

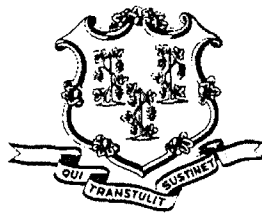
*STATE OF CONNECTICUT*

# **Child Poverty and Prevention Council**

## **2014 Progress Report**

**For submission to the  
Honorable Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor**

**and members of the  
Joint Standing Committees of the General Assembly on  
Appropriations, Children, Education,  
Human Services and Public Health**



Anne Foley, Chair

- c) Develop critical job training and support programs for young parents, including basic education programs, job search and placement initiatives, and child care services

6. HOMELESSNESS:

Keep children out of homeless shelters.

- a) Increase Rental Assistance Program certificates (RAPs) available to families with children, within available appropriations. The Council supports rental assistance programs prioritizing services to populations such as families involved in the child welfare system who are separated or at risk of permanent separation, young adults ages 18-24 who have aged out of the child welfare system and are homeless or at risk of being homeless, families with children with physical and mental health needs, and families with children living below the official poverty level or the alternative poverty level.
- b) Re-open the Security Deposit Guarantee Program.
- c) Continue to implement supportive housing for families with children (funded with \$30 million in bonding during 2011 session and \$1.5 million in 2012).
- d) Align investments of state agencies in family housing between the Departments of Housing, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Social Services, and Children and Families to create pools of funds for housing vouchers, needed support services and creative use of federal funds.
- e) Support the Northeast Hartford Initiative, a newly established national not-for-profit organization based in New York City whose mission is to strengthen communities to end homelessness.

**EDUCATION:**

7. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:

- a) Guarantee Child Care Subsidies: Within available appropriations, allow low-income parents up to 75% of the state median income (instead of the current 50%) to enroll in Care4Kids to reduce poverty, since it would improve the ability of parents to participate in the labor force, while providing safe, developmentally appropriate care for their children. This would need to be phased in over several years due to the cost.

- b) In the short-term, and within available appropriations, increase eligibility to 75% of state median income for minor parents, including the parents of a minor parent in the income calculation. (This would address the small group of teen parents living with their parents, making it more likely that they would attend high school and graduate, and succeed economically.)
- c) Create a “bridge” program, within available appropriations, to cover Care4Kids costs for providers between the time an application is submitted and approved (usually 60 days), to ensure that parents do not lose a job during the wait period.

## 8. YOUTH DROPOUT PREVENTION

Although youth dropout prevention is not one of the Council’s priority recommendations, the Council believes the enforcement and implementation of existing truancy laws is of highest priority and supports efforts to address this issue.

- a) Enforce existing law which requires districts to annually collect and report in the strategic school profiles truancy statistics and actions taken to reduce truancy.
- b) Enforce existing law which requires school districts to: hold meetings with parents of truant students and appropriate school personnel within 10 school days of the child obtaining truant status; refer truant children to community agencies for services; and within 15 calendar days file a Families With Service Needs (FWSN) petition for truant children whose parents do not respond to school outreach efforts. Create new accountability mechanisms and penalties that allow the Department of Education to monitor local board follow-through and enforce compliance.
- c) Ensure compliance with state and federal Child Find laws to identify students with special needs.
- d) Expand from the current ten day window the time frame in which districts must immediately re-enroll students who have dropped out (formally through signing disenrollment forms).
- e) Establish clear guidelines for alternative schools and programs, including a specific definition of what constitutes each type of program, entry and exit processes for students voluntarily or involuntarily placed into an alternative setting, and minimum requirements for curricular offerings and teacher training and credentialing.