive loan servicing and funds control capabilities to provide general accounting and fiscal control services, including collecting payments from borrowers, distributing payments to servicers on a monthly basis, performing accounting, managing loan balances, and providing payoff information. The fiscal agent would also provide note processing function and services for the program such as recording liens, storing the note and handling the payoffs at the end of the program. Once the note/ mortgage is placed and the homeowner's final balance is determined, the loan servicing function will be transferred to HUD FHA for longer term management.
- **Program Administration -- Substantially similar state law approach:** State HFAs that operate loan assistance programs that are determined by HUD to be substantially similar to the EHRF program will receive allocations to fund emergency loans for borrowers in their states as well as payments to cover the administrative costs of performing the intake and housing counseling and fiscal agent functions (described above) directly or indirectly through subcontracts with third parties.

#### *Allocation of Program Funds*

- **Recipient Geography:** HUD will assist borrowers living in Puerto Rico and the 32 states otherwise not funded by Treasury's Innovation Fund for Hardest Hit Housing Markets program.
- **Allocation Amount:** An allocation amount will be reserved to assist homeowners living in each of these states. The total amount reserved will be based on the state's approximate share of unemployed homeowners with a mortgage relative to all unemployed homeowners with a mortgage (See attached allocation list).
- **Targeting Funds to Local Geographies:** HUD will provide information that identifies pockets within each of the designated states that have suffered the most from recent spikes in unemployment and/or mortgage delinquencies. HUD will encourage the use of program dollars in these hardest-hit areas.

### *Homeowner Eligibility and Program Operation*

- **Income Thresholds:** Has a total pre-event household income equal to, or less than, 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), which includes wage, salary, and self-employed earnings and income.
- **Significant Income Reduction:** Has a current gross income that is at least 15 percent lower than the pre-event income.<sup>1</sup>
- **Employment type:** Both wage and salary workers and self-employed individuals are eligible.
- **Delinquency and Likelihood of Foreclosure:** Must be at least three months delinquent on payments and have received notification of an intention to foreclose. This requirement can be documented by any written communication from the mortgagee to the homeowner indicating at least three months of missed payments and the mortgagee's intent to foreclose. In addition, the homeowner can self-certify that there is a likelihood of initiation of foreclosure on the part of their mortgagee due to the homeowner being at least three months delinquent in their monthly payment.
- **Ability to Resume Repayment:** Has a reasonable likelihood of being able to resume repayment of the first mortgage obligations within 2 years, and meet other housing expenses and debt obligations when the household regains full employment, as determined by:
  - The homeowner must have a back-end ratio or DTI below 55% (principal, interest, taxes, insurance, revolving and fixed installment debt divided by total gross monthly income). For this calculation, gross income will be measured at the pre-event level.
- **Principal Residence:** Must reside in the mortgaged property as principal residence. The mortgaged property must also be a single family residence (1 to 4 unit structure or condominium unit).

**Creation of HUD Note:** After the first assistance payment is made on behalf of the homeowner, the fiscal agent will create an open-ended "HUD note" and a mortgage to be in the name of the Secretary HUD of sufficient size to accommodate the expected amount of assistance to be provided to homeowner.

### *Ongoing Qualification of Homeowner*

- **Termination of Monthly Assistance:** Assistance is terminated and the homeowner resumes full responsibility for meeting the first lien mortgage payments in the event of any of the following circumstances:

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<sup>1</sup> "Pre-event income" is defined as the income prior to the onset of unemployment, underemployment, or medical emergency, while "current income" is the income at the time of program application, as well as income during the period that the homeowner continues to receive assistance from the fund.

- The maximum loan (\$50,000) amount has been reached;
  - The homeowner fails to report changes in unemployment status or income;
  - The homeowner's income regains 85% or more of its pre-event level;
  - The homeowner no longer resides in, sells, or refinances the debt on the mortgaged property; or
  - The homeowner defaults on their portion of the current first lien mortgage loan payments.
- **Income re-evaluation:** After initial income verification at application intake, the homeowner shall be required to notify the fiscal agent of any changes in the household income and/or employment status at any point throughout the entire period of assistance.

#### *Forms of Assistance*

- **Use of Funds for Arrearages:** On behalf of the homeowner, the fiscal agent shall use loan funds to pay 100% of arrears (mortgage principal, interest, mortgage insurance premiums, taxes, hazard insurance, and ground rent, if any).
- **Homeowner Payments:** Homeowner contribution to monthly payment on first mortgage will be set at 31 percent of gross income at the time of application, but in no instance will it be less than \$25 per month.
- **Use of Funds for Continuing Mortgage Assistance:** The fiscal agent will make monthly mortgage payments to the servicer of the first lien mortgage in excess of the payments made by the homeowner.
- **Duration of Assistance:** If at any time the household's gross income increases to 85% or more of its pre-event level, assistance will be phased out by the fiscal agent over a two month period. In any event, assistance with monthly payments may not continue beyond 24 months.

#### *Repayment Terms*

- **Transition Counseling:** The designated counseling agent shall contact each homeowner that is approaching the last months of program eligibility and remains un/underemployed (3-6 months before the assistance ends) and require the homeowner to meet with a HUD approved counseling agent to explore other loss mitigation options, including loan modification, short sales, deeds-in-lieu of foreclosure, or traditional sale of home.
- **Repayment of HUD Note:** Following the last payment on behalf of the homeowner, the fiscal agent will process the homeowner's "HUD Note" and record a mortgage with a specific loan balance. The note and mortgage will be in the form of a five year declining balance, zero interest, nonrecourse loan, and the mortgage shall be in the form of a secured junior lien on the property.

- **Terms for Declining Balance Feature:** No payment is due on the note during the 5 year term so long as the assisted household maintains the property as principal residence and remains current in his or her monthly payments on the first mortgage loan. If the homeowner meets these two conditions, the balance due shall decline by twenty percent (20%) annually, until the note is extinguished and the junior loan is terminated.
  
- **Events Triggering Note Repayment:** The homeowner will be responsible for repayment of the applicable balance of the HUD note to the fiscal agent or its successor, if, at any time during the five year repayment period, any of the following events occur:
  - The homeowner no longer resides in the mortgaged property as a principal residence, but maintains ownership;
  - The homeowner defaults on its portion of the current mortgage; or
  - The homeowner receives net proceeds from selling or refinancing debt on the home. Net proceeds -- after paying outstanding applicable brokers fees, first balances (and second lien balances, as applicable), and an allowance of \$2,000 to the homeowner for relocation expenses when the home is sold -- will go towards paying down the HUD note. In the event that proceeds of a sale or loan refinance are not sufficient to repay the entire HUD note, the remaining applicable balance of the HUD note shall be considered to have been met, and the lien against the property shall be released.
  
- **Provisions for Underwater Homeowners:** At all stages of the program, “underwater” homeowners<sup>2</sup> will be encouraged to explore participation in short sale or short refinancing programs offered by their servicer and/or the federal government (*i.e.* Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives)<sup>3</sup>, which will not trigger repayment of the HUD note.

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<sup>2</sup> Underwater homeowners are those with mortgage debt in excess of the market value of their home

<sup>3</sup> Making Home Affordable.gov: <http://makinghomeaffordable.gov/hafa.html>

Borrowers living in the following jurisdictions are eligible to receive funds.

|        |               |               |
|--------|---------------|---------------|
| TX     | Texas         | 135,418,959   |
| NY     | New York      | 111,649,112   |
| PA     | Pennsylvania  | 105,804,905   |
| MA     | Massachusetts | 61,036,001    |
| WA     | Washington    | 56,272,599    |
| MN     | Minnesota     | 55,848,137    |
| WI     | Wisconsin     | 51,540,638    |
| MO     | Missouri      | 49,001,729    |
| VA     | Virginia      | 46,627,889    |
| CO     | Colorado      | 41,286,747    |
| MD     | Maryland      | 39,962,270    |
| CT     | Connecticut   | 32,946,864    |
| KS     | Kansas        | 17,748,782    |
| AR     | Arkansas      | 17,736,991    |
| IA     | Iowa          | 17,379,343    |
| LA     | Louisiana     | 16,691,558    |
| UT     | Utah          | 16,577,582    |
| OK     | Oklahoma      | 15,575,381    |
| PR     | Puerto Rico   | 14,714,668    |
| ID     | Idaho         | 13,284,075    |
| NH     | New Hampshire | 12,655,243    |
| NM     | New Mexico    | 10,725,515    |
| ME     | Maine         | 10,379,657    |
| WV     | West Virginia | 8,339,884     |
| NE     | Nebraska      | 8,304,512     |
| HI     | Hawaii        | 6,292,250     |
| DE     | Delaware      | 6,048,577     |
| MT     | Montana       | 5,710,580     |
| VT     | Vermont       | 4,830,215     |
| AK     | Alaska        | 3,890,898     |
| WY     | Wyoming       | 2,346,329     |
| SD     | South Dakota  | 2,051,563     |
| ND     | North Dakota  | 1,320,547     |
| Total: |               | 1,000,000,000 |





## **M. Jodi Rell**

GOVERNOR  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

February 4, 2010

The Honorable Christopher J. Dodd  
448 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
2262 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman  
706 Senate Hart Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jim Himes  
214 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John B. Larson  
1005 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Christopher Murphy  
501 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joseph Courtney  
215 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Connecticut Congressional Delegation:

I am writing to you to urge you to support extending the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund program for an additional year to allow reimbursement on quarterly program expenditures through September 30, 2011. This request is to extend only the time when program expenditures may be made and reimbursed for applications received by the current deadline of September 1, 2010, within the \$5 billion authorized funding. The TANF Emergency Contingency Fund made possible thru the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 will play an important part in Connecticut in providing direct assistance to needy families and creating employment opportunities during this economic recession. Currently, funding is available for qualifying expenditures made between October 1, 2008 and September 30, 2010. The deadline for securing these funds is fast approaching. The complexity of establishing and extending short term programs, training, and work opportunities, such as Summer Youth Employment and Subsidized Employment, during this difficult economic time is high. A time extension will allow us to increase supports to our most vulnerable families and provide incentives for Connecticut businesses and non-profit agencies to help build program capacity and increase access for needy families to Connecticut's TANF programs and services.

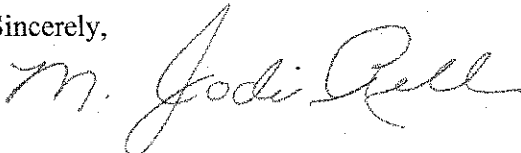
Connecticut has applied for Emergency Contingency Fund reimbursement in the Basic Assistance category. In addition, I have convened a workgroup with representatives from foundations, non-profit agencies, workforce investment boards and state agencies to capitalize on opportunities and to develop a plan to design initiatives and effective programs that qualify for and are accountable to the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund. The workgroup will be submitting a plan to me within the next month that will identify resources that can help leverage access to this opportunity for additional federal funds.

Implementation of programs such as subsidized employment takes a great deal of time and commitment by businesses and agencies working with potential employees. It is difficult to quickly build capacity, increase program spending, and then end programs within months of their commencement. The ability to establish and maintain new programs without reimbursement in this economy is almost impossible. Additional challenges for creating employment include:

- Start-up time to find employers and establish contracts
- Employer costs, supervision & training, benefits & Worker Compensation
- Recruitment, application & eligibility determination, and administration
- Need for record retention and audit records back to October 1, 2006
- Collective Bargaining Issues - not replace workers, etc.
- Understanding and compliance with Wage & Workplace Standards (including standards for minors)

Connecticut is pleased to have this opportunity to maximize its' dedication and support to families through the support of federal funds and urges Congress to extend in time to implement successful and accountable programs through federal fiscal year 2011.

Sincerely,



M. Jodi Rell  
Governor

## Connecticut Child Poverty Rate

2005- 2009

|             | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|-------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Connecticut |      |      |      |      |      |
| Percent     | 11.6 | 11.0 | 11.1 | 12.5 | 12.1 |
| State Rank  | 46   | 49   | 47   | 42   | 49   |

*Source: U.S. Census ;2005-2009 American Community Survey*

## Priority Recommendations of the Child Poverty and Prevention Council

Revised 10/10

### FAMILY INCOME AND EARNINGS POTENTIAL:

1. FEDERAL EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC): Increase usage of federal EITC with a target group of working poor families.
2. HOMELESSNESS: [Expand homeless diversion programs for working poor families, including expanding transitional housing to] keep children out of homeless shelters.

#### Council Priority Recommendation

##### Increase Enrollment in Subsidized Housing

- a) Increase Homelessness Prevention Programs through [C]continued development of the DSS-funded Counselors in Shelters and Beyond Shelter CT program [to provide a continued framework for homelessness prevention and shelter diversion] once stimulus funds are exhausted.
- b) Create more safe and affordable housing in communities across Connecticut by r[R]e-activat[e]ing the Connecticut Housing Trust Fund as a source of gap financing for the development of affordable housing.
- c) Prioritize family housing that blends families with special needs with families that do not have such special needs.
- d) Utilize the Low Income Housing Credit (LIHTC) program to provide incentives to developers to (1) develop affordable housing for families, and (2) affordable housing for families with a supportive housing component.
- e) Create incentives (or expand incentives in place) to more effectively link service resources with housing.
- f) Preserve the remaining housing available to low-income families by a[A]ligning neighborhood-based social and educational investments from all state agencies to promote housing stability and foster the growth of financial and social capital for low income households.
- g) Urge the Connecticut congressional delegation to secure additional funding for the federal McKinney-Vento Act for educational services for homeless children and youth.

## EDUCATION:

3. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: [Review and support the Early Childhood Cabinet proposals targeting children aged birth to five.]

### Council Priority Recommendation

#### Guarantee Child Care Subsidies

- a) Enable low-income parents with earnings up to 75% of the state median income level and with children under the age of 13 (or under 19 if they have special needs) to continue working or secure new employment through enrollment in Care4Kids within available appropriations. If the program must be closed, provide 30 days' notice to parent and providers.
- b) Support families transitioning from public cash assistance to work with public child care programs including Care4Kids, Head Start, state-supported centers, and school readiness programs within available appropriations.
- c) Pilot and explore how to provide and fund child care in homeless shelters with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness
- d) DSS should partner with SDE in the administration of the state's school readiness program to enroll preschool children living in families with earnings less than 75% of the state median income level
- e) DSS should establish linkages with employment and training organizations and businesses to provide necessary supports for their employees seeking child care assistance.

4. YOUTH DROPOUT PREVENTION: Enhance efforts to reduce the number of students who drop out of high school.

- a) Create more opportunities in service and after-school programs to keep youth safe and engaged
- b) Give youth more opportunities in civic leadership
- c) Continue to target school districts with high dropout rates and assist their community planning for improving students secondary school completion.

5. POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: Expand access to our state colleges for late teens and young adults, particularly our community colleges, and expand programs intended to encourage high school students to pursue a college education.

Council Priority Recommendation

Increase Attainment of Associates Degrees

- a) Assure that collaboration of K-12 and higher education communities takes place in all regions of the state to address the challenges and opportunities of college readiness.
- b) Expand the role of full-time faculty in advising at each community college
- c) Expand the national "Achieving the Dream" model at community colleges to close gaps in student achievement
- d) Expand financial aid strategies to cover cost of living expenses
- e) Establish an incentive fund for transfer scholarships
- f) Expand dual enrollment initiatives to enable high school students to enroll without cost in college-level courses at community college.

6. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT: Enhance the existing GED program for working poor families receiving Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) and literacy and examine how youths who drop out of high school can obtain a GED.

- a) Support programs that help low-income adults get and hold jobs
- b) The state should avail itself of the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund
- c) Continue to build youth employment
- d) Expand summer youth work opportunities, using TANF emergency funds
- e) DSS should work with DOT, DOL and the Jobs First Employment Services program to enhance opportunities for parents through job opportunities training, transportation, and child care

**INCOME SAFETY NET:**

7. SUPPORT FOR YOUNG MOTHERS ON TFA: Make case management services available to some young mothers on TFA so that they and their children would have access to family support services, particularly during the twelve months after having a child.

8. ABRUPT TERMINATION OF BENEFITS: Examine how to soften the “cliffs” of welfare benefits.
9. ENHANCE ACCESS TO FEDERAL PROGRAMS: Increase access to available public benefits for food stamps and other similar federally-funded programs for working poor families.

Council Priority Recommendation

Increase Enrollment in Energy and Nutrition Assistance

- a) Streamline the application process for federal nutrition programs in compliance with federal rules and regulations
- b) Create more access to DSS regional offices
- c) Increase the efficiency of DSS in processing applications and providing services for SNAP
- d) Enhance outreach for SNAP and child nutrition programs such as school meals, summer feeding, after school snack, and WIC.
- e) Maximize co-enrollment in WIC and Medicaid for all eligible women
- f) Expand tobacco cessation programs targeted at pregnant women
- g) Promote use of a model of prenatal care which includes health care assessment, education, and support.
- h) DSS should provide to all of its recipient households energy assistance notifications, informing them of the availability of LIHEAP benefits and where to apply.
- i) DSS should work with providers of municipal, charitable or private energy resources which may be available to low income households to establish a coordinated response to alleviate potential crises due to a low-income household’s inability to pay for heat.

**FAMILY STRUCTURE AND SUPPORT:**

10. REDUCE TEEN PREGNANCY: Intensify efforts to reduce teen pregnancy.
11. CASE MANAGEMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT RELATED SERVICES: Provide case management services to overcome barriers to employment.
12. FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE: Support the fatherhood initiative for working poor families.

**PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS:**

13. IMPROVE POVERTY MEASURE: Conduct a review of alternative measures of poverty using an Economic Modeling consultant and monitor how the federal government and other states address this issue.
14. CHARTER OAK GROUP'S RESULTS BASED ACCOUNTABILITY INITIATIVE. Coordinate with the RBA initiative.
15. COORDINATION AND SYSTEMS:
  - a. Educate service employees to be aware of various services across agency lines,
  - b. Utilize technology to make it easier for people to determine whether they're eligible for programs;
  - c. Create a master contract or coordinated leadership team across agencies and branches of government.



## Truancy Recommendations For Council Consideration

### From An Act Concerning Truancy (Senate Bill 278):

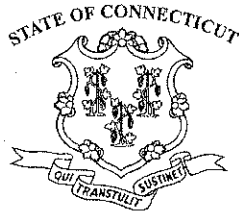
1. Require superintendents to file a "family with service needs" complaint in the Superior Court within 30 days of a parent or guardian failing to attend a meeting with school officials or failing to cooperate in addressing a child's truancy. (\$0)
2. Require the State Board of Education to define "excused absence" and "unexcused absence" and to establish criteria the local school boards must use to measure, collect and report on attendance data. And require the State Board of Education to report on this attendance data and on any programs that local boards use to address truancy (\$100,000 for SBE and \$15,000 for local school districts.)

### From Families with Service Needs Advisory Board (FWSN) Report

3. Fund and establish pilot truancy reduction initiatives.
4. Provide funds to enhance Youth Service Bureaus (YSB). As a pilot, in each of four judicial districts, increase the capacity of at least one YSB that has a Juvenile Review Board so that the YSB can increase its caseload and handle referrals of those youth who are at risk of having FWSN referral submitted to the court.

### From the Family School Connection

5. Maintain funding for this prevention program which provides comprehensive home visiting and support services for families whose children are frequently absent, truant, have academic or behavioral problems, or often come to school unprepared. The program is located at five elementary schools, serves 175 families a year for \$930,000.



## Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 470**

February Session, 2010

Substitute Senate Bill No. 278

*Senate, April 12, 2010*

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. GAFFEY of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

### **AN ACT CONCERNING TRUANCY.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-198a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

3 (a) For purposes of this section, "truant" means a child age five to  
4 eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and  
5 has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten  
6 unexcused absences from school in any school year.

7 (b) Each local and regional board of education shall adopt and  
8 implement policies and procedures concerning truants who are  
9 enrolled in schools under the jurisdiction of such board of education.  
10 Such policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to,  
11 the following: (1) The holding of a meeting with the parent of each  
12 child who is a truant, or other person having control of such child, and  
13 appropriate school personnel to review and evaluate the reasons for  
14 the child being a truant, provided such meeting shall be held not later

15 than ten school days after the child's fourth unexcused absence in a  
16 month or tenth unexcused absence in a school year, (2) coordinating  
17 services with and referrals of children to community agencies  
18 providing child and family services, (3) annually at the beginning of  
19 the school year and upon any enrollment during the school year,  
20 notifying the parent or other person having control of each child  
21 enrolled in a grade from kindergarten to eight, inclusive, in the public  
22 schools in writing of the obligations of the parent or such other person  
23 pursuant to section 10-184, (4) annually at the beginning of the school  
24 year and upon any enrollment during the school year, obtaining from  
25 the parent or other person having control of each child in a grade from  
26 kindergarten to eight, inclusive, a telephone number or other means of  
27 contacting such parent or such other person during the school day, and  
28 (5) a system of monitoring individual unexcused absences of children  
29 in grades kindergarten to eight, inclusive, which shall provide that  
30 whenever a child enrolled in school in any such grade fails to report to  
31 school on a regularly scheduled school day and no indication has been  
32 received by school personnel that the child's parent or other person  
33 having control of the child is aware of the pupil's absence, a reasonable  
34 effort to notify, by telephone, the parent or such other person shall be  
35 made by school personnel or volunteers under the direction of school  
36 personnel. Any person who, in good faith, gives or fails to give notice  
37 pursuant to subdivision (5) of this subsection shall be immune from  
38 any liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or  
39 imposed and shall have the same immunity with respect to any  
40 judicial proceeding which results from such notice or failure to give  
41 such notice.

42 (c) If the parent or other person having control of a child who is a  
43 truant fails to attend the meeting held pursuant to subdivision (1) of  
44 subsection (b) of this section or if such parent or other person  
45 otherwise fails to cooperate with the school in attempting to solve the  
46 truancy problem, such policies and procedures shall require the  
47 superintendent of schools to file, not later than thirty calendar days  
48 after such failure to attend such meeting or such failure to cooperate  
49 with the school attempting to solve the truancy problem, for each such

50 truant enrolled in the schools under his jurisdiction a written  
 51 complaint with the Superior Court pursuant to section 46b-149 alleging  
 52 the belief that the acts or omissions of the child are such that his family  
 53 is a family with service needs.

54 (d) Nothing in subsections (a) to (c), inclusive, of this section shall  
 55 preclude a local or regional board of education from adopting policies  
 56 and procedures pursuant to this section which exceed the  
 57 requirements of said subsections.

58 (e) The provisions of this section shall not apply to any child  
 59 receiving equivalent instruction pursuant to section 10-184.

60 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2010*) (a) On or before July 1, 2011, the  
 61 State Board of Education shall (1) define "excused absence" and  
 62 "unexcused absence" for use by local and regional boards of education  
 63 for purposes of carrying out the provisions of section 10-198a of the  
 64 general statutes, as amended by this act, and (2) establish the criteria  
 65 by which local and regional boards of education are to measure, collect  
 66 and report on data concerning attendance in the school district  
 67 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (c) of section 10-220 of the  
 68 general statutes.

69 (b) On or before July 1, 2012, and annually thereafter, the State  
 70 Board of Education shall report, in accordance with the provisions of  
 71 section 11-4a of the general statutes, on the data received pursuant to  
 72 subsection (a) of this section and truancy programs implemented by  
 73 local and regional boards of education, pursuant to section 10-198a of  
 74 the general statutes, as amended by this act, to the Governor and the  
 75 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance  
 76 of matters relating to education.

|   |                     |             |
|---|---------------------|-------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |                     |             |
| Section 1   | <i>July 1, 2010</i> | 10-198a     |
| Sec. 2  | <i>July 1, 2010</i> | New section |

*ED Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

### **OFA Fiscal Note**

#### **State Impact:**

| Agency Affected  | Fund-Effect | FY 11 \$ |
|------------------|-------------|----------|
| Education, Dept. | GF - Cost   | 100,000  |

Note: GF=General Fund

#### **Municipal Impact:**

| Municipalities                      | Effect                     | FY 11 \$ | FY 12 \$ |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Local and Regional School Districts | STATE<br>MANDATE<br>- Cost | 0-15,000 | 0-15,000 |

#### **Explanation**

Section 1 of the bill, which requires a superintendent to file a complaint in the Superior Court within thirty calendar days of a parent or guardian of a truant child, failing to attend a meeting or cooperate with school officials, regarding the child's truancy, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

Section 2 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to define "excused absence" and "unexcused absence", by July 1, 2011, for local and regional school boards in order to meet statutory requirements for addressing truancy. SBE must establish criteria that the local and regional schools boards must use to measure, collect, and report on attendance data, and this information must be included in each school's strategic school profile. Additionally, SBE must report, by July 1, 2012, and each year following, on the attendance data gathered under the new definitions and provisions.

It is anticipated that the new requirements contained in Section 2 will result in an additional cost to SBE of approximately \$100,000

associated with: (1) the upgrade and addition of elements to the central SBE data system, (2) changes to the user interface to allow local and regional districts to enter new information, and (3) programming needs to finalize the collection of additional data.

Additionally, it is anticipated that the new requirements for collecting attendance data could result in an additional cost to local and regional school districts associated with the revision and reprinting of school handbooks, minimal changes to student database software, and data entry. The costs to local and regional school districts will vary by district. It is anticipated that some districts may incur minimal to no additional costs, while larger districts could incur costs up to \$15,000.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above, associated with local and regional school districts, would continue into the future subject to inflation. The cost to SBE would be one-time in nature.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 278*****AN ACT CONCERNING TRUANCY.*****SUMMARY:**

By law, when the parent or guardian of a truant child fails to meet with school officials or cooperate in addressing the child's truancy, the school district superintendent must file a complaint in the Superior Court alleging the student's family is a family with service needs. Under the bill, the superintendent must file this complaint within 30 calendar days of the parent or guardian failing to attend the meeting or cooperate with school officials.

The bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE), on or before July 1, 2011, to define "excused absence" and "unexcused absence" so that local and regional school boards can meet statutory requirements for addressing truancy among schoolchildren. It requires the SBE to establish criteria the local and regional boards must use to measure, collect, and report on attendance data and include this information in their strategic school profile, an annual required report on student performance. Currently, boards define excused and unexcused absences.

By law, and unchanged by the bill, a truant is a child, age 5 to 18, who is enrolled in a public or private school and has four unexcused absences from school in any month or 10 unexcused absences in any year.

The bill requires the SBE to report, by July 1, 2012 and each following year, on the attendance data gathered under the bill's provisions and on any truancy programs that local or regional boards of education use to address truancy, including the steps that law mandates they take. SBE must submit the report to the governor and



the Education Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2010

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Families with Service Needs Children***

Children of families with service needs are those under age 18 who have run away without good cause, are truant or beyond control of their parents or school authorities, or are engaged in certain forms of sexual or immoral conduct (CGS § 46b-149).

### ***Mandated Truancy Efforts***

By law, school districts are required to adopt policies and procedures addressing truants, which must include the following:

1. meeting with parents or guardians of a truant to evaluate reasons for the truancy;
2. coordinating services with and referrals to agencies providing family and child services;
3. annually notifying parents or guardians of their obligations under state education law;
4. annually obtaining daytime contact information, including phone number, of parents or guardians of children in grades kindergarten to eight; and
5. implementing a system of monitoring unexcused absences of children in grades kindergarten to eight, inclusive, and notifying parents or guardians in cases when school personnel have not been informed that the parent or guardian is aware of the absence (CGS § 10-198a).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 31 Nay 0 (03/23/2010)

**Families with Service Needs Advisory Board  
Report to the Connecticut General Assembly  
(February 2008)**

**June 2010 Final Progress Update**



**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FEBRUARY 2008 FWSN ADVISORY BOARD REPORT TO THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JUNE 2010 PROGRESS UPDATE**

NOTE: Updates reflect the Agency self-reports from CSSD, DCF, and SDE, following meetings with the Board Co-Chairs, Martha Stone and Preston Britner.

**THE FIVE CORE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**RECOMMENDATION ONE**

**PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SIX ADDITIONAL FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS TO MAKE THESE SERVICES AVAILABLE TO EVERY CHILD AND FAMILY IN CONNECTICUT.**

CSSD: Complete.

FSC services will be available statewide by the fall of 2010. Existing FSCs will continue to offer services in New Haven, Bridgeport, Hartford and Waterbury.

FSCs will be expanded through the competitive bid process to open three new stand alone programs in the following locations: Waterford, Middletown, and New Britain. Awards will be made in mid-July 2010.

In the remaining locations (Willimantic, Norwalk/Stamford, Danbury, Torrington & Rockville), the YES! programs will be expanded to offer specific services to FWSN-referred juveniles. Additional services will be added (such as educational advocacy, clinical services, and group offerings) to ensure that families in these locations are able to receive similar services.

**RECOMMENDATION TWO**

**FUND AND ESTABLISH PILOT TRUANCY REDUCTION INITIATIVES.**

Incomplete. No agency actions.

**RECOMMENDATION THREE**

**PROVIDE FUNDS TO ENHANCE YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS (YSB). AS A PILOT, IN EACH OF FOUR JUDICIAL DISTRICTS, INCREASE THE CAPACITY OF AT LEAST ONE YSB THAT HAS A JUVENILE REVIEW BOARD SO THAT THE YSB CAN INCREASE ITS CASELOAD AND HANDLE REFERRALS OF THOSE YOUTH WHO ARE AT RISK OF HAVING FWSN REFERRALS SUBMITTED TO THE COURT.**

While recognizing the value and success of the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) model of the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) diversion program, state funding was not available to enable any YSB to increase the capacity of its JRB program to handle referrals of youth who are at risk of a FWSN referral to court. Some state funding through DCF was used to establish a few JRB type diversion programs in the larger cities, but these programs primarily address delinquent rather than FWSN behavior. Although DCF has some administrative oversight of those few specific programs, the majority of the existing JRB programs are administered by their local YSB.

**RECOMMENDATION FOUR**

**FUND AND USE FLEXIBLE FUNDING TO ALLOW THE COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION TO PURCHASE CHILD SPECIFIC SERVICES FOR COURT REFERRED LOW AND MEDIUM RISK CHILDREN.**

CSSD: Complete.

Flex-funds are available to juvenile probation clients (delinquent and FWSN) throughout the state.

Flex-funds are available to delinquent children at all YES programs statewide.

Flex-funds are included as discretionary funds in FSC budgets.

**RECOMMENDATION FIVE**

**MAKE NEEDED CHANGES TO THE FAMILIES WITH SERVICE NEEDS LAW TO ENSURE PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS, ALLOW FOR THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION WITHOUT AFFECTING DUE PROCESS CONSIDERATIONS AND ADHERE TO FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.**

Procedural safeguards: Complete.

Information exchange/confidentiality: In Process.

**OTHER KEY RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE FWSN POPULATION:**

**A. Recommendations related to FWSN Population**

**B.**

| <b>Type of Recommendation</b> | <b>Detail</b>  | <b>Primary Agency</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| <b>1.Prevention</b>           | Fund and implement an evidence-based parent education program that targets high risk, runaway, beyond control, truant behavior (e.g. Parent Project). Initially implement in the middle schools in the five cities that have the highest number of FWSN accepted referrals. Allocate sufficient funds to SDE to establish desired outcomes, monitoring and independent evaluation of the parent education program. | <b>SDE</b>            |

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|--|--|--|
|  | <p>SDE: No funding was allocated for this purpose. However, SDE examined current initiatives and partnerships that facilitate the delivery of evidence-based effective parenting models. SDE will provide information to districts through its normal information delivery channels.</p> <p>In Connecticut's Race to the Top application as well as through Public Act No. 10-111, the SDE will provide evidence based parent education programs such as the Parent Leadership Training Institute, (PLTI) and orientation to early warning systems for school failure.</p> | <b>In Process</b>                          |
| <b>2. Expansion of Services</b>          | <p>Expand the number of FWSN Liaisons from 8 to 10 for statewide coverage of all courts and family support centers.</p> <p>DCF: Due to the pending closure of the Norwalk Office and the recent restructuring of the DCF regional offices, Liaisons have been re-assigned to cover all of the courts and current family support centers with the existing 8 positions. State Budget deficits prevent increasing positions at this time.</p>  | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |
| <b>3. Data Collection and Evaluation</b> | <p>CSSD will work to ensure data collection systems for providers and the evaluation contractor exist and are secure and adhere to all state and federal laws requiring confidentiality.</p> <p>CSSD: The Contractor Data collection system is established for all Family Support Centers in addition to several other Judicial Branch, CSSD programs.</p>   | <p><b>CSSD</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>  |
|  | <p>Efforts should be made to obtain funds and modify the data collection systems of CSSD and DCF to ensure the collection of the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Racial and ethnic disparities at all stages of the FWSN system</li> <li>2. Timeliness and appropriateness of services</li> </ol>   | <b>CSSD &amp; DCF</b>                      |

|  |   |                                       |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | <p>for all FWSNs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Effectiveness of community-based preventive programs</li> <li>4. Flex funding for FWSN population separated from delinquency population</li> </ol> <p>DCF: The DCF FWSN Share point system does collect Data on racial and ethnic backgrounds of youth that are involved with both DCF and CSSD. DCF and CSSD have been in collaboration regarding their data collection systems, of Conduit and CMIS.</p> <p>The creation of the LIST, a system development strategy for the establishment of an integrated system for planning, implementation and evaluation of juvenile justice service delivery in Connecticut. It encourages collaborative efforts among local stakeholders for assessing the physical, social, behavioral, and educational needs of children and youth in their respective communities that leads to juvenile justice involvement, and for assisting in the development of comprehensive plans to address such needs.</p> <p>The infrastructure for planning is intended to be data-driven and encourage the use of evidence-based approaches and programs to support positive youth development. Primary goal is to get organized, identify what technical assistance needs would support local collaboration, identification of needs for at-risk/juvenile populations, and what state agencies can do to be more responsive to local needs (e.g., post juvenile stats on website, add lead entity to RFP distribution list, provide more time to respond to RFPs), collect data on child/youth population, needs, gaps in services, and increase knowledge of juvenile justice system and current programs and policies.</p> | <p><b>DCF:<br/>In Process</b></p>     |
|  | <p>DCF, CSSD, and SDE will coordinate plans for research and evaluation of expanded prevention strategies, services and coordination across systems with focus on systems-level outcomes such as</p>  | <p><b>DCF, CSSD &amp;<br/>SDE</b></p> |



|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p>drop-out; FWSN recidivism. (See Appendix VII for further information)</p> <p>The Juvenile Research Center, Inc (JRC) of Florida was contracted by CSSD to conduct the process and outcome evaluation, now completed.</p> <p>CSSD: Several efforts are underway to allow information sharing to determine longer-term effectiveness of programming. These include CSSD work with SDE to gain access to information regarding children receiving educational advocacy services, and two (2) Data Compatibility workgroups; one led by SDE and one by DSS.</p> | <p><b>Complete</b></p> <p><b>CSSD: In Process</b></p> |
|--|--|---|

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|---|---|--|
| <p><b>4. Systemic, longitudinal evaluation and planning</b></p> | <p>Create a Joint Strategic Planning Committee with representatives from CSSD, DCF, SDE, OPM, Child Protection Commission, Office of the Chief Public Defender, and the Division of Criminal Justice in order to:</p> <p>DCF: From the Joint Strategic Plan came the development of the Executive Implementation Team, responsible for the facilitation of the creation of the LISTS; respond to Annual Report, incorporate needs/recommendations in budget options as appropriate, issue an Annual Report on the State of the Juvenile Justice System in Connecticut; and offer guidance and technical assistance, Resource identification, Needs assessment, Monitoring and performance evaluation, Strategic planning, and Information sharing</p> <p>SDE: SDE is a participating member of the Joint Strategic Planning Committee. In addition, the SDE has representation on many of the identified committees/councils such as: JJPOCC; Child Poverty and Prevention, Youth Futures; Mental Health Transformation; etc.</p> <p>A. Enhance coordination between agencies in regard to initiatives that involve FWSN and other at risk youth. In particular, the following initiatives under the auspices of four different agencies need coordination:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DCF (community collaboratives, voluntary services, some Juvenile Review Boards, Safe Harbor Respite Home, MST)</li> <li>2. CSSD (Family Support Centers, CARE Centers, and FWSN Centers, MST);</li> </ol> | <p><b>CSSD, DCF, SDE, OPM, CCPA, Office of the Public Defender, Division of Criminal Justice</b></p> <p><b>DCF: Complete</b></p> <p><b>SDE: In Process</b></p> |
|---|---|--|

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|--|--|-------------------------------|
|  | <p>3. SDE (Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards)</p> <p>4. OPM (Neighborhood Youth Centers, Governor's Urban Violence initiative, Consortium on School Attendance)</p> <p>DCF: DCF, FWSN court Liaisons collaborate between agencies in regard to initiatives that involve FWSN and other at risk youth. The initiatives include additions to the Juvenile Criminal Diversion Programs, such as, the Parent Project and CasaStart programs. RFP'd out to the community. Wilderness School has expanded their outreach and developed programming to include youth who are involved with FWSN, Juvenile Review Boards and Family Support Centers. The continuation of the FWSN Protocol and DCF/CSSD agreement to provide case management voluntarily to families in need of services, through DCF. DCF participates as a member of the CSSD Family Support Center triage team to coordinate and optimize services and reduce the risk of duplication. of services. DCF's participation in the LIST enhances the collaboration with the Youth Service Bureaus. Work with the YSB includes participation on the Juvenile Review Boards to expand to include FWSN cases referred both from the police and local educational departments as well as networking with the community providers involved with servicing the youth in their local communities.</p> <p>B. Enhance coordination between task forces to avoid duplication:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Juvenile Justice Planning and Oversight Coordinating Council (JJPOC)</li> <li>2. FWSN Advisory Board</li> <li>3. McArthur Foundation Mental Health Network</li> <li>4. SAMSA Transformation</li> </ol> | <p><b>DCF: In Process</b></p> |
|--|--|-------------------------------|



|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>evaluation of imminent risk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Training for police officers</li> <li>5. Training for schools, community programs.</li> </ol> <p>CSSD: CSSD has completed establishing trauma, relational and strengths-based training programs as part of the mandatory pre- and in-service training requirements for contracted providers and juvenile probation.</p> <p>DCF: TIGR - Trauma Informed Gender Responsive Team, is the bringing together of all of the DCF Bureaus as an initiative to Train the agency in the Trauma Informed Organizational Toolkit. DCF Training Academy has begun offering training to all new employees, and a workgroup has been meeting regularly to develop a plan for integrating trauma sensitive training into all of the DCF bureaus. Training for police officers regarding adolescent girls has been implemented in Waterbury, Bridgeport and 12 surrounding towns. These trainings have included Role Call Training for all shifts as well as academy training for new recruits. In addition, Troop L (State Police) has implemented Role Call training for all of their officers. Current initiatives include the development of training for POST and the School Resource Officers. In addition, the Department of Children and Families has implemented a major initiative to reduce arrests at congregate care settings across the state. A kick-off meeting was held with the providers and law enforcement and future trainings are being coordinated.</p> <p>SDE: SDE has been building capacity within the Regional Educational Service Centers and the State Education Resource Center to effectively coordinate and deliver training to school districts.</p> <p>This effort is under the direction of the Deputy Commissioner and as the catalogue of training initiatives develops annually,</p> | <p><b>CSSD:<br/>Complete</b></p> <p><b>DCF: In Process</b></p> <p><b>SDE: In process</b></p> |
|--|---|--|

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | SDE will continue to address issues related to suspensions, expulsion, truancy, drop-outs, etc. SDE recognizes the importance of addressing the social, emotional, mental and behavioral needs of youth in order to facilitate school success. |  |
|--|--|--|

**B. Recommendations related to Truancy Prevention/Truancy Intervention**

| Type of Recommendation                       | Detail  | Primary Agency                             |
|--|---|--|
| A. Change Requirements re: Attendance Policy | <p>SDE has adopted uniform definition of “attendance” but for FWSN purposes, the definition of “excused” and “unexcused” for court referral purposes will be clarified and the statutory basis for a FWSN truancy referral will be reexamined.</p> <p>SDE: Attendance policies –including the definitions of excused and unexcused- are determined by each local school district. The SDE has examined other states’ definitions including the potential cost implications associated with implementation. As a result, it has determined that due to fiscal constraints, a prudent approach is to emphasize training on early warning systems for school failure including the predictive nature of poor school attendance on achievement. See more details below.</p> | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |
| B. Improve Data Collection                   | <p>No later than <u>2011-2012</u>, conduct an analysis of the academic penalties that students receive for being truant across districts and evaluate the policies’ effectiveness in reducing truancy.</p> <p>SDE: Public Act No. 10-111 will necessitate a design and dissemination for school use, presentations for middle and high school parent communities on implementation and management of individual student success plans. Included in the student success plan effort will be a focus toward secondary school</p>  | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |

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|                                      | <p>administrators and student support service personnel (e.g., guidance counselors, school social workers and school psychologists) to prevent high school dropout. School attendance will be a critical predictive variable for identifying students who drop out of high school and understanding what can be done to prevent early school failure.</p> <p>Within available appropriations, the SDE will collect and analyze school district penalties that students receive for being truant.</p>   |  |
|                                      | <p>No later than 2010, use Connecticut's Public School Information System (PSIS), with its unique student identifier, to report annually to the State Board of Education and the Education Committee of the Connecticut Legislature each district's "excused" and "unexcused" absences per year in ten representative Districts (to lead to an annual report in all Districts) and SDE's progress in increasing school attendance.</p> <p>SDE: As noted in recommendation A. above, SDE will train on early warning systems for school failure including the predictive nature of poor school attendance. The SDE will evaluate the impact of the training on reducing school failure and dropout rates. The evaluation will also assess the use of attendance in application of an early warning system for school failure.</p> | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |
| C. Increase Enforcement & Monitoring | <p>Issue an initial report on number of "truants," "habitual truants," and the number of meetings held pursuant to CGS § 10-198a(b) by district, school, grade level, race, ethnicity, gender and enrollment type in ten representative Districts to lead to an annual report in all Districts.</p>  | <b>SDE</b>                                 |

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|  | <p>SDE: SDE addressed this recommendation by the distribution of a Commissioner Circular Letter to districts (Circular Letter: C-2, Series 2009-2010) reminding the districts of the responsibility to develop truancy policies that include the holding of meetings as noted. Consideration will also be given to incorporating truancy policies into existing agency monitoring protocols.</p>  | <p><b>In Process</b></p>                   |
|  | <p>Identify specific full-time SDE staff whose responsibility is to track and provide technical assistance for truancy initiatives and to work with the Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance to coordinate statewide efforts to increase school attendance.</p> <p>SDE: Funding was not allocated for this position. However, in Connecticut's Race to the Top application, the SDE has identified the Bureau and staff members who will be involved in this work. Professional development and technical assistance will be shared among the Divisions of the agency in order to avoid the silo effect and to achieve maximum benefit. For example, the SDE has several staff members, including program and data personnel, attending the Connecticut Consortium on School Attendance.</p> | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |
|  | <p>Require Districts that are in the process of being "restructured" pursuant to Public Act 07-3, sec. 32 to include truancy reduction initiatives in their improvement plans that are evidence-based or include "best practices."</p> <p>SDE: While there are currently no districts in the process of being restructured, schools/districts not making progress for five years are required to submit improvement plans. Currently, attendance issues (suspension, expulsion, drop-outs, etc.) are being addressed in the plans.</p>  | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p> |



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|  | <p>SDE's Secondary School Redesign Draft Plan should include strategies and initiatives for students with a history of poor school attendance, including increased opportunities to access alternative education and vocational education.</p> <p>SDE: The secondary school redesign plan is built on the premise that school attendance is required in order for students to achieve academically. Therefore, nonacademic student support services which address attendance issues are an integral part of the student success planning that will be required under Public Act No. 10-111.</p> <p>In Connecticut's Race to the Top application as well as through Public Act No. 10-111, the SDE will provide professional development sessions for middle and high school leaders on: research-based computer and internet based academic applications that have proven effective for high needs students, the design of effective schedules (e.g., block schedules, trimester school years) to maximize learning time for low performing students and orientation to early warning systems for school failure.</p> | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p>         |
|  | <p>Implement differential response system for educational neglect referrals.</p> <p>DCF: The Differential Response System will be made available for educational neglect referrals for youth over the age of 12. Work is currently being done on the details of the implementation plan, roll out will begin in DCF's Region Three.</p>   | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p>         |
|  | <p>Increase number of FWSN liaisons by two so each court and Family Support Center has coverage.</p> <p>DCF: Due to the pending closure of the Norwalk Office and the recent restructuring of the DCF regional offices Liaison have been re-assigned to cover all of the courts and current family support centers with the</p>   | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>Partially Complete</b></p> |

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|   | existing 8 positions. State Budget deficits prevent increasing positions at this time.   |   |
|   | <p>Develop transition program (e.g. STEP) for DCF-committed youth, including truants re-entering school system from respite or other out of home living situation.</p> <p>There are 3-STEP programs available through the Bureau of Juvenile Services, (New Haven, Hartford and Bridgeport. Bridgeport and Hartford have on occasion, accepted FWSN youth for services. During the past few years their has been a significant decrease in the number of truants re-entering school from out of home placements due to a decrease in FWSN commitments.</p> | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>            |
|   | <p>Collect data and report FWSN referrals and outcomes (including entry into juvenile justice system, grade completion) by category (truant, habitual truant), race, age, town, school, program intervention.</p> <p>CSSD: CSSD can report this data, except data relating to schools and school completion.</p>   | <p><b>CSSD</b></p> <p><b>Partially Complete</b></p> |
|   | Fund and increase number of educational advocates in order for each court to have one full-time position with responsibility for both FWSN and juvenile justice youth.   | <p><b>CSSD</b></p> <p><b>Complete</b></p>           |
| <b>D. System-wide Prevention Strategies</b> | Raise the age of withdrawal from school from 16 with parents' permission to 18 (no parental permission needed). Exception should be made for students age 16 or over who are enrolled in Job Corps, join the military with parental permission, or are emancipated.  | <b>CGA</b>  |

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|  | Lower the age of mandatory school attendance from seven years of age to six years of age.   | <b>CGA</b>  |
|  | Amend PA 07-66 so that neither truancy nor tardiness to class is punished by outside suspension.  | <b>CGA</b>  |
|  | Mandate that schools file reports for educational neglect rather than FWSN's for children 9 years of age and under if parent fails to follow school-parent contract and/or child continues to be truant as defined by CGS § 10-198a(a).   | <b>CGA</b>  |
|  | <p>Require the Department of Labor, SDE, CSSD and DCF to work with the existing Regional Workforce Development Boards to focus on developing workforce activities that provide incentives to formerly truant students who attend school regularly.</p> <p>SDE: The SDE Adult Education staff participates in each of the Workforce Investment Boards. The assigned Education Consultant has worked to place this issue on the meeting agenda.</p> <p>CSSD: CSSD is actively working to established vocational programs in every court location through expansion of the YES programs.</p> | <p><b>DOL, SDE, CSSD &amp; DCF</b></p> <p><b>DCF: Incomplete</b></p> <p><b>SDE: In Process</b></p> <p><b>CSSD: In Process</b></p> |

**C. Issues related to the FWSN Population requiring further study or examination by the Joint Strategic Planning Committee.**

| <b>Type of Recommendation</b>  | <b>Detail</b>   | <b>Primary Agency</b>                                 |
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| "Raise the Age"  | Analyze the differences in risk and need for 16 & 17 year old status offenders and determine what service should be in place to ensure the best possible outcomes for this group. Fund and develop services.                                    | <b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE &amp; JJPIC</b> |
| <b>Transition of FWSN triage system from Probation;</b>                  | Determine when probation should transition triage function to Family Support Centers or other private agency; determine which state agency would supervise and evaluate (e.g. DCF, CSSD)  | <b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>             |
| <b>Transition other FWSN services (Family Support Centers) from CSSD</b> | Create an Implementation Plan including an implementation team to oversee transition.   | <b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>             |
| <b>Handling of FWSN cases</b>  | Study and consider whether the Attorney General's office should assume jurisdiction over the FWSN cases rather than the Division of Criminal Justice.   | <b>OAG &amp; DCJ</b>                                  |
| <b>Confidentiality &amp; Data sharing</b>                                | Address the data or information sharing issues raised in the 2006 report "The Connecticut Juvenile Justice Strategic Plan" as well as formal and informal practices of information sharing in FWSN cases to ensure appropriate confidentiality. | <b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>             |

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|   | Resolve confidentiality issues as they relate to the comprehensive assessment and treatment and programmatic evaluations so as to protect the child's and family's right to informed consent.   | <b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>                                       |
| <b>Intervention for DCF youth residing in out of home placements.</b> | <p>Determine the actual number of DCF involved children who are subsequently referred to the court who are a FWSN and the number who are arrested. Determine what prevention services and de-escalation techniques might be planned and implemented for DCF involved children to avoid future court involvement for runaway or out of control behavior.</p> <p>DCF: Local Interagency Service Teams are collecting data, some of which includes: who is being referred to the court, type of charges and where the charges are originating from. The identification of this data will help at the local level and the Executive Team level to determine what prevention and intervention strategies will be needed.</p> <p>An AWOL/Sexual Assault Team has been developed at DCF to assess the needs of children who run away from care and develop a plan to decrease AWOL/SA.</p> | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p>                                      |
| <b>Funding Options</b>  | <p>Explore federal funding reimbursement for FWSN Centers, Respite Centers, Family Support Centers, community-based mental health services (e.g. MST, MDFC) (IV-E eligibility; Medicaid-EPSDT)</p> <p>CSSD: FSCs and Respite centers are being submitted for consideration for TANF eligibility</p>   | <p><b>JOINT STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE</b></p> <p><b>CSSD: In Process</b></p> |
| <b>Treatment of</b>   | Determine how sexual status   | <b>JOINT</b>  |

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| <b>FWSN Immoral<br/>conduct</b> | offenses and delinquency sexual<br>offenses are being handled and<br>clarify the two options. | <b>STRATEGIC<br/>PLANNING<br/>COMMITTEE</b> |
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**D. Recommendations Relating to Girls in the Juvenile Delinquency Population**

| <b>Type of Recommendation</b>   | <b>Detail</b>  | <b>Primary Agency</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Establish and strengthen services for girls in the juvenile justice system.</b></p> | <p>Fund and have the State Department of Education issue a Request for Proposal to pilot an alternative therapeutic gender responsive school (i.e. the PACE Center for Girls) in one location for a minimum of 3-5 years and conduct an appropriate evaluation of the school and programming.</p> <p>SDE: Funding has not been provided.</p>   | <p><b>SDE</b></p> <p><b>Incomplete</b></p>  |
|   | <p>Include, ( or, in the case of CSSD continue to include) gender responsive training as a basic component of training in orientation and update training for all DCF Social Workers and CSSD Probation Officers. Develop specific gender responsive training for those DCF staff that work with children under the age of 12.</p> <p>DCF: Juvenile Services Providers have all been trained in Female-Responsive Programming and on-going trainings continue. The Girls' Parole Unit was trained when this unit was designed and implemented in 2008 and they participate in the Girls' Provider Group. The Trauma Informed Organizational Toolkit training and workgroups take into consideration the age of the children that DCF as an agency works with. One of the task of the trauma workgroup will be to identify and modify the need for Trauma Sensitive training to meet the needs of the population being addressed.</p> <p>CSSD: All officers receive training on Gender responsive practice and there is one specialized officer with over 100 hours of training in working with girls in each</p> | <p><b>CSSD &amp; DCF</b></p> <p><b>DCF: In Process</b></p> <p><b>CSSD: Complete</b></p> |

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|  | probation office.  |   |
|  | <p>Include in all DCF and CSSD contracts that provide services to adolescents, language that requires the adherence to gender responsive principles.</p> <p>DCF: Juvenile Services has developed and implemented the following contract language: The Girls' Program Guidelines provided by the Department are the basis of the therapeutic model and must be used to guide programming decisions. The definition adopted by the Department for female-responsive programming is:<br/> <i>Female-responsive programs intentionally incorporate research on female socialization, psychological, cognitive and physical development, strengths and risks to affect and guide ALL aspects of a program's design, processes and services.</i></p> | <p><b>CSSD &amp; DCF</b></p> <p><b>CSSD:<br/>Complete</b></p> <p><b>DCF: Complete</b></p> |
|  | <p>Develop and sustain a Community Advisory Committee for the secure girls' facility similar to the one established for the Connecticut Juvenile Training School.</p> <p>DCF: Juvenile Services remains committed in developing a Community Advisory Board when a community is identified as a site for the new secure girls' treatment program.</p>   | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p>  |
|  | <p>Establish funding to engage the services of an expert or experts in gender responsive programming to assist, at each stage of the process, in the development of the girls' secure facility, train staff prior to its opening, and ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in all DCF state run and contracted facilities that serve juvenile justice girls.</p>   | <p><b>DCF</b></p>   |



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|  | <p>DCF: Juvenile Services has agreed to work with experts in the final design and implementation of the new secure girls' treatment program.</p>  | <p><b>In Process</b></p>  |
|  | <p>Develop a plan no later than July 1, 2008 to ensure implementation of gender responsive practices in DCF state run and contracted facilities, implement such plan no later than January 2010.</p> <p>DCF: Juvenile Services continues to work with the Girls' Provider Group in the implementation of the Program Guidelines for Girls' Services in Connecticut. The Self-Assessment is complete with the first assessment to be completed in September of this year. Final modifications to the assessment will be completed after the first assessment and training and resources will be identified based on the outcomes of the assessments.</p> | <p><b>DCF</b></p> <p><b>In Process</b></p>  |
|  | <p>Adopt and work to ensure implementation of the Program Guidelines for Girls Services in Connecticut, April, 2007 (<i>see Appendix VIII</i>) in state run facilities no later than Jan.2010.</p> <p>DCF: Juvenile Services remains committed that the Program Guidelines for Girls' Services will be implemented at the new girls secure treatment facility; the Program Guidelines for Girls' Services in Connecticut has been part of the DPW RFP's.</p>  | <p><b>CSSD &amp; DCF</b></p> <p><b>CSSD: In Process</b></p> <p><b>DCF: In Process</b></p> |

## **The Family School Connection:**

Family School Connection (FSC) is a prevention program funded by the Connecticut Children's Trust Fund, a division of the Department of Social Services. The program provides comprehensive home visiting and support services for families whose children are frequently absent, truant, have academic or behavioral problems, or often come to school unprepared. In addition, the program provides services to parents who are not adequately engaged with the school or attending to their child's educational needs. All of these problems indicate a risk of educational neglect and school failure.

The goals of FSC are to improve parenting skills and help families become more involved with their child's educational experience. To accomplish this, the home visitors meet with the families on a regular basis – usually 2 or 3 times a month – for several months. They use an evidenced based curriculum to help improve their parenting skills and encourage parents to spend more time interacting with their child. The home visitors support the families in making better connections with the school, its teachers and other officials.

The home visitors take a two-generation approach to their work. They focus on the development of the child while providing support for the parents. A major role of the home visitors is to help the parents address the issues that are interfering with their ability to meet needs of their child. The home visitors help the parents identify problems, develop plans and problem solving skills. They also connect them with community resources that can help.

The program is located at five elementary schools in Connecticut – pre-k to grade 12.

- Betances in Hartford
- Bielefield School in Middletown
- Fair Haven School in New Haven
- Wequonnoc School in Norwich
- W.B. Sweeney School in Willimantic

FSC serves about 175 families a year. Most of the children are three to six years old. Roughly 15% are ten to twelve years old. The families are largely single head of household, have limited educations, high rates of unemployment and few resources. More than one-third of the parents have less than a high school education. Fifteen percent of mothers were enrolled in school while participating in the program.

In a recent evaluation of the program, researchers at the University of Hartford Center for Social Research noted that the “outcomes for program participants are positive.” The evaluators found that the participants showed a significant increase in their involvement with their child's school. In addition, they found that parents were spending more time listening to their child read and helping them with their homework. Participants also showed a significant increase in life skills, specifically in the areas of budgeting and getting support from others.

## Why make a referral?

Struggling families often have trouble meeting the needs of their children. Children who are not getting their needs met are at greater risk for developmental, behavioral and health issues – issues that too often lead to school failure.

Family School Connection helps parents develop the skills they need to meet the needs of their children.

- Parents who participate in the program become more involved in their children's education and in their lives.
- Parents develop healthier attitudes about parenting and experience less stress.
- Parents are more accepting and have more realistic attitudes about their children.
- Parents find the resources they need to address a number of challenging issues in their own lives.

\*FSC evaluation conducted by the University of Hartford Center for Social Research

## Make a Referral

Please fill out this form and check all of the boxes that apply on the inside page.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_

Referring Teacher/Staff Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Has the family been notified of the referral to Family School Connection? Yes  No

**Don't have time to complete this form or have a question about a referral?**

Please contact the FSC staff and they will be happy to assist you.

Program contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Family School Connection is a program of the Children's Trust Fund, a division of the State of CT Department of Social Services

# FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION

*Why and How to Refer?*

*Program Site Contact Info:*

School Name

## What is Family School Connection?

Family School Connection (FSC) strengthens the ability of families to **support their children's development and school success.**

FSC works in partnership with school personnel to identify children who are "at risk" of falling behind.

FSC is a comprehensive home visiting program that meets with families on a regular basis to teach parenting skills and address other issues.

Families with children attending this school -including children with special needs- are eligible for services if they are having difficulty attending to the educational, social-emotional or basic needs of their children.

FSC is a **prevention focused** program. Families currently under DCF investigation, receiving mandated services or who have been substantiated for child abuse or neglect are not eligible for this service.

## Who should I refer?

*(Please check all that apply)*

Do you **know a student** with any of the following problems?

- Is frequently **tardy**
- Is frequently **absent**
- Excessive excused absences**
- Clothing that is dirty**, too small or large, in need of repair or inappropriate for the weather
- Hungry**, hoarding, stealing, or requesting food for home
- Tired with little energy** due to lack of sleep or illness
- Reports **caring for younger siblings**
- Has **poor hygiene**
- Unattended **medical or dental problems**
- Steals, vandalizes or other **delinquent behaviors**
- Poor relationships** with peers

Do you know a student **whose parent or guardian is struggling to address** any of the following **problems for their child?**

- Behavior or mental health issues**
- Physical, learning or developmental delay or disability**
- Difficulty with language comprehension**
- Academic problems**

Do you **know a student** whose parent or guardian is struggling with **any** of the following **issues at home?**

- Mental health issues
- Alcohol or drug issues
- Serious health challenges
- Unstable housing or homelessness
- Domestic violence
- Unmet basic needs

Do you **know a student** whose **parent or guardian** has been **unresponsive to attempts to communicate** with them about **any** of the following?

- Parent – Teacher Conferences
- Progress Report/Report Card
- Child at Risk of Retention

**If you checked any of the boxes on this brochure please refer the family to Family School Connection.**

### How to refer?

1. Check all boxes that apply and complete the short form on the back of this brochure.
2. Drop the brochure in the FSC mailbox in the main office.
3. If possible, let the parent or guardian know that you have made a referral to Family School Connection.