



April 18, 2013

Dear Dr. D'Amico,

Attached please find the Connecticut Youth Services Association response to the Department of Children and Families: Adolescent and Juvenile Services Division Request For Information. It is our sincere hope that the information contained within our reply is helpful in the redesign process of DCF's Juvenile Review Board/ Criminal Diversion programs and services.

As the statewide organization which represents nearly 100 Youth Service Bureaus in 145 communities in Connecticut, we felt that creating a unified response on behalf of our members was the best course of action. Many Youth Service Bureaus facilitate Juvenile Review Boards and Local Interagency Service Teams (LIST) in their communities and they decided to entrust the response to a team which is very knowledgeable in the JRB arena. CYSA Board members Joel Rosenberg and Christopher Montes were unanimously chosen as the "experts" in responding to the inquiries within the document; and because of this decision I will be deferring any questions regarding the responses within the RFI to both Joel Rosenberg and Christopher Montes. Please find their contact information below.

Again, on behalf of the Connecticut Youth Services Association we hope that the information contained within our response is helpful in DCF's quest to redesign its Juvenile Review Boards and Criminal Diversion programs and services.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted:

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Juvenile Review Board / Criminal Diversion Redesign  
**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**  
State of Connecticut  
Department of Children and Families  
*Adolescent and Juvenile Services Division*

**Response From:**

**The Connecticut Youth Services Association**



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***A - 1. What tenets and goals should be addressed through the re-design of Connecticut's JRB system, in addition to those set forth in the RFI?***

The Connecticut Youth Services Association (CYSA) offers the following response to the proposed redesign of Connecticut's Juvenile Review Board (JRB) system. In doing so, it is important to draw a distinction between the Department of Children and Families Juvenile Review Board, (DCF JRB) model and the Youth Service Bureau model. The forty (+) year history of JRBs in Connecticut is directly related to the history and mission of Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs). It is difficult to examine model without acknowledging the relationship to the other. CYSA's response to this Request for Information can only address the YSB JRB model, as CYSA does not have reliable data to make comparisons to the DCF funded JRB programs.

***History of the Youth Service Bureau – JRB Model***

According to a report published in 2011 by CYSA, "An Examination of Youth Service Bureaus and Juvenile Review Boards," some of the earliest JRBs were developed in Connecticut towns such as Enfield, East Hartford, Madison, and East Haven more than forty years ago. Each was and still remains part of their community YSB. This report can be downloaded from CYSA's website [www.ctyouthservices.org](http://www.ctyouthservices.org). Over the past forty years, CYSA has played an important role in helping to create a network that has linked YSBs (new and seasoned) together to share knowledge, professional trainings, best practices and resources. CYSA has a current membership of 99 YSBs statewide serving 142 cities and towns. The YSB JRB model ranges from diversions related exclusively to criminal complaints to an ever increasing number of YSBs handling Families With Service Needs (FWSN) referrals. CYSA recognizes that not all YSBs handle FWSN cases within their JRBs. During the past six years, through CYSA's partnership with the Chief State's Attorney Office, a growing number of communities have developed JRBs.

The formation and growth of JRBs across the state is directly linked to the passage of Connecticut General Statutes in the 1970's that were established to set standards for YSBs. Once part of the former Department of Children and Youth Services, today YSBs are funded by the Department of Education. YSBs have a strong history of collaborating with multiple state departments, as evidenced most recently through the DCF and CSSD Local Interagency Service Teams, (LIST project). Of the 12 LISTs, 11 are currently led or co – led by YSBs. These LISTs serve an important role in the state by fostering opportunities to form community partnerships between schools, YSBs, law enforcement, DCF, Juvenile Court, families and other local entities to examine juvenile justice and mental health services that impact youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

### **Laws, Standards and Practices**

YSBs follow the standards set forth in CGS 10-19m which specifically addresses the Administrative and Direct Service functions that effectively work towards diverting youth from the juvenile justice system. A portion of CGS 10-19m reads as follows:

*Agents of one or more municipalities may establish a multipurpose youth service bureau for the purposes of evaluation, planning, coordination and implementation of services, including prevention and intervention programs for delinquent, pre-delinquent, pregnant, parenting and troubled youth referred to such bureau by schools, police, juvenile courts, adult courts, local youth-serving agencies, parents and self-referrals. A youth service bureau shall be the coordinating unit of community-based services to provide comprehensive delivery of prevention, intervention, treatment and follow-up services. (b) A youth service bureau established pursuant to subsection (a) of this section may provide, but shall not be limited to the delivery of, the following services: (1) Individual and group counseling; (2) parent training and family therapy; (3) work placement and employment counseling; (4) alternative and special educational opportunities; (5) recreational and youth enrichment programs; (6) outreach programs to insure participation and planning by the entire community for the development of regional and community-based youth services; (7) preventive programs, including youth pregnancy, youth suicide, violence, alcohol and drug prevention; and (8) programs that develop positive youth involvement. Such services shall be designed to meet the needs of youth by the diversion of troubled youth from the justice system as well as by the provision of opportunities for all youth to function as responsible members of their communities.”*

Attachment #1 reflects the current list of YSBs by region statewide.

**Services statewide within rural, suburban, and urban Youth Service Bureaus include:**

Youth Development: Youth Employment and Job Training; Adventure-Based Activities/Ropes Courses; After-School Programs; Anger Management Groups; Community Service; Leadership Programs; Mentoring; Peer Programs; Substance-Free Alternative Activities; Summer Recreation Programs; Teen Centers; Theatre Troupes; Truancy/Drop-out/Violence/Substance Abuse Prevention Programs; Wellness Programs; Youth/Adult Partnership Programs;

Family Involvement: Information and Referral; Parent Support Groups; Parent Workshops;

Mental Health Services: Case Management; Child & Family Counseling; Crisis Intervention; Host Homes; Information & Referral; Support Groups;

Child Welfare: Family Reunification; Information & Referral; Social Service Activities; Supervised Visitation; Therapeutic Playgroups; Holiday Giving;

Teen Pregnancy Prevention: Counseling; Education; Positive Youth Development Programs; Support Groups;

Community Outreach: Cultural Activities; Family Events; Field Trips; Holiday Festivals; Intergenerational Activities;

Juvenile Justice: Alternative Sanction Programs; Court Advocacy; Court-Ordered Community Service; Detention/Suspension/Expulsion Prevention & Intervention Programs; Diversion Programs; Truancy Prevention/Intervention Programs and Juvenile Review Boards.

A 2012-2013 CYSA Statewide Youth Service Bureau inventory found the following:

**Does your YSB offer a Juvenile Review Board?**

Yes	62	68.9%	
No	28	31.1%	

Of the 62 YSB community based Juvenile Review Boards:

21 see Delinquency cases up to age 16	21	17.1%	
58 see Delinquency cases up to age 17	58	47.2%	
34 see Families With Service Needs Cases	34	27.6%	
10 offer Other services	10	8.1%	

A growing number of YSBs continue to join the ranks of those who had years earlier established Juvenile Review Boards, (JRBs).

### *Tenets and Goals of a Re-Design*

The RFI states that YSBs currently receive funding for JRBs. There is no evidence of SDE funding at the present time for the vast majority of JRBs in Connecticut. There is evidence of only 2-3 YSBs receiving funding from DCF for JRBs. While YSBs have a long history of leveraging funds, when it comes to funding specifically for JRB case managers, and/or accessing specialized treatment services for JRB clients, dedicated funding at the present time simply does not exist. The following recommendations are offered:

- Provide the 60 (+ or -) YSBs that currently have JRBs with access to the same specialized mental health services afforded to the five YSBs that are presently part of the CSSD Juvenile Review Board pilot project.
- Align with CYSA training, standards and best practices for YSBs that implement JRBs.
- Provide funding to CYSA to administer oversight, management, training and data collection for YSBs with JRBs.
- Provide existing JRBs with funding for case managers.

YSBs play a critical role as a “service bridge” among families, police departments, school systems, juvenile court, human service departments, mental health systems, and DCF. The earliest JRBs in Connecticut were directly associated with the language contained in state statute coinciding with the creation of community based YSBs offering diversion alternatives for at-risk youth. YSBs historically have created or partnered with other support systems to assist children and families as part of the diversion process based on the unique needs and/or resources of each community.

From the perspective of the CYSA, whose experience with JRBs spans more than four decades, the tenets and goals of any JRB Criminal Diversion redesign, should focus first and foremost on ways

to replicate what is working well via the YSB JRB model. The current YSB JRB model should help fund those JRBs already in place among YSBs statewide. To replicate this system outside of the current YSB model would be duplicative state spending. It is important to note that the CYSA has adopted and highly recommends the use of the 2010 JRB Best Practices Standards that were developed by the CYSA JRB Advisory Committee for YSBs (Attachment #6).

***A-2. How might the Department increase resources and create flexibility to better serve children and families served through the JRBs?***

Through a competitive grant process, YSBs with existing JRB programs could submit proposals requesting funding to meet specific needs identified by the particular JRB program. These needs might be funded to provide:

- additional case manager hours;
- establishing a uniform data collection method;
- transportation or child care for JRB families that need such assistance to attend counseling or other recommended services;
- Flexible funding to cover costs related to the participation in recommended programs;
- full or partial payment for uninsured counseling or treatment services;
- ongoing staff development training on such topics as: new laws and court procedures, restorative justice principles, spotting and understanding the impact of things such as race, culture, sexual orientation, disabilities, trauma, etc., and upcoming funding opportunities;
- marketing of the JRB program to encourage its use;

Also through a competitive grant process, YSBs interested in starting a JRB could apply for the funding necessary to start a JRB in a community where none exist. In addition to the above bullets, JRB start up activities would include:

- training community entities, such as the YSB, law enforcement, schools and other interested parties;
- training new JRB members about how to operate the JRB;
- hiring a case manager;

***A-3. What supports and resources are needed to support JRBs?***

Please refer to the same answer as in Question #2 of this section.

***A-4. What supports and resources are needed to enhance diversion options?***

- As with the current CSSD pilot project, access to available slots in existing CSSD and DCF programs and services, including flex funds, should be allotted to the extent capacity exists. Not only would this assist JRBs, but it would also increase utilization of already funded state programs/services
- Having employees from DCF and CSSD as members of each JRB greatly enhances the JRB's knowledge of existing state programs and services.
- Each JRB or LIST can identify specific service gaps that exist in each area, as these vary from community to community and will change over time. DCF can then seek to provide the needed service or make funds available for the individual YSB to establish the needed service in the community or region.
- If the JRBs could be notified when DCF or CSSD implement a new program or service, either locally, regionally or statewide, designed to meet certain needs of the population

served. That information would be very useful to the JRBs and would enable them to be kept up to date on the available programs and services.

***B-1. Is this identified tier structure appropriate for the redesign? If not, what tier structure might be developed to effectively address the distinct needs of children in varying regions and types of communities, such as urban and rural communities?***

The identified tier structure in the RFI does not seem appropriate. JRBs fitting the definition of Tier 1 would serve 100-200 youth annually, while Tier 2 would serve 20-30. The question begs answering: What about JRB's that serve between 30 and 100 youth per year? Instead, as devised by the CYSA, a four (4) tier system would serve regions much more effectively. This four tier system would be based on population and numbers of youth served by each JRB within their respective community. See template prepared by CYSA Attachment #2.

***B-2. What tier structure might be developed to effectively address the distinct needs of children within one region?***

To the extent a regional JRB would attempt to serve diverse populations within a region, this would not be a feasible option. JRBs, in order to function well, need to be community based, with resident board members, inclusive of locally based diversions that are specific to the demographics and socioeconomics of the families in their respective towns and cities.

***B-3. How might the Department create a JRB system that supports existing non DCF funded JRBs?***

Such a system already exists in Connecticut. All that is missing is a sustainable funding source to help offset the operational costs for JRB case managers and ancillary support services for families and youth who are referred to their local JRB. Funding could also be utilized to expand the JRB system into communities that currently do not have one. We do not need to redesign the "wheel". It works well the way it is. Instead, we need more spokes, or supports, in the existing wheels (JRBs).

CYSA has the ability to organize, administer, and further its network of local providers that already deliver juvenile justice diversion programs. While each JRB is unique to the community or communities it serves, the CYSA has clearly defined JRB Best Practices, recommended JRB operating standards, policies, forms, and training for its member agencies. Operationally through a partnership with the SDE and Charter Oak Group, CYSA also has the capability of managing a statewide data collection system to help with Results Based Accountability (RBA) measures to determine the success of the JRB model. CYSA also has a proven history of providing mentoring and guidance amongst the YSB network members. Additionally, CYSA now has a staff member supporting the administrative efforts of the Association. Again, what is lacking in the system of JRBs statewide is funding for a unified data tracking system, support for case managers and support for ancillary services, (primarily specialized mental health services).

Duplicating the existing YSB JRB model would be counterproductive to the spirit of the state statute already governing YSB efforts. A strategic funding focus such as one that could potentially be carried out through a partnership among state agencies, similar to the LIST initiative, but funded, would lend the greatest level of support to help leverage services already in place through existing JRBs.

Recommendations:

- a) provide funding for case managers of existing non DCF funded JRBs.
- b) expand the current CSSD, SDE, CYSA JRB project that grants access to court referred youth to JRBs for targeted mental health services
- c) provide funding to establish/manage a statewide data collection system for YSBs

***B-4. What supports and resources are needed for the development of new community JRBs?***

The CYSA, in partnership with the Connecticut Chief State's Attorney's Office, has for the past six years through the CYSA JRB Advisory Committee provided training, technical assistance, policies and procedures to communities around Connecticut interested in starting, expanding or re-designing existing JRBs. In several instances where YSBs did not exist, the JRB training also served as an opportunity to bring in seasoned YSB Directors to speak with Town Managers, School Superintendents and Police Chiefs about the YSB model. These discussions have also fostered stronger linkages with community leaders to the importance of engaging staff from DCF and CSSD. In many instances, where training has taken place, those communities have formed JRBs. The system already exists and works and any significant re-design related to this question would be counterproductive. Instead, joining forces and lending support in the form of the following would be beneficial:

- a) A small amount of funding to help CYSA manage this work, conduct ongoing training, and provide centralized and unified support.
- b) Expansion or start up funding for existing and new YSB coordinated JRBs.
- c) Assuring that local CSSD and DCF workers are aware of and are granted time to participate on local JRBs.
- d) Work in partnership with the state agencies that are also involved either with YSBs directly or indirectly via the LIST initiative, including but not limited to: SDE, DCF, CSSD

***B-5. What staffing structure might be developed to support a tier system of JRB?***

CYSA had previously developed a tiered JRB case management system in 2011, which had been forwarded to DCF, CSSD and SDE for consideration of funding for future JRB Case Managers. The system was based on a 4 tiered funding system considering populations bases of: 70,000 and

Greater, 40,001 – 69,999, 20,000 – 40,000, and up to 19,999. The tiered system took into account case management positions that went from PT 5, 10, or 20 hours per week up to FTE 35 hours per week. Estimates of hours were based on the tiered structure of population basis only and did not differentiate between existing and new YSB model JRBs. A second consideration could be given to separate existing JRBs that have data showing trends over a three year period on cases accepted and diverted vs. new JRBs as yet to be formed. In order to do this effectively, it would only make sense to work with the State Department of Education which currently monitors YSB data. Moreover, it is important to note that current JRB data is being tracked for five YSBs that are participating in the CSSD JRB pilot project. YSBs have been tracking data for many years and have been doing so without funding to purchase a unified data collection system. There is currently in place a systems purchase proposal that is tracking data for SDE for fewer than 10 current YSBs statewide. This system, referred to as KidTrax©, can effectively aggregate the data that would be needed to evaluate the tiered structure being recommended. The Kidtrax© system can also aggregate data contained in surveys, such as the sample provided below, (the 2012 Inventory of YSBs statewide):

**Sample Question 9:**

**If your YSB does have a JRB, please tell the range of services that you offer based on the following, (check all that apply)**

Delinquency cases up to age 16	21	17.1%	
Delinquency cases up to age 17	58	47.2%	
Families With Service Needs Cases	34	27.6%	
Other	10	8.1%	

**Sample Question 10:**

**Does your Youth Service Bureau either provide directly or offer access through a contracted partner agency any of the following services? Please check all that apply.**

Family Counseling	64	5.4%	█
Individual Counseling for children and/or youth	68	5.7%	█
Crisis Intervention Services for children or youth	62	5.2%	█
Psychological evaluations for children or youth	12	1.0%	
Psychiatric medication consultation for children or youth	13	1.1%	
Gender Specific Mental Health programs for children or youth	25	2.1%	
Individual or Family Credit Recovery Programs	3	0.3%	█
Therapeutic Play Groups	18	1.5%	
Family Reunification Services	7	0.6%	█
Respite care programs for children or youth	6	0.5%	█
Court Ordered Community Service	53	4.5%	█
Substance abuse assessments/treatment services for children or youth	34	2.9%	
Gender Specific Life Skills Programs for children or youth	38	3.2%	█
Substance abuse education prevention programs for children or youth	69	5.8%	█
Violence prevention education programs for children or youth	51	4.3%	█
Problem sex offender treatment services for children or youth	3	0.3%	█
Teen Parent program	8	0.7%	█
Truancy program for children or youth other than a JRB	13	1.1%	
Tutoring program for children or youth	28	2.4%	
Mentoring program for children or youth	49	4.1%	█
After school/Out of School Time activities for children or youth	74	6.2%	█
Summer activities for children or youth	70	5.9%	█
Community service programs for children or youth	75	6.3%	█
Police/Youth Development partnership program for children or youth	46	3.9%	█
Family Mediation services	6	0.5%	█
Peer to Peer programs for children or youth, such as peer mediation, peer helpers, or other youth leadership programs	51	4.3%	█

Child Welfare programs for children or youth	28	2.4%	
Parent Education programs	70	5.9%	█
Shelter program for families	2	0.2%	█
Youth Runaway Shelter or Host Home	3	0.3%	█
Youth Employment Program	51	4.3%	█
Independent Living Skills program for youth	17	1.4%	
Educational advocacy services for children or youth	31	2.6%	
Multilingual services for children or youth	11	0.9%	█
Resiliency Skills training programs for children or youth	29	2.4%	

***B-6. What data might the Department use to measure the volume of at risk children in a town or region?***

The volume of at risk children in a town or region can be calculated by looking at police arrests and referrals to the JRB, school discipline records, school referrals to the JRB and to court and DCF reports. Police reports should include not only juvenile delinquency arrests but also reports involving police calls for FWSN complaints of runaway and beyond control children as well as children engaging in indecent or immoral conduct or inappropriate sexual activity. Police reports involving domestic violence complaints and disorderly or intoxicated person complaints where children might be present should also be included since they are indicators of a potentially at risk child. Likewise, depending on how “at risk” is defined, standard census demographic information can also be informative since it includes information about race, poverty, household composition and age, all of which appear to have some impact on “risk.”

***B-7. Would the funding of slots for some services including summer jobs and mediation be helpful to add to the list of possible diversions? Please detail the potential benefits and/or challenges that might be presented by purchasing services when using a balance and restorative justice community model.***

Yes, services such as summer employment and mediation would certainly be helpful in diverting youth from the Juvenile Justice system using the Balance and Restorative Justice, (BARJ model).

In fact, existing JRBs have already utilized these types of diversions when adequate funding and/or opportunities are available. One case in point, as an anecdote, a youth who had stolen from a 7-11 inn New Britain was given restitution to work (voluntarily) as part of his JRB recommendation. He developed a very good working relationship with the owner and upon completion of his restitution was hired to work at the very 7-11 he had originally stolen from. With an active JRB panel, many creative and effective BARJ diversions can be meted out, benefitting both the youth and community. Purchasing of services for JRB youth should not present many challenges other than: #1. The perception that a youth can get perks (like employment) if he/she does something wrong while other youth in the community do not get the same opportunity; and #2. There are not always consistent services available to purchase in each region or town, thereby what is available to one JRB youth may not be available to another. Benefits of purchasing certain services, such as employment for youth would be; occupying his/her time, teaching a healthy work ethic, building solid relationships with appropriate adults well as other youth, and of course the financial plus of having a paying job. Services such as mediation would be a benefit for the victim (assuming the victim agrees to mediation) as well as the youth. In all, any well thought out diversion, whether purchased or not has historically shown to be of great value to JRB youth.

***B-8. How might the Department create incentives or opportunities to further enhance the child or youth's chances for continued success once the diversion or restoration is complete and the child or youth has been accountable for his or her behaviors? Please detail what other opportunities, incentives or interventions could be offered.***

This is easily done in the existing YSB JRB model because the child/youth is offered services with the YSB. Case management, school and after school support, counseling, positive youth development, leadership skills development, counseling and other mental health services, and many, many other prevention, intervention, and treatment services are delivered by the YSB to

JRB referred youth. This is the reason YSB JRB model youth have only a 3-6% recidivism rate (in a study completed by New Britain's YSB JRB of 100 referred youth) as opposed to over an 80% recidivism rate of court referred youth.

The Department itself cannot create incentives for community youth. Instead, funding local JRBs to help cultivate and provide local community based incentives is much more feasible and efficient. This is the role of the local YSB as stated in CGS § 10-19m-p.

***B-9. What staff constellation is recommended to best support the goals and objectives of the proposed JRB system? What qualifications should be required for any positions identified or recommended? Detail the responsibilities that should be accorded to each position, including any quantifiable expectations (e.g., units of service, frequency of care provision, etc.).***



AHM CYSA JRB Cost  
Template.xlsx

See the attached template #2.

***B-10. What type of training should the Department consider? If the training and its curriculum are proprietary, please include any possible costs.***

For new JRBs, basic orientation training about how JRBs function is essential so new programs can benefit from the experience of existing programs and avoid pitfalls associated with such start ups. JRB staff should be trained in the BARJ ideology, first and foremost. Secondly, basic case management skills are paramount to working with the JRB population. Other skills/training that is both beneficial and recommended includes:

- Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-Version 2 (MAYSI-2) \$200 for purchase
- Motivational Interviewing (DCF/CSSD already provides)
- Family Development Credential (Unknown Cost –Contact University of CT School of Family Studies)
- Trauma informed care, (refer to Question 16)

- Basic understanding of Juvenile Court jurisdiction, philosophy and basic principles of the criminal and FWSN laws
- Working with law enforcement, schools and the court

***B-11. What mechanism for training delivery will best ensure that case managers and panel members receive high quality training and support greater consistency across programs?***

If the Department is going to undertake the role as lead for JRBs, it should be prepared to use its training academy to assist in training JRB caseworkers. Moreover, CSSD may also be used as a resource to train JRB staff. These are already in existence and can be easily coordinated to train JRB staff. Certain training topics, such as BARJ ideology and use of the MAYSI-2, lend themselves to statewide training delivery while others, such as addressing issues of local interagency conflicts, would be best provided on a local basis.

***B-12. What barriers or challenges are likely to prevent the successful implementation of a tier JRB system in Connecticut?***

The barrier and challenges that can be anticipated include:

- Inadequate funding of case managers /ancillary mental health services throughout system
- Insufficient training of JRB members
- Resistance or lack of participation, primarily due to lack of understanding or turf issues, on the part of law enforcement or the schools
- Over regulation or micro-managing by state level entities rather than permitting control on matters best left to the local programs to resolve

Note: The YSB model that has existed for more than 40 years is being considered for replication, yet during that span of four decades little dedicated funding has ever been granted for case managers and ancillary mental health services for clients. At the same time new juvenile justice and mental health services needs have increased.

***B-13. What innovations might the Department consider to better support the provision of culturally competent care? Please be sure to think about care that is gender specific, and responsive to children's racial, linguistic, spiritual, and sexual orientation identification.***

Providing competent care, is more than just reflective of a person's culture and includes other factors such as gender, spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation as well as consideration of the child's and family's history and the impact of prior or current domestic violence, substance abuse, medical issues, physical or mental disabilities, death or incarceration of a family member, loss of employment, socio-economic status and a myriad of other factors. The JRB must be aware of such issues, know how to spot them where they exist, understand the impact they may have on the child and family and know how to design an appropriate response that will accomplish the desired goal while taking into consideration such factors. This comes from training and experience. DCF could support JRBs in this area by providing periodic and ongoing training of JRB staff on such topics. As has been done to a limited extent already, such training of JRB members does not have to be a separate training program. It can be as simple as inviting a certain number of JRB members to such training programs presented on a regional or statewide basis for existing DCF or CSSD staff. By providing training of JRB members in this way, there are little to no additional costs while there are the significant collateral benefits JRB members get being trained alongside the DCF and CSSD staff members, including strengthening the connections between them. It would also be helpful if appropriate programs and services were made available and accessible to JRBs to address such issues as they arrive. Such programs and services might not be cost effective if left to the local communities to develop, but if they were available on a statewide or regional level, they would be more feasible.

In addition to the training, and having programs and services initially available, it would be very useful if the JRBs could be notified when DCF or CSSD implement a new program or service,

either locally, regionally or statewide, designed to meet certain needs of the population served.

That information would enable JRBs to be current in their knowledge of available programs and services. The LISTS might be one avenue to disseminate such information.

***B-14. Based upon the Department's proposed model concepts and its attending expectations, how should the JRBs be funded (given that the current available dollars will be redistributed, not increased)? This should include a conceptualization of the distribution, any prioritization of tiers or areas, and costs that may be supplemented from other funding sources.***

There may be a fundamental flaw in the Department's concept to the extent it "seeks to create statewide consistency in the development and application of JRBs." One of the features of the YSB JRB model is that, while there is a very basic common concept or framework for a JRB, the programs are built in such a way that they reflect the individualized strengths and needs of the communities they serve. They are also flexible enough to be able to adapt as necessary to the changing needs of the community. A program that works in one community might not work in another. This individualized and dynamic structure, built to meet the needs of the community along with the ability to change as the needs of the community change, is one of the major reasons the YSB JRB model is such a successful model. A program that is successful at one point, but unable to change as needed, may become unsuccessful at a later point. The setting of some very basic minimum concepts and standards, such as CYSA's "Recommended Best Practices Connecticut's Youth Service Bureau Service Delivery Model For Juvenile Review Boards" found at [www.ctyouthservices.org](http://www.ctyouthservices.org) and perhaps some consistent method of data method of operation in the interest of establishing a "statewide consistency in the development and application of JRBs" could very well detract from the success of the current YSB model. For example, the "Core Model Tenets and Objectives" described in the RFI calls for a "management information system and electronic environment that supports efficient and data informed service delivery, quality assurance and fidelity monitoring." In a perfect world, that is a

desirable feature to have but in some unfunded JRB programs, such data might be kept manually on a paper spreadsheet or on a simple Excel spreadsheet because the JRB lacks the funding necessary to purchase or develop a more sophisticated “management information system and electronic environment.” Regarding the proposed “tier structure” of the JRBs, there is a significant gap between Tier 1, which will handle 100-200 cases per year, and Tier 2, which is expected to handle 20-30 cases per year. There are probably several existing JRB programs that handle more than 30 cases per year but less than 100 and they should not fall between the cracks. Also, the availability of DCF funds for “prevention, summer jobs and mediation” would be just as helpful for smaller JRB programs as they would be for larger ones. Funding for such purposes should not be allocated based on the size of the population served; rather consideration should be given to allocating the funds for some purposes based on geographic location. For example, a mediation service available in the Hartford area should be accessible to the JRBs in the adjoining towns of West Hartford and Bloomfield even though the West Hartford and Bloomfield JRBs handle fewer cases. Similarly, a summer jobs program available to the Enfield JRB should also be available to kids handled by the nearby but smaller Granby JRB.

For too long, resources have been provided to the big cities for programs and services because they serve a larger population and the nearby smaller jurisdictions have been ignored. Often the big city programs and services are underutilized and, by making them accessible to the nearby smaller programs, not only do youth in the smaller jurisdictions benefit, but there is a more efficient use of the funding allocated for those programs and services. This is one of the concepts behind the CSSD JRB Pilot Project. One of the components of the project is that the project JRBs are able to access, to the extent that the capacity exists, programs, services and flex funds that were otherwise only available through the court and often went unused. This has broadened

the availability of the programs and services to include JRB involved families at no additional cost and has improved the cost effectiveness of such programs and services. In the interest of “re-distributing existing fund” DCF should review its current JRB contracts to determine:

- If the services originally purchased are in fact needed and being sufficiently utilized;
- If comparable services by a larger number of existing JRBs through the network of YSBs can do the same work for the same level of funding.

***B-15. What innovations might the Department consider to avoid barriers that may arise from funding diversions for a philosophy that utilizes a consensus model and an individualized approach?***

The Department may wish to consider that there have been multiple JRBs in existence since the early 1970’s and that as of this time there are 66 non funded DCF sites in operation without any difficulties using a consensus model and an individualized approach. History is the best predictor of the future, and considering the history of the local JRB in each town that has developed one, there have not been any barriers that have affected the delivery of diversionary services using a consensus model for individualized diversions.

***B-16. What type of trauma informed training should the Department consider? If the training and its curriculum are proprietary, please include any possible costs.***

It is the responsibility of all JRB’s to offer diversionary programming to youth utilizing the best practices available. Trauma informed training is certainly beneficial for all JRB members, and especially for the case manager(s) of each JRB. Free information and links to training are available at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) at <http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/>. Also, the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care (NCTIC) provides training for staff, leaders, consumers, and others to facilitate the implementation of trauma-informed care in a range of service systems, including mental health, substance abuse, criminal justice, victim assistance, peer support, education, primary care, domestic violence,

child welfare, and others. This training may be offered either in brief sessions to diverse meeting/conference audiences or over several hours or days to specific programs or agencies.

The NCTIC also provides technical assistance and consultation to support systems and programs that are committed to implementing trauma-informed approaches to service delivery. Technical assistance may help identify and implement some of the following steps that programs, agencies, or institutions can take to begin the transformation to a trauma-informed environment:

- Adopt a TIC organizational mission and commit resources to support it
- Update policies and procedures to reflect new mission
- Conduct universal trauma screening for all consumers and survivors
- Incorporate values and approaches focused on safety and prevention for consumers, survivors, and staff
- Create strengths-based environments and practices that allow for consumer and survivor empowerment
- Provide ongoing staff training and education in trauma-informed care
- Improve and target staff hiring practices

The Department may wish to contact the NCTIC to do its own due diligence regarding any costs related to trauma informed care, as it is not known to what extent the Department will want to provide training in terms of numbers of JRBs, members, and caseworkers, etc. as well as duration and frequency of said trainings. For more information about training and technical assistance contact NCTIC at [NCTIC@NASMHPD.org](mailto:NCTIC@NASMHPD.org) or call 866-254-4819. To the extent that DCF and CSSD provides such training to its staff, permitting JRB members to sit in on workshops, would enable such training to be provided without added costs.

***B-17. What outcome measures might the Department consider to support effective diversion?***

The Connecticut Department of Education has conducted extensive work with CYSA and Charter Oak Group to develop RBA standards and practices to track data and conduct surveys to help measure outcomes of services provided within all YSB programs. Through CSSD, a data partnership with SDE and Charter Oak Group, a pilot initiative is currently underway involving five YSBs in three Connecticut Juvenile Court Districts. This pilot project is also engaged in an RBA data tracking process that measures outcomes. To that end, page 14 of the RFI, calls for a data reporting system. The current JRB Pilot project being partnered by CSSD and SDE does in fact track a number of elements that include: demographics, successful or unsuccessful diversions, referral sources.

Note: Attachment #3 is the demographic data collection tool being used by SDE and CSSD to track JRB cases as part of the pilot project involving the following YSBs: AHM, New Britain, Southington, East Hartford and Rocky Hill. Attachment #4 is a survey that is being used for the JRB pilot project as well. Both tools are used as part of the RBA initiative involving all YSBs across Connecticut. These RBA tools were developed by SDE, the Charter Oak Group and CYSA.

***B-18. How might the Department partner with other providers or agencies, in ensuring the effectiveness and quality of JRBS?***

By working directly with CYSA, SDE and the community of YSBs across Connecticut at the present time DCF would immediately reach approximately 142 towns and cities if funding were available to support existing YSB led Juvenile Review Boards. Additionally with nearly all of the LISTs being led by YSBs there would be in place a parallel track of community support for Juvenile Review Boards.

DCF is relatively new to the concept of local, community –based JRB programs and the services they provide. Members of CYSA on the other hand have been successfully operating such programs and providing such services for over forty years. Therefore it would make sense for DCF to partner

with CYSA in an effort to expand the reach of JRBs to the communities not currently served by the YSB model JRB.

CYSA brings to the table not only this tremendous amount of experience with establishing and operating JRBs, but it also brings existing, long standing relationships with Court Support Services Division, the State Department of Education, the Division of Criminal Justice, local Boards of Education, local law enforcement agencies and a network of community-based Youth Service Bureaus and other local service providers.

At this point, CYSA and its partners stand ready to collaborate with DCF to expand the YSB model JRB to benefit families across the State of Connecticut.

***B-19. Would the inclusion of a JRB advisory committee be useful? Please detail the potential benefits, and set forth how it could work in partnership with the existing CYSA Juvenile Review Board Committee.***

If the “JRB advisory committee” consisted of persons familiar with issues related to the establishment and operation of JRBs and they were available to present training, advice and technical assistance to existing and startup JRBs, then yes, such an entity would be very useful. This is essentially what the current CYSA JRB Advisory Committee does now. The committee, which consists of one or more YSB staff members with considerable JRB experience and the Supervisory Assistant State’s Attorney who is responsible for juvenile matters from the Chief State’s Attorney’s Office does now. The committee has a proven and effective 90 minute presentation which groups consisting of YSB staff, police, schools, probation officers, community providers and other entities interested in establishing a JRB participate in. It covers the basics of how a JRB works, the types of cases handled, the process of handling them and possible dispositional options. It also discusses the various organizational and operational options that exist around the state. The committee currently functions without a budget or any

funding. The time and materials distributed are donated by the committee members' agencies in recognition of the value that JRBs contribute to the community and the juvenile justice system. Through the CYSA website, the Committee provides access to the Best Practices for JRBs as well as sample forms that can be easily adopted by any JRB.

The committee is also available to provide ongoing technical assistance to startup and existing JRBs. Such assistance is often provided through telephone or e-mail contact or, if necessary, members of the group will come out and meet with the people involved with the program to discuss any issues raised.

Members of the committee have also testified at the Legislature and presented at conferences to discuss the concept and benefits of the CYSA model JRB diversion programs.

The committee plans on offering a "Frequently Asked Questions" section to be added to the CYSA website. One can benefit from questions raised by other JRBs. Features like this, as well as other useful information, have made the CYSA website found at <http://www.ctyouthservices.org>, a very useful and valuable resource for existing and start up JRBs, and anyone seeking information about the work of Youth Service Bureaus.

### **C. Other Suggestions**

- 1. Respondents are welcome to include any other recommendations that they think will be helpful to informing the redesign of Connecticut's Juvenile Review Board system.*

The Department may wish to consider that the "redesign of Connecticut's Juvenile Review Board system" is frankly inappropriate with regards to the larger number of unfunded programs by the same name. The YSB JRB model that currently exists, apart from the DCF funded programs that are not part of YSBs, utilize an effective model that does not require redesign. This model has been tooled by the CYSA and has its own best practices, inclusive of RBA

format reporting to the Connecticut General Assembly via the SDE. The Department may wish to meet with representatives from the CYSA, the Supervisor of Juvenile Prosecutors, Francis J. Carino of the Office of the State’s Attorney, Dr. Agnes Quinones from the SDE, and representatives from CSSD involved in the JRB pilot project. In doing so, the Department may then fully realize there is already a functional model for JRBs in existence. This model for the larger body of non-DCF funded JRBs does not need a redesign, instead they need funding to enhance services, provide for additional staff and in turn keep more children and youth from the juvenile justice system. In conclusion, the comments and recommendations included as a response to this RFI by the Connecticut Youth Services Association are representative of the more than 99 member agencies that make up this Association. This representation is approximately 95% of YSBs across CT. The following additional documents include:

Attachment #1 – Youth Service Bureaus by region

Attachment #2 – Cost Analysis Template

Attachment #3 – RBA SDE Data Tracking for the CSSD JRB Pilot Project involving 5 YSBs.

Attachment #4 – RBA SDE JRB Survey

Attachment #5 – Position Paper on Juvenile Review Boards – CYSA

Attachment #6 SDE Connecticut Youth Service Bureaus Report to the General Assembly –

Impact on Referral or Diversion of Children and Youth from the Justice System.

Attachment #7 CYSA JRB Best Practices

Attachment #8 Sample JRB Training - Prepared by Francis Carino, Chief State Attorney Office

Attachment #9-10 – Thesis Papers on JRBs

Name of Respondent: Joel Rosenberg – Christopher Montes	
Affiliation (check one): Foster Parent Youth Service Provider Association Other (specify):	
Agency Name: Connecticut Youth Services Association	Address: PO Box 551 Glastonbury, CT. 06033

Phone: 860-228-9488

Email: Joelr@ahmyouth.org

Respondent's interest in Connecticut's Juvenile Review Board system: CYSA JRB Advisory Committee

**Attachment #1**

**Youth Service Bureaus by CYSA Chapter Regions**

**Eastern Region Youth Service Bureaus – (16 YSBs)**

*Andover/Hebron/Marlborough Youth Services (serving Andover, Columbia, Hebron, Marlborough)*

*Ashford Youth Services Bureau*

*Coventry Youth Services*

*East Hartford Youth Services*

*Ellington Youth Services*

*Enfield Youth Services*

*Glastonbury Youth and Family Services*

*Manchester Youth Services*

*Mansfield Youth Services*

*South Windsor Youth & Family Services*

*Stafford Family Services*

*Tolland Human Services*

*United Services (serving Killingly, Putnam, Thompson, Plainfield, Sterling, Pomfret, Woodstock, Canterbury Brooklyn, Eastford)*

*Vernon Youth Services Bureau*

*Willington Youth Services*

*Windham Youth Services*

**Fairfield County Youth Service Bureaus – (12 YSBs)**

*Bridgeport Youth Services Bureau*

*Fairfield Youth Services*

*Mayor's Youth Service Bureau of Stamford*

*New Canaan Youth Services*

*Norwalk Department of Youth Services*

*Stratford Community Services*

*The Depot (serving Darien)*

*The United Way of Greenwich, Inc.*

*Trumbull Counseling Center*

*Weston Youth Services*

*Westport Department of Human Services*

*Wilton Youth Services*

**Middlesex County Youth Service Bureaus (11 YSBs)**

*Clinton Youth & Family Services*

*Cromwell Youth Services*

*Durham/Middlefield Youth Services (serving Durham, Middlefield)*

*East Haddam Youth Services*

*Middletown Youth Services*

*Old Saybrook Youth & Family Services*

*Portland Youth & Family Services*

*Tri-Town Youth Services, Inc. (serving Essex, Deep River, Chester)*

*Westbrook Youth & Family Services*

*Youth & Family Services of Haddam/Killingworth (serving Haddam, Killingworth)*

*\* East Hampton Youth Services (not a CYSA member)*

**New London Youth Service Bureaus (12 YSBs)**

*Colchester Youth Services*

*East Lyme Youth Services*

*Griswold Youth Services Bureau*

*Ledyard Youth Services*

*Lymes Youth Services (serving Old Lyme, Lyme)*

*Montville Youth Services*

*Norwich Youth & Family Services*

*Office of Youth Affairs (serving New London)*

*Preston Youth Services  
Waterford Youth Service Bureau*

*Stonington Youth & Family Services*

*\*Groton Youth & Family Services (not a CYSA member)*

**North Central Youth Service Bureaus (19 YSBs)**

<i>Avon Youth Services</i>	<i>Berlin Youth Services</i>
<i>Bloomfield Social &amp; Youth Services</i>	<i>Bristol Youth Services</i>
<i>East Granby Youth Services</i>	<i>Farmington Youth Services</i>
<i>Granby Youth Services</i>	<i>Hartford Youth Services</i>
<i>New Britain Youth &amp; Family Services</i>	<i>Newington Youth Services</i>
<i>Plainville Youth Services</i>	<i>Rocky Hill Youth Services</i>
<i>Simsbury Youth Service Bureau</i>	<i>Southington Youth Services</i>
<i>Suffield Youth Services</i>	<i>The Bridge Family Center (serving West Hartford)</i>
<i>Wethersfield Social &amp; Youth Services Department</i>	
<i>Windsor Locks Youth Services</i>	<i>Windsor Youth Service Bureau</i>

**Northwestern Youth Service Bureaus (15 YSBs)**

<i>Canaan Youth Services</i>	<i>Canton Youth Services Bureau</i>
<i>Cheshire Youth and Social Services</i>	<i>Danbury Youth Services</i>
<i>Housatonic Youth Services (serving Canaan [Falls Village], Cornwall, Kent, North Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon)</i>	
<i>Naugatuck Youth Services</i>	<i>New Milford Youth Agency</i>
<i>Newtown Youth Services</i>	<i>Prospect Youth Service Bureau</i>
<i>Ridgefield Youth Services</i>	
<i>Southbury-Middlebury Youth &amp; Family Services (serving Southbury, Middlebury)</i>	
<i>Torrington Area Youth Services (serving Torrington, Harwinton, Burlington)</i>	
<i>Waterbury Youth Service System</i>	
<i>Watertown Youth Services</i>	
<i>Winchester Youth Service Bureau (serving Barkhamsted, Colebrook, Hartland, NewHartford, Norfolk, Winchester)</i>	

**South Central Youth Service Bureaus (16 YSBs)**

<i>Ansonia Youth Service Bureau</i>	<i>Branford Counseling Center</i>
<i>Derby Youth Services</i>	<i>East Haven Youth Services</i>
<i>Guilford Youth &amp; Family Services</i>	<i>Hamden Youth Services</i>
<i>Madison Youth Services</i>	<i>Meriden Youth Services</i>
<i>Milford Youth Services</i>	<i>New Haven Youth Services</i>
<i>North Haven Community Services</i>	<i>Orange Department of Youth Services</i>
<i>Shelton Youth Service Bureau</i>	<i>West Haven Youth &amp; Family Services</i>
<i>Woodbridge Human Services</i>	

*\*Wallingford Youth Social Services (not a CYSA member)*

**Attachment #2 – JRB Cost Analysis Template- prepared by CYSA**



AHM CYSA JRB Cost  
Template.xlsx

**Attachment #3 – RBA SDE Data Tracking for the CSSD JRB Pilot Project involving 5 YSBs.**



Use This- Copy of  
CSDE Annual Data Cc

**Attachment #4 – RBA SDE JRB Survey Attachment #5 – CYSA JRB Position Paper**



JRB Survey.doc



Final 2011 JJPOCC  
Presentation 1-4-2011

**Attachment #6 SDE Connecticut Youth Service Bureaus Report to the General Assembly**



ysb\_annual\_report  
\_2010\_2011.pdf

**Attachment #7 CYSA JRB Best Practices**



CYSAJuvenileReview  
BoardBestPracticesFir

**Attachment #8 JRB Training - Prepared by Francis Carino, Chief State Attorney Office**



New JRB-exp.pdf

**Attachment #9 - #10 Reddick, Eigler, Marchand Thesis Papers on JRBs**



JRB Thesis John  
Reddick.pdf



JRB Study  
Eigler-Marchand.pdf