The Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) began in 2014 and is a legislatively appointed committee that has oversight of the youth legal system in Connecticut. JJPOC subcommittees work on issues throughout the year and end the year by introducing and voting on legislative recommendations to improve the youth legal system in different ways. One subcommittee, the Community Expertise Workgroup (CEW), was created as a way to partner with children and young people directly impacted by the legal system, specifically families and young people.

What is the CEW?

The goal of CEW is to partner with young people and families that currently are or have been impacted by the youth legal system to inform the ongoing work of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC). The following is a way to commit to that partnership:

1. Public Act 14-217, Section 79 be amended to increase the membership of the JJPOC to include:
   a. Two children/youth/young adults between the ages of 18 and 26 with lived expertise in the juvenile justice system and nominated by the Community Expertise Workgroup
   b. One community member, which could include family members of youth impacted by the juvenile justice system or credible messengers with lived expertise in the justice system and currently working with youth in the juvenile justice system, nominated by the Community Expertise Workgroup

2. The state shall fund sponsor organizations to support members appointed by the Community Expertise Workgroup with transportation, childcare, and stipends to enable member participation.

Compensating the appointed members for their time would align with the current practice of the JJPOC. Current appointed members of the JJPOC are there as part of their professional responsibilities and are compensated for their participation.

What are other examples of this kind of partnership?

- The Juvenile Justice Reform Act led to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) creating a requirement for youth membership in state juvenile justice advisory groups. It states that “at least one-fifth of the members shall be under the age of 28 at the time of initial appointment, and at least three members have been or currently are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile justice system...” The OJJDP has released a sample template of what a membership roster should look like.
- The Coalition for Juvenile Justice recently released a report with guidelines to effectively partner with young people and communities. The full report can be found here, Youth Partnership: A Call to Action for State Advisory Groups.