

The Council is grounded in prevention and works to ensure justice by building equitable and effective opportunities for children, youth and families to thrive in Vermont.

**Council for Equitable Youth Justice  
Special Meeting Notes February 1, 2024, 12:00 – 12:30 p.m.**

**Members present:** Kreig Pinkham, Linda Johnson, Katherine O’Day, Donn Hutchins, Christopher Lukasik, Sparks, Amy Davenport, Karen Vastine

**Members Missing:** Mercedes Avila, Kirsten Kersey, Julia Brand, Matt Wolf, Stuart Berry, Mike Loner, Laurey Burris

**Partners Present:** Elizabeth Morris

**H. 645 An act relating to the expansion of approaches to restorative justice**

- Most recent draft: [H.645~Ben Novogroski~H.645 Draft No. 1.2~1-26-2024.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)
- Recommendation: Inclusion of RJ in the curriculum at the Police Academy

**Salient Comments:**

- The current draft of h.645 bill does not cover this topic of including RJ in the Police Academy.
- A full 8-hours training is what the SI funded the Burlington Community Justice and Marc Wenneberg to fund, but we’d probably start with 2-3 hours instead.
- Should there be some kind of youth specific focus to this, given the brain development and research that shows that youth are particularly benefited by restorative justice?
- Are there any outcomes regarding the training?
- Just a quick observation about the value of recruiting law enforcement representation -. We should have perspective on how this training would fit into the schedule and fit with the other demands on trainees.
- If we ask for this, how do we ensure that it’s legitimate enough, how do we ensure that there’s some accountability?
- The recommendation would be not just that it be included in the training at the police academy, but also the certification. Would that address/cut across the concerns that have been raised?
- In the language that we propose, I’d strongly encourage us to use the word accountability.
- Marc Wenneberg was in charge of the training that the SI committee funded, and did some unsuccessful reach out to the academy at that time. There is already legislation that outlines the bare minimum of police academy training, and this would be added to that list.
- Given a lack of consensus, while we saw this as an opportunity to put a potential stamp on restorative justice, it may not be a recommendation for the Council to make.
- In the mental health field, you aren’t charging for the time spent, you’re charging for the outcomes that you achieved. Concerns about making it a law and not requiring an outcome along with it - what is it that we’re looking for? More kids that are completing or going to restorative justice?
- Having this included in the police academy also gives a way to effectively say that restorative justice is a valid outcome and legitimize it. If restorative justice was already at that point, our diversion rates would be much higher.
- General consensus was not achieved, so a vote was not taken.

**CJJ Annual Conference discussion was delayed to the normal February meeting since early registration was extended to March 1<sup>st</sup>.**