

Christopher Gilson

From: charles.schoenfeld@adamsknight.com
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 10:55 AM
To: 119K
Subject: Testimony submitted via 119Kcommission.org

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Testimony submitted via 119Kcommission.org

Message from: Shelly McNulty

Organization: Connecticut Behavioral Health

Title: Director-Clinical/In Home Serv

Email: smcnulty.cbh@gmail.com

City/State: Cheshire, CT

Areas of Interest: Absenteeism, Child Welfare, Education

Groups of Interest: Youth Ages 14-17, Youth Ages 18-26, At-Risk, Moderately Disconnected, Severely Disconnected

Subject: School Avoidance/Refusal

Message:

I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has worked with at-risk youth for over 30 years. I have been a School Social Worker, DCF Social Worker, and Director of Special Education. I am currently the Director of the School Avoidance Program run through CBH and find one of the biggest challenges is supporting the students who are 16 years or older who are short credits to graduate and therefore drop out. We need to build different opportunities for these young adults to engage and participate in a program that is achievable so they can feel the same pride successful high school students feel.

I hate the terms school avoidance and school refusal as it has a negative tone for the students who are impacted. On a Macro level, I am finding one of the biggest challenges is the administration of school districts understanding the flexibility they may have in creating opportunities for obtaining credits toward graduation and credit recovery for classes students partially attended. On a Micro level - many programs have been developed to support these students/families, however, one of the biggest obstacles is the ability for someone to be in the home in the morning to motivate the student, and then for transportation to be available to get the student to school if they have missed the bus and parents have left for work. I am proud to say that the program I run provides both of these supports. I would love to participate and become part of the commission. Please feel free to contact me at smcnulty.cbh@gmail.com or 203-376-3537. Looking forward to attending tomorrow evenings event.

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