

Annual Report

2022

Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity



The Commission on
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

CWCSEO
Connecticut General Assembly

Mission

To inform and engage all policy makers about constituent needs for women, children and their families, seniors, and the African American, Asian Pacific-American, Latino and Puerto Rican populations in Connecticut. We are a nonpartisan agency with a data driven, cross-cultural approach to policy innovation. We work to eliminate disparities by identifying opportunities, building connections and promoting change.



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Letter from the Co-Chairs

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

On behalf of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWCSEO), we are pleased to present our 2022 Annual Report, as required by Sec. 2-127 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The CWCSEO is a non-partisan agency within the legislative branch of the State of Connecticut, dedicated to eliminating disparities by identifying opportunities, building connections, and promoting equity.

While there were numerous public events this year, the ones described herein represent the most significant in terms of impact and alignment with our mission. These activities showcase our ongoing commitment to fostering inclusion and driving policy innovation.

The Commission staff serves the legislature and the people of the state by promoting best practices and driving sound public policy. Our advisors provide feedback via sub-commission chairs to the Executive Board and Executive Director, shaping legislative priorities and action steps.

This year marked significant advancements for the CWCSEO. Our commitment to data-driven research and a cross-cultural approach to policy innovation was prominently featured during the Advancing Racial Equity Symposium on September 8, 2022. This cornerstone event brought together state and national experts to discuss the implications of Racial and Ethnic Impact Statements in Connecticut.

In response to an uptick in workplace harassment based on national origin, we collaborated with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities to strengthen our commitment to creating nondiscriminatory environments across workplaces.

Legislatively, we achieved a milestone with the enactment of a comprehensive K-12 curriculum that includes studies on Native American, Asian American, African American, and Latino Puerto Rican cultures. This significant legislative victory underscores our ongoing efforts to foster inclusivity in Connecticut's educational frameworks.

Our outreach extended beyond legislative achievements. We actively engaged the public through various forums, including the Getting it Right: Cannabis Implementation Policy Virtual Forum and the Anti-Bullying and School Climate Forum, providing valuable insights and fostering community dialogues.

In December, we celebrated the Parent Leadership Graduation of our Parent Leadership Training Institute. The program, founded on respect and validation, empowers parents to become active participants in their communities, understanding public systems and decision-making processes in public policy and budget domains.

As we reflect on a productive year, we are grateful for your support, which has been crucial in advancing our mission to serve the underrepresented and vulnerable groups in our community. We remain committed to our collaborative efforts and look forward to another year of meaningful impact.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, enclosed in a thin blue rectangular border. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Alan Tan'.

Alan Tan CWCSEO Co-Chair

Karen Jarmoc

Karen Jarmoc CWCSEO Co-Chair

Commission Mandate

Section 2-128. Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity.

The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall:

1. Focus its efforts on the following quality of life desired results for women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state: That all such [members] persons are (A) healthy, safe and achieve educational success; (B) free from poverty; and (C) free from discrimination;
2. [Make] With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster progress in achieving the desired results described in subdivision (1) of this subsection. Such recommendations shall, when applicable, include, but need not be limited to: (A) Systems innovations, model policies and practices which embed two-generational practice in program, policy and systems change on the state and local levels, in accordance with section 17b-112l; (B) strategies for reducing family poverty, promoting parent leadership and family civics; (C) the promotion of youth leadership opportunities that keep youth engaged in the community; and (D) strategies and programs that address equitable access, impede bias, and narrow the opportunity gap for women, children and their families, seniors, and members of the African American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state. Such 6 recommendations may include other state and national best practices, and recommendations on federal funding maximization;
3. [Review] With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, review and comment, as necessary, on any specific proposed state legislation or recommendations that may affect women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General Assembly;

4. [Advise] With the advice of the executive committee of the commission, advise the General Assembly concerning the coordination and administration of state programs that affect [families]women, children and their families, seniors, and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state;
5. Gather and maintain, as necessary, current information regarding women, children and their families, seniors, and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state that can be used to better understand the status, condition, and contributions of such [populations] groups. Such information, as appropriate and pertinent to the desired results delineated in subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall be included in the annual report submitted in accordance with subsection (b) of this section and shall be made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request;
6. Maintain liaisons between women, children and their families, seniors, and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state and government agencies, including the General Assembly; and
7. Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise awareness of and address critical issues for women, children and their families, seniors, and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state.

Commission Board Members

Alan Tan, Co-Chair
Karen Jarmoc, Co-Chair
Joan Barere
Liz Bumgardner
Denise Cesareo
Donna Campbell
Cynthia Dematteis-Cartier
Ada Fenick
Madeline Granato
Jordan Grossman
Nancy Heaton
Tiana Victoria Hercules
Mui Mui Hin-McCormick
Sylvia Ho
Hossain Roman Khondker
Gerard Kerins
Hilda Nieves
Gladys Rivera
Dianne Stone
Ji Tong
Regina Vermont
Kunwar Umesh Vig
Clifton Watson
Tiheba Williams-Bain
Alphonse Wright
Penelope Young

Commission Staff

Steven Hernández, Esq.
Executive Director

Werner Oyanadel
Latino and Puerto Rican Policy Director

Denise Drummond
African American Legislative Policy Analyst

Rosemary López
Women's Legislative Policy Analyst

Megan Baker
Asian Pacific American Legislative Policy Analyst

Thomas Nuccio
Children's Legislative Policy Analyst

Michael Werner
Seniors' Legislative Policy Analyst

Melvette Hill
Director, Parent Leadership and Family Engagement



The Commission on
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity
CWCSEO
Connecticut General Assembly

2022 Commission Fellows, Interns, & Volunteers

Summer 2022 LEE Policy Fellows:

Vivian Dai

Christian Duborg

2022 Yale School of Public Health Fellows

Megan Malloy

Anna Hollowell

Hannah Karabatsos

Sarah Megiel

Interns & Volunteers

Olivia Czachor



The Commission on
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

CWCSEO
Connecticut General Assembly



2022 Legislative Wrap Up Report

The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) aimed at improving and promoting the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the populations that the commission is mandated to represent in the State of Connecticut. Through best practices models and partnerships with local, state, and national organizations, the CWCSEO uses a cross-cultural lens to inform public policy and involve traditionally underserved populations in the legislative process to unite minority communities in the policy arena.



The Commission on
Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity

CWCSEO
Connecticut General Assembly

2022 Legislative Wrap Up Report

Children's Mental Health

Two bills, SB 2 (Public Act 22-81) and HB 5001 (Public Act 22-47), emerged from a series of webinars hosted by CWCSEO. Senate Bill 2, "An Act Expanding Preschool and Mental and Behavioral Services For Children," makes a \$30 million investment to expand mobile crisis centers to make them available 24/7. It also creates an equity-based mental health fund. Additionally, this new law also allows for telehealth services expansion, including services from out-of-state professionals, and proposed a study on the effects of social media and mobile phone use on children's mental health. Furthermore, SB 2 sought to expand family care centers, facilitate the hiring of social workers and therapists, and improve the recruitment and retention of healthcare workers. Finally, \$10 million is allocated for mental health services at School-Based Health Centers.

House Bill 5001 (Public Act 22-47), "An Act Concerning Children's Mental Health," increases funding for mental health programs and services, enhancing school-based mental health resources, and promoting comprehensive support systems for children and their families. The new law also addresses the need for integrated care approaches and supports the development of community-based services to ensure that children receive timely and effective treatment. Furthermore, SB 1 (Public Act 22-80) included several measures developed with the assistance of the children's subcommission, including requiring the Department of Education to administer a grant program for 2023 to 2025 to provide funding to school boards to hire additional school mental health specialists and requiring the Department of Children and Families to develop a peer-to-peer mental health support program for students in grades 6 through 12. Finally, the recently approved state budget allocates more than \$100 million to support mental health services, underscoring the state's commitment to addressing this critical issue. This comprehensive funding is expected to significantly bolster the initiatives outlined in SB 2 and HB 5001, ensuring that mental health services are accessible and effective statewide.

AAPI Studies in K-12 Curricula

A part of SB 1 (Public Act 22-80) included measures to include AAPI studies in school curricula. This new law requires local and regional boards of education to include Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies as part of their social studies curriculum starting in the 2025-26 school year. This curriculum is required to cover the history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the state, region, and country, the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in advancing civil rights, the contributions of individual Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander communities to the economic, cultural, and political development of the United States.

Investigating Hate Crimes

SB 217 (Public Act 22-9) was passed to address the investigation of hate crimes. This new law creates a statewide Hate Crimes Investigation Unit. This unit is tasked with preventing and detecting hate crimes, collecting and maintaining data on the prevalence of such crimes, and

providing that data and other assistance to local law enforcement. This law also requires the creation of a standardized system for law enforcement to report hate crimes to the Hate Crimes Investigation Unit as well as best practices and model policies for the investigation of hate crimes and sharing of information between law enforcement and the statewide unit. Finally, the law requires law enforcement agencies to report a hate crime or suspected hate crime to the Hate Crimes Investigation Unit within 14 days of its occurrence.

Supporting Women Returning to Work

SB 407 (Special Act 22-22), An Act Concerning the Development and Implementation of a Post COVID-19 Women's Return to Work Economic Development Plan, was passed to support women's return to the workplace in the aftermath of the pandemic. This law requires the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, in consultation with the Office of Workforce Strategy and regional workforce development boards, to develop and implement a Post-COVID-19 Women's Return to Work Economic Development Plan.

Protections Against Online Dating, Child Grooming, and Domestic Violence

SB 5, An Act Concerning Online Dating Operators, Online Child Grooming and Harassment, Domestic Violence Training and Protections for Victims of Family Violence and Domestic Violence passed and became Public Act 22-82. This law establishes verification requirements prior to the creation of an online dating account, establishes the crime of child grooming, creates a grant program to prevent online abuse, requires domestic violence training for state employees, prohibits discrimination against a victim of family violence, and expands assistance to families and children in homes experiencing domestic violence.

Educator Diversity

In Public Act 22-80 created the minority teacher candidate scholarship program and authorizes up to \$20,00 a year for high school graduates of priority school districts who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program. This law also renames the minority teacher recruitment task force as the task force to diversify the educator workforce and requires the task force to conduct a study.

Suspensions and Expulsions

The children's subcommission participated in suspension and expulsion meetings and contributed to the development of legislative recommendations provided by the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee. Public Act 22-47 allows classroom teachers to request behavior intervention meetings for students exhibiting seriously disruptive behavior or physically harmful behavior. This is one methods that may reduce suspensions and expulsions of students and prevent escalation of inappropriate behaviors.

Equal Access & Opportunity in Education

Public Act 22-80 permits school boards to authorize remote learning for students in kindergarten to 12th grade beginning with the 2024-2025 school year. This law also creates a teacher shortage and retention task force that is required to develop a report with recommendations addressing teacher attrition rates and retention, teacher shortages across subject matter disciplines, impact of retention on school districts and streamlining teacher certification without diminishing standards. Additionally, Public Act 22-47 requires each school district to adopt and implement three new policies or procedures related to truant students and requires the Connecticut State Department of Education to develop a truancy intervention model for students with mental and behavioral health issues.

Gun Violence Prevention and Intervention

The children's subcommission held a public event to hear about the lived experiences of those affected by gun violence. This stressed the importance of the establishment of an office of gun violence intervention in the state of Connecticut.

School Climate

Public Act 22-87 requires the Department of Public Health to administer the Connecticut School Health Survey to students in high schools and requires school personnel to complete training when a student in the school has been the victim of abuse by an adult. The Statewide Social Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative has been an avenue of discussions related to this and many other areas of school climate.

Equitable Tax and Finance

The Fiscal year 23 budget and other laws made a number of tax and revenue changes, some of which include an increase to the property tax credit from \$200 to \$300 and expansion of the number of taxpayers who may claim it, the establishment of a one-time child tax credit rebate for qualifying taxpayers equal to \$250 per child for up to three children, an expansion of the loans eligible for the student loan payment tax credit and allows certain small businesses to exchange the credit for a refund, a decreased the motor vehicle mill rate cap from 45 to 32.46 mills beginning in the 2023 assessment year, and the expansion of the gas tax suspension and allocated additional funding to provide free bus service through November 30, 2022.

Fair Work Week Requirements – Bill Died

HB 5353, An Act Concerning a Fair Work Week Schedule, would've required certain employers to provide advance notice to certain employees of the employees' work schedule. This bill was on the House Calendar but was referred to the Judiciary where it received no action.

Prohibiting Discriminatory Pricing – Bill Died

SB 189, An Act Prohibiting Sex or Gender-Based Differential Pricing for Substantially Similar Goods or Services, would have provided that it shall be a discriminatory practice for a business to charge different prices for substantially similar goods or services if the difference is due to sex or gender identity or expression. This bill had a public hearing but received no further action.

Reproductive Healthcare Access – Bill Died

HB 5261, An Act Increasing Reproductive Healthcare, would have increased access to reproductive healthcare. The bill received no action in committee.

Access to Menstrual Products – Bill Died

HB 5272, An Act Concerning Menstrual Products, would have required the provision of free menstrual products in various settings. The bill received no action in committee.

Sexual Violence in the Workplace Training – Bill Died

HB 5355, An Act Concerning Sexual Violence in the Workplace Posting and Training, would have required postings and training on sexual and domestic violence to employees of state agencies. The bill received no action in committee.

Rent Stabilization Study – Bill Died

SB 293, an act concerning a study of rent stabilization, proposed a study by the Commissioner of Housing on potential rent control policies and their effects. Although the study was not passed, the Commission underscored its importance due to anecdotal complaints about significant rent increases from local landlords. Such increases exacerbate the eviction crisis affecting Connecticut renters.

Excessive Rent Increases Study – Bill Died

SB 300, an act concerning a study of excessive rent increases would have allowed the Commissioner of Housing to study excessive rent increases, including annual complaints to fair rent commissions regarding such hikes. The Commission highlighted severe cases, such as a \$600 increase in one year for a Latino constituent and a substantial rent rise for a young Latino family in Middletown. These instances illustrate the worsening eviction crisis.

2022 Commission Community Engagement

Symposium on Racial and Ethnic Impact Statements

In 2022, the Commission, with support from the Latino and Puerto Rican Sub Commission and a generous grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, organized a significant symposium on racial and ethnic impact statements (REIS) and other racial equity tools in Connecticut. This all-day event was held on Thursday, September 8, 2022, at Goodwin College's Main Campus Auditorium in East Hartford, Connecticut. The symposium focused on Public Act 18-78, passed in 2018, which mandates that, beginning in 2019, the Connecticut General Assembly prepare a REIS for certain bills and amendments upon request by any legislator. Modeled after environmental and fiscal impact statements, a REIS is a predictive report summarizing the effects that legislation may have on minority groups, aimed at informing legislators about potential adverse impacts before new legislation is enacted. The Commission's Executive Director, Steven Hernandez, CWCSEO staff and Brenda Calderon, a CWCSEO Consultant played a key role in making recommendations how the legislature should implement this new requirement, drawing from expert insights in the field. The symposium provided comprehensive recommendations on the procedure for preparing REIS, their content, and the types of bills and amendments they should cover. The event was well-attended by the leadership of the Connecticut General Assembly, several legislators, and key stakeholders, highlighting its importance and the broad interest in racial equity initiatives.



Hispanic Heritage Month Flag Raising Ceremony

On September 17, 2022, the Connecticut General Assembly's Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity, and Opportunity (CWCSEO) celebrated the Chilean community in Connecticut with their first-ever Flag Raising Ceremony. This event, part of Hispanic Heritage Month, was



held at the State Capitol Building in Hartford. Co-sponsored by the Connecticut Black and Puerto Rican Caucus (BPRC), the ceremony featured a folkloric dance presentation and keynote address by the Honorable Mario Artaza, Consul General of Chile. The event was free and open to the public, drawing several dignitaries and community members to honor the rich cultural heritage of the Chilean

community.

Policy Conversation on Systemic Inequalities

This groundbreaking policy-focused conversation delved into how systemic inequalities continue to affect Connecticut's rapidly growing Latino community. The event aimed to foster solutions-based discussions and review policies that could enhance equity and opportunities for Latinos in Connecticut.

Additionally, the event featured an Acknowledgement and Recognition Ceremony for State Representative Juan Candelaria, Deputy Speaker at the Connecticut General Assembly. He was honored for his leadership in immigrant rights, climate equity, and advancing policies that support Connecticut's youth.



Small Business Roundtable Series

The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) convened a Small Business Matters Roundtable Series titled "Trail Blazing Business" on March 31, 2022, in commemoration of Women's History Month. The event spotlighted three local enterprises in Connecticut that are pioneering in their respective



fields. Among the esteemed guests were Vivian Guttman Perez, a partner at HE Energy Solutions in Stratford, CT; Ira Revels, a strategic management consultant specializing in NFT's with over two decades of expertise in art, technology, and digitization.; and Carla Saccento, the Owner/Stylist of Doggie Style Salon in Manchester.

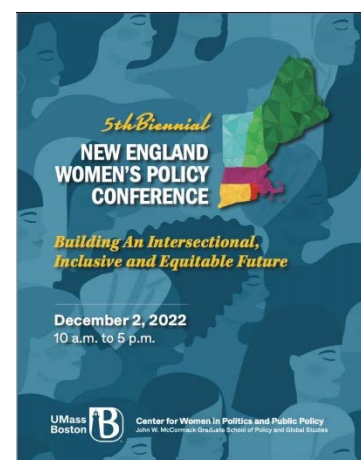
Moving Connecticut Ahead Webinar: Protecting Girls from Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity as part of the CT Coalition to End Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) convened a collaborative effort involving organizations and individuals from diverse sectors to shed light on the issue of FGM/C and its effects on girls and women in Connecticut. This initiative culminated in a webinar titled "Moving Connecticut Ahead : Protecting Girls from Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting," held on September 29, 2022.



New England Women's Policy Conference

Rosemary Lopez, as the Women's Legislative Policy Analyst for the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, played a pivotal role as a steering committee member in organizing the 5th Annual New England Women's Policy Conference: "Building an Intersectional, Inclusive, and Equitable Future." This conference was a cornerstone initiative of the New England Women's Policy Initiative (NEWPI), a nonpartisan endeavor dedicated to advancing the economic security, health, and well-being of women and their families over the long term. Regional partners, including Women's Commissions, Women's Funds, and nonprofit organizations focused on serving women, particularly women of color, from six New England states, co-convened this significant event on December 2, 2022.



Lunar New Year Cultural Celebration & Conversation

This panel discussion, comprised of state government officials and community members, celebrated culture within AAPI communities while also pivoting to a transitional conversation surrounding pertinent issues within these communities – looking onward to the new year and

the prospective possibilities for positive change. Various AAPI community members shared individual experiences about their own celebrations of Lunar New Year, followed by a critical dialogue with the Commission and other members of the legislature surrounding AAPI curriculum and language access.

Yoga In Our City (YIOC) In the Parks Program Summer Kickoff

The Commission partnered with Yoga In Our City and Mental Health CT to host a Yoga event at the Bushnell Park in the City of Hartford in honor of Asian-American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month to kickoff YIOC's summer park yoga program.

AAPI Resource Panel

The Commission hosted a virtual panel highlighting various resources from across the state available to the CT AAPI community.

We Are Here" Display

The Commission set up the "We Are Here" exhibit located at the concourse between the Legislative Office Building (LOB) and the Connecticut State Capitol that highlighted AAPI community activists, legal professionals, educators, and law enforcement personnel from across Connecticut so their stories can be read by the public and shared to celebrate Asian History Month.

Inclusivity in Education Roundtable

The Commission hosted a virtual roundtable on inclusivity in education, where statewide education leaders, community members, and educators engaged in a dialogue surrounding the passage of the AAPI K-12 curriculum, what it means for the trajectory of education in learning spaces across the state, and the overarching importance of ethnic studies.

Regional Summit on Innovation and Inclusion with White House Initiative on Asian American, Native Hawaiians, & Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI)

The Commission co-hosted a regional summit with WHIAANHPI discuss and evaluate what more can be done in the work of inclusion, collaboration, and opportunity.

Anti-Bullying and School Climate Forum

During this forum on August 10, we heard from some of our state's anti-bullying experts who discussed the current state of our anti-bullying law. Following that expert panel, we had a responsive panel with legislators from around the state.

Connecticut Youth Address Gun Violence Forum

This event occurred on February 23 and was a forum for youth to share their lived experiences and reflections on gun violence, as well as the situational and long-term effects of gun violence on their own health and well-being.

Suicide Prevention Month Forum

This forum on September 26 featured subject matter experts who will discuss death by suicide and how individuals, families and communities can come together to address despair. Additionally, the forum included a presentation on data and statistics about death by suicide, with a focus on preventative resources available to those experiencing emotional distress, feeling suicidal, or in need of mental health services. Following our expert panel, we will hear reflections from state and local leaders

Courage to Speak Roundtable

During this forum on April 28, we heard firsthand lived experiences of families who have been affected by drug related issues.

2022 Parent Leadership and Engagement

Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

In 1992, focused on prevention and capacity building, the Commission on Children (predecessor to the CWCSEO) created The Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) as a statewide family civics initiative. PLTI enables parents and other caring adults to become leading advocates for children. The CWCSEO continues to support and lead PLTI in the State of Connecticut.

PLTI is the premier leadership training initiative for parent leaders in Connecticut. Through PLTI, parents who wish to improve the lifelong health, safety and learning of children become practiced change agents for the next generation. Communities sponsor the 20-week program in which parents complete a community civic project and accrue college credit for the program through Charter Oak State College. Each PLTI alumni class mentors the next, creating a ripple effect of community caring and a developing coalition of parent leaders. The program is evidence-based and program evaluation is done by parents weekly. Additionally, parents complete a pre- and post-survey.

The Children's Leadership Training Institute (CLTI) is a parallel course to the Parent Leadership Training Institute. Following the profile of PLTI, it is organized into the two sections: Phase I – Developing Community and Phase II – Democracy and civic skills. CLTI was an idea that emerged at a PLTI graduation. It was there that the children's pride in both their parents' accomplishments and their own became visible. This challenged us to develop a parallel childcare component that includes parallel content. It is an organic bridge for parents and children who would now share the course experience.

CLTI uses literacy as a base and creates a full spectrum of activities that parallel the PLTI course and encompass the multiple intelligences.

There were 7 cohorts of PLTI in 2021-2022 hosted by the following PLTI communities: Bridgeport, Danbury, Middletown, Naugatuck, Norwalk, Stamford, West Hartford. The pre-post survey showed that PLTI served a diverse group of parents. By the end of the program, parents reported engaging at a higher rate in a range of civic behaviors. In addition to changes in civic attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors, the majority of parents reported that as a direct result of PLTI, they had thought about or taken steps to make changes in their personal lives, such as furthering their education, changing/advancing their careers, and making changes in their emotional, social, or physical health. Furthermore, parents reported that they had positive experiences in the program, as evidenced by high ratings when asked about perceived sense of community, opportunities for leadership, peer connection, and likelihood to recommend PLTI to a friend.

2022 Two Generational Initiative

Connecticut's [2Gen Initiative](#), structured as an advisory board with policy work groups, represents a diverse collaborative of executive, legislative, and judicial branch leaders, nonprofit and private sector partners, and parent leaders. Despite the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic and departure of 2Gen coordinator in 2021, the 2Gen Initiative advanced work in key areas. In late July 2022, an interim 2Gen Coordinator was hired.

Recognizing the changed economy and importance of re-evaluating the direction of 2Gen to fully support families, 2Gen conducted a landscape analysis of existing 2Gen work and facilitated an iterative consensus-building process to determine the priorities for 2023 and beyond. The results of that process are highlighted in the final section of this document. Below are the pertinent updates from 2022 as well as recommendations from the 2Gen Advisory Board.

Parent Engagement

In summer of 2022, the number of active parents on the 2Gen Advisory Board decreased from 9 to 6. As required by C.G.S. [Sec. 17b-112l](#), one-fourth of the members of the 2Gen Advisory Board must be parent leaders with lived experience of poverty. As a result, the 2Gen Parent Engagement Workgroup co-chairs and 2Gen staff recruited 8 additional parents to expand parent voice on the Advisory Board beyond the required proportion. One parent has completed onboarding and 7 additional parents will be onboarded before January 2023. This will bring the total number of active parents up to 15. All parents received or will receive training on the 2Gen Initiative, state government, and legislative process, and will participate as equal members in high-level policy discussions. All parents are compensated for their time and expertise.

Over the past 8 years, the Connecticut 2Gen Initiative has established a framework and infrastructure for parent engagement in state government. In addition to previous advising work on the creation of the Parent Cabinet for the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), 2Gen parents are working with the Connecticut Office of the Treasurer to establish a potential parent advisory board for CT Baby Bonds and will assist in creating the Resident Advisory Board for the [Preschool through 20 Workforce Information Network \(P20WIN\)](#).

The 2Gen Parent Engagement Workgroup presented the 2Gen model of parent engagement to the University of Georgia's 2Gen Academy in October 2022. This Academy was attended by administrative leaders in Georgia who were interested in learning from Connecticut about integrating parent voices into their operations. 2Gen is formalizing parent engagement work into a larger framework that promotes coordination of parent engagement initiatives across the state and develops plans for parents to advance to roles of mentors and consultants and obtain career advancement opportunities. This will be led by a parent consultant paid for with combined funding from the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and 2Gen. Details of this ongoing work are in the Goals and Outcomes for 2023-24 section below.

Coalitions and Partnerships

The CWCSEO serves or leads on the following coalitions:

- Coalition for Choice
- Healthy Youth Connecticut
- Family Law Working Group
- Maternal and Child Health Coalition
- Campaign for Paid Family Leave
- Secretary of State Civic Health Advisory Group
- Safe Havens Working Group
- Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance
- Commission on the Standardization of the
- Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations
 - Trafficking in Persons Council
- Commission for Child Support Guidelines
- Governor's Sexual Assault Kit Working Group
- Long-Term Care Advisory Council
- Council on Medicaid Assistance Program Oversight
- Task Force on Senior Centers
- Hospital Merger Watch Coalition
- Legislature's Task Force to Study School Climate
- Children's Behavioral Health Plan Implementation Advisory Board
- MTR Policy Oversight Committee
- Legislature's Minority Teacher Recruitment Task Force
- Legislature's Achievement Gap Task Force
- LGBT Aging Advocacy

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