

2020 Annual Report

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WOMEN & GIRLS



**Full Council and
Subcommittee Summary
Year 2020**



**Governor’s Council on Women & Girls
2020 Annual Summary Report**

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Purpose of Report:

This report is designed to discuss and summarize the meetings conducted by the Governor's Council on Women and Girls ("CoWaG") or ("Council"). This report will highlight topics discussed in full council and subcommittee meetings. The meetings aim to aid and bring light to issues women face in the state of Connecticut, with the CoWaG finding solutions for said issues.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many issues and topics were highlighted that impact many women and girls across the state. The main topics discussed in 2020, revolve around the impacts of the pandemic on women and minority owned businesses, the importance of providing women more opportunities for work and development, the need to prioritize health support/aid for women, and an acknowledgment on the lack of diversity in companies and agencies.

Subcommittees were:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity subcommittee
 - The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify financial barriers that disproportionately hinder women and girls, including (but not limited to) pay and work environment disparities that inhibit fair performance evaluation and advancement in the workplace.
- ❖ Education & STEAM subcommittee
 - The purpose of this subcommittee is to encourage educational advancement for women and girls, particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math.
- ❖ Health & Safety subcommittee
 - The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify health and safety issues that particularly impact women and girls and develop initiatives that support healthy lifestyles and offer physical, mental and emotional protection for women and girls affected by such matters.
- ❖ Leadership subcommittee
 - The purpose of this subcommittee is to promote women leadership in both the public and private sectors, particularly government elected and appointed officials, corporate boards and executive management, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and the media with the ultimate goal of achieving gender parity such that gender in workforce leadership proportionately represents the Connecticut population.

Summary of Full Council Meeting:

In 2020, the Full Council met on January 14, March 3, May 12 (which was later cancelled), June 3, July 7, September 15, and November 10 (total seven meetings). Those meetings consisted of special presentations, as well as a collection of reports from the subcommittees and what they had accomplished since prior meetings. For detailed information beyond the summaries below, please view the actual meeting minutes.

A. January 14, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Discussed the Council's goals for the new year. Acknowledged Galvanize CT, which had an excellent turnout thanks to partners CT Collective for Women and Girls and the United State of Women. The event included a formal recruitment for the Million Women Mentors Program, a national initiative to get more girls involved in STEM fields. Also discussed Census 2020. Starting March 15th, postcards will be sent to residents to complete the census online. With the Corporate Leadership Circle, it was noted that there will be a large press event during the Women and Girls' Day at the Capitol on March 6th.

It was noted that there are seven legislative items/administrative priorities that the Council is planning to endorse/request support for (see Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.) The acknowledgement of legislation submitted for Social and Emotional Learning in schools was discussed, along with the existence of a collaborative exploring relevant policies.

Subcommittees reported:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – Financial Literacy working group is in the middle of developing a website to house and link resources; Comptroller's Office working on next steps for its initiatives (see Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.)
- ❖ Education & STEAM – the four working groups within the subcommittee were addressed: 1) Lt. Governor Coding Challenge; 2) Information Hub; 3) Internship Development; and 4) Strengthening Arts Infrastructure.
- ❖ Health & Safety – Members have participated in various forums, meetings and panels to lift up the focus of the Subcommittee and get feedback on related issues that impact the Subcommittee; noted involvement/participation in the Galvanize CT Event
- ❖ Leadership – Discussed goal to help companies invest and understand the importance of diversity; events regarding Women and Girl's Day was discussed, along with the intentions of sending invitations to schools for student participation; the research report on gender and racial diversity on State boards and commissions was said to be released in the coming days; the report on women candidates in CT in the last 50 years was reported to be released (see Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.)

The Attorney General's Office noted how the office continues to push back on federal initiatives that are negatively targeting and impacting women.

B. March 3, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Updates were offered for (1) applicable legislative committees and any known public hearing dates and JF deadlines; (2) supportive testimony from Council leadership that had been and/or was planned to be submitted; and (3) any known press conference information. Council discussed a bill (SB 13), which could impact women and girls. Updates on SDE Implementation Plan was provided (see Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details).

Subcommittees reported:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity - updates provided (see Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity subcommittee meeting minutes below).
- ❖ Education & STEAM - updates provided (see Education & STEAM subcommittee meeting minutes below).
- ❖ Health & Safety - updates provided (see Health & Safety subcommittee meeting minutes below).
- ❖ Leadership –updates provided (see Leadership subcommittee meeting minutes).

C. May 12, 2020

The May 12th meeting was cancelled.

D. June 3, 2020 ([minutes](#))

With the events of COVID-19, the Subcommittee reports consisted of the Council goals and objectives while also briefly describing some of the Council's work in responding to COVID-19.

Subcommittees reported:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – impact of pandemic on women-owned businesses has been disproportionate; connections and resources are being provided to help sustain their businesses; subcommittee is close to launching the Financial Literacy website and are resolving some administrative issues; looking at increasing state employee testing; next phases of the pay equity study are being investigated.
- ❖ Education & STEAM – acknowledge launch of Lt. Governor's Coding Challenge; discussed intentions to expand and enlarge the coding challenge, along with the importance of analyzing participation data.
- ❖ Health & Safety – discussed Tele-Town Hall regarding childcare; federal childcare bailout bill, and complications being faced regarding open and closed childcare programs as the

state reopens; and updates on women's services, applications for federal grants, and participation with work groups.

- ❖ Leadership – discussed various initiatives to promote gender diversity and state procurement practices and opportunities for a diverse roster of vendors; Office of the Treasurer is working on communicating to businesses the business case for gender and racial diversity; an additional Paradigm for Parity signatory was announced.

Other Agency Updates consisted of:

- ❖ More details regarding the Financial Literacy website.
- ❖ Updates on DOH's support for the housing and community development leadership institute that hosted a table at Women and Girls' Day at the Capitol (for more information regarding DOH's work see Full Council Meeting Minutes).
- ❖ A survey to identify women and minority owned businesses is being worked on to help reach companies about available economic assistance.

E. July 7, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Subcommittees provided follow up reports and announcements regarding the reopening of more institutions such as schools:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – the Council intends to remain a resource to answer questions for women-owned businesses; the launch of the Financial Literacy website was introduced and described.
- ❖ Education & STEAM – presentation summarizing the launch of the coding challenge, entries, results' statistics, and opportunities for improvement with participation from girls and underserved communities; a note of potentially working with Girl scouts of CT and YWCA in the future was acknowledged.
- ❖ Health & Safety –discussed collaboration on addressing social and emotional learning in schools; further discussion addressed how COVID-19 shaped their work.
- ❖ Leadership – discussed how to refocus work considering lessons learned by current challenges; formation of work groups are considered to address racial and gender disparities on boards and commissions, leaders and first responders during COVID 19, Aspiring Leaders online platform with expansion of programming and development opportunities, overall employee development and training, and assessing ways in which state agencies set hiring goals.

Further discussion on potential to address students' social, emotional, and mental health needs.

F. September 15, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Members viewed a presentation from Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Authority.

Subcommittees reported:

- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – continuation of partnering with UCONN on the next phase of the equity workforce analysis to help focus on how dependents affect women vs. men; HEDCO and Bridge Loan program funding; work on creating adequate and affordable childcare programs; presentation of results from SOTS voluntary surveys; launch of CT One Stop Business was announced; notes regarding CARES Act funding and deployment of dollars to assist workers who were relocated.
- ❖ Education & STEAM – internship committee continues to work towards their goal of creating an internship toolkit; updates regarding the Coding Challenge; plans to partner with Girl Scouts to create special content to attract more females and reach underrepresented populations; creation of a hub that can be accessed by a variety of stakeholders for things related to computer science was shared.
- ❖ Health & Safety – discussed potential legislative proposals; further discussions regarding reopen efforts were acknowledged along with other issues; discussion regarding creation of a one stop shop of resources from Subcommittee agencies. See Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.
- ❖ Leadership – announcement of Hispanic Female Leadership Panel highlighting elected Latina leaders around the state; a draft diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) framework was created; a glossary of standard terms was assembled to help facilitate DEI conversations with the workforce; Diversifying Representation on State Boards and Commissions was further discussed and elaborated; preparation for eligible retirement of state employees; looking into the State’s Affirmative Action Plan framework to evaluate the data being used.

Latina Leadership Forums were also discussed.

G. November 10, 2020 ([minutes](#))

For the last Full Council meeting of the year, members reflected on the year’s work. Reports from Council Leadership were presented, along with the following Subcommittee reports:

- ❖ Council Leadership - legislative proposals previously endorsed will be re-endorsed in the upcoming session and briefly summarizes them; memorialization of the commitment to achieving gender and racial diversity, create more marketing and outreach for a more diverse pool of candidates, and improve the data system in communicating with the public.
- ❖ Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity – two DECD programs with CARES Act Funding were described; updates on what the financial literacy group discussed was shared; Department of Housing is working on a draft of application, program, and fact sheet. For more information, see Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.

- ❖ Education & STEAM – updates regarding the work for Lt. Governor Coding Challenge group, Information HUB Group, Arts group, and Internships group were provided. See Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.
- ❖ Health & Safety – presentation discussing subcommittee’s goal of connecting with women in the community and providing useful resources. See Full Council Meeting Attachment 1.
- ❖ Leadership – Affirmative Action Review and Recruitment Strategy Group are working on enhancing the data used for their goals; updates regarding the Cultural Competency Employee Development and Training Group’s work and process was provided. See Full Council Meeting Minutes for more details.

Summary of Economic Opportunity & Workforce Equity Subcommittee Meetings:

The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify financial barriers that disproportionately hinder women and girls, including (but not limited to) pay and work environment disparities that inhibit fair performance evaluation and advancement in the workplace.

This portion of the report summary summarizes the meeting minutes of the Economic Opportunity and Workforce Equity Subcommittee. In 2020, the Subcommittee met on February 11, April 8 (which was later cancelled), June 10, August 13, October 14, and December 9 (total six meetings). For detailed information beyond the summaries below, please view the actual meeting minutes.

A. February 11, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Items that the Council intends to endorse are identified and legislation is described. A few bills and submissions were in accordance with issues regarding women and girls (for detailed information, please view the subcommittee's meeting minutes). The Health and Safety Subcommittee was then acknowledged for providing two proposals: 1) Pay equity for Midwives and Doulas, and 2) Social and Emotional Learning in schools. The subcommittee moved on to discuss updates on the Women and Girls' Day at the Capitol, consisting of the location for fairs, press conferences, morning programming, and luncheon leadership panel. The subcommittee broke out into three groups: Workforce equity, Financial Literacy, and Economic Development and Resources; their reports can be found in the Subcommittee's meeting minutes.

B. April 8, 2020 (cancelled)

No meeting minutes.

C. June 10, 2020 ([minutes](#))

This subcommittee was conducted via teleconference. PFML Roundtable Discussions consisted of discussions regarding paid family and medical leave; Comptroller's Office discussed a "new hire" equity report and impacts of long-term career advancement; Women Owned Business Resources available to help women-owned businesses understand the available resources being provided to them such as Capitol Programs; Department of Housing discussed homeowner's relief and family help (especially single moms); and Financial Literacy working group consisted of the status of the website and the anticipated launch date. The subcommittee continued to discuss the efforts of addressing access to affordable healthcare and aid to states to support childcare programs. For a more detailed description, please view subcommittee meeting minutes.

D. August 13, 2020 (minutes unavailable)

Based on the agenda, the Subcommittee provided updates regarding the status of their work since their last meeting consisting of 2021 Legislative Recommendations, Comptroller's Office Updates, DECD Updates, Department of Housing update, and Office of Health Strategy Update.

E. October 14, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Acknowledgement regarding Hispanic Heritage Month. The Subcommittee meeting consisted of status reports on their work: It was noted that the Council will endorse several pieces of legislation that were raised through the Subcommittee and others. With the help of financial assistance through State and Federal resources, women and minority owned businesses were able to stay afloat through the pandemic. The Comptroller's Office report is still on target for completion by the end of the 2020 year as planned. Reports that Leadership Academy applications will be available in November (with the due date being in December). The Subcommittee continues to evaluate different ways to approach and reach women and girls with information regarding the financial literacy website; and the subcommittee continues to be a resource for women-owned businesses and continues to be available to partner with the Steering Committee.

F. December 9, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Acknowledgement of legislations proposed from the Subcommittee and later endorsed by the full Council. Highlighted the Subcommittee's work throughout the year. PFML updated on contributions to paid leave trust fund, build claims administration process, resistance of calls for paid leave to be postponed, and educating small businesses. Updates from the Comptroller's Office (consisting of two reports – initial equity report and evaluating where the State will be in 10 years). It is encouraged that women get involved in fields where they are underrepresented (with acknowledgement of Lt. Governor's Computing Challenge and Million Women Mentors). The Department of Housing provided a report on the Leadership Institute (see Attachment 2 from the Subcommittee's meeting minutes). DECD provided updates and conflicts faced (consisted of the CT CARES Small Business Grant Program and Small Business Impact Study). Updates on Financial Literacy was provided. It should be noted that technical difficulties arose where detailed updates for the Financial Literacy workgroup were unable to be provided. For detailed descriptions on updated matters, please see meeting minutes.

Summary of Education & STEAM Subcommittee Meetings:

The purpose of this subcommittee is to encourage educational advancement for women and girls, particularly in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts and math.

This portion of the report summary summarizes the meeting minutes of the Education and STEAM Subcommittee. In 2020, the Subcommittee met on February 11, April 8 (which was later cancelled), June 17, August 12, October 14, and December 15 (total six meetings). For detailed information beyond the summaries below, please view the actual meeting minutes.

A. February 11, 2020 ([minutes](#))

The meeting consisted of reports on the upcoming Women and Girls' Day at the Capitol with positive feedback from target audience. Announcement of upcoming subcommittee meeting dates were announced. The members of the subcommittee divided into four working groups (Internship, Arts, Coding Challenge and Tech Champions and Information Hub) to discuss initiatives and plans moving forward.

B. April 8, 2020 (cancelled)

No meeting minutes.

C. June 17, 2020 (minutes unavailable)

Discussed updates and proposed plans. The Internship Program is responsible with developing a statewide internship tool-kit for agencies. Arts Team focused on strengthening the arts infrastructure across the state and developing a non-traditional model to integrate arts into mainstream education. Information Hub was created to house information on resources, programs, opportunities, and events that can be accessed by students, teachers, schools, and parents. The Lt. Governor's Coding Challenge was created to promote inclusion of girls in technology fields.

D. August 12, 2020 ([minutes](#))

The start of the meeting consisted of announcements regarding new positions, deadline for work stream groups to provide a report, and the announcement of the Committee accepting legislative proposals. The work stream groups provided updates: the Coding Challenge Group reported the success of the first Lt. Governor's Coding Challenge with further suggestions on how to improve the next event; the Information Hub outlined challenges the group faced; the Internship Group reported they had developed a toolkit; and the Arts group were not present and were unable to provide an update. For a detail description on the updates, please view the meeting minutes.

E. October 14, 2020 ([minutes](#))

The subcommittee lead with updates and proposed plans. The Internship group reported that their group developed a table of contents and model of a toolkit for internships; they also acknowledged the work they still must do. The Arts group reported that they planned a fair that highlighted all careers in arts, however, the pandemic has postponed said plans. The group currently plans to have a month-long virtual experience in March. The Coding Challenge group is working on an implementation strategy to kick off the challenge. The Information Hub group provided a report regarding a model for STEM resources (STEM Map), which is an existing framework being used to engage women into STEM fields. For closing announcements and comments, a report on Million Women Mentors was provided with acknowledgement of its relaunch and their Annual Summit. For detailed information regarding the updates and reports, please see meeting minutes.

F. December 15, 2020 ([minutes](#))

For the last meeting of the year, the subcommittee began with acknowledging the success of the Lt. Governor's Coding Challenge. A video created to market the event was shared with the members (this video can be accessed through a link provided in the meeting minutes). The meeting progressed with working group reports, later followed by break-out sessions for said groups. The Information Hub group shared their collaboration with the Governor's Workforce Council in creating the website and their goals to develop the most effective architecture for the hub. It was also mentioned the budget constraints affecting the target date, and the mentioning of "Untapped Potential." The use of interns to assist the committee with the information content was discussed as next steps. The Coding Challenge group reported their upcoming theme for the challenge (Coding for Good) and further elaborated in the how they plan to enforce and structure it. Funding was discussed and knowledgeable contributors were presented (Google and AT&T). The Internship Group is reviewing the current internship toolkit outline and evaluating the needs. Also discussed a partnership to help support the Office of Workforce Strategy and their housing workplace opportunities. The Arts group reported they will be hosting a women and girls in arts series with their goal of having a diverse showcase. The group is working on a consolidated list of organizations that will participate in the event. Detailed information can be provided in the meeting minutes.

Summary of Health & Safety Subcommittee Meetings:

The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify health and safety issues that particularly impact women and girls and develop initiatives that support healthy lifestyles and offer physical, mental and emotional protection for women and girls affected by such matters.

This portion of the report summary summarizes the meeting minutes of the Health and Safety Subcommittee. In 2020, the Subcommittee met on February 3, April 6 (which was later cancelled), June 23, August 3, October 5, and December 7 (total six meetings). For detailed information beyond the summaries below, please view the actual meeting minutes.

A. February 3, 2020 ([minutes](#))

The meeting began with a follow-up on Legislative items from the last meeting in December 2019. Matters regarding the Doulas and Nurse Midwives Proposals were discussed with the proposal submitted to the subcommittee not being moved forward. It was stated that DSS is in the process of developing a bundled payment mechanism that could potentially include nurse midwives and doulas. The Subcommittee members expressed interest in partnering with the DSS on devising the bundled payment structure. Social Emotional Learning was then discussed with the School Climate Advisory Committee working on legislation that will address this topic. The Subcommittee members then expressed the importance of working with partners doing similar works. The tri-chairs had announced the Committee's charge related to triaging questions and that the Subcommittee will continue to address questions on women and girls' health and safety as they come up. The topic for the meeting drifted to the Women and Girls Day at the Capitol and their Health and Wellness Fair Planning, which would include the opportunity for subcommittee members to highlight/display their work. Ideas regarding information topics were listed and further recommended by subcommittee members. For closing updates and announcements: film on Resilience screening, Care for Kids federal grant award, CCADV received a grant award, and a Race and Child health event. For specific details, please view meeting minutes.

B. April 6, 2020 (cancelled)

No meeting minutes.

C. June 23, 2020 ([minutes](#))

The contents of this meeting consisted of two main topics: (1) Statewide Collaborative on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Updates, and (2) impacts of COVID-19 and what it magnified. A presentation on SEL was presented, along with history of SEL work, which started after the State's anti-bullying statute. The SEL Collaborative worked with partners to better understand bullying,

and with the impacts of COVID-19. The importance of social emotional skills was highlighted. Need to support equity in developing the skill set in young children was identified. A discussion followed regarding how COVID-19 impacted organizations and how disparities arose since. Topics that were acknowledged were – healthcare for maternal and child health, disparities in race and ethnicity, disparities in health care outcome impacted by race and ethnicity, balance in overall patient health, importance of alternate contact methods, magnification of individuals with cognitive problems, face mask interfering with medical conditions, testing difficulties, disproportionate impacts on communities of color, patient’s inability to receive time sensitive care, food and formula pain points, and impacts on Behavioral Health Professionals working in the field and their families.

D. August 3, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Discussed legislative proposals, and various other topics such as: diapers being covered under Medicaid, Do-It-Yourself rape kits, changes to the civil commitment system and the PSRB, and the question on if existing statutes provide commissioners broader authority depending on certain circumstances. The discussion of the meeting progressed to CoWaG revisiting issues related to supportive services available to women and girls within schools, childcare, and domestic violence situations, along with equity considerations. It was mentioned that the Subcommittee may have a collaboration with MAPOC subcommittee to find ways to collaborate and reduce duplication of efforts while strengthening advocacy.

E. October 5, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Updates received from the MAPOC subcommittee, on OEC ACE’s Grant, acknowledgement of Breast Awareness Month (October), and legislative proposal discussions. Brief background information was provided on what MAPOC is and its goals. During the pandemic, the Subcommittee focused efforts on prenatal maternity and well-baby care. It worked on changes to CT’s systems and services to better understand the issues impacting this population. It discussed the use of Telehealth, expansion of Medicaid coverage to twelve months, and non-evasive pregnancy testing. The UCONN Workgroup report consisted of a presentation entitled, ‘Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences: Data to Action Grant.’ Facts and information regarding ACEs were provided to Subcommittee and acknowledgement of OEC being one of the grantees. DPH Staff discussed the three components of the CT Early Detection and Prevention Program (CEDPP): (1) Breast and cervical cancer early detection program, (2) Wise Women program, and (3) colorectal screening program. DPH provided information regarding what it provides to women across Connecticut who are low income, uninsured, and/or underinsured. Legislative proposals were discussed. An announcement regarding a report from the National Women’s Law Center and need for nurses was addressed. Suggestion made for CTCADV to do a presentation on what has been learned during the pandemic and how to connect with domestic violence survivors. For detailed information, please view meeting minutes.

F. December 7, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Members discussed their organizations work embarking on to enhance women and girls' health and safety. DMHAS is working on launching the CT Parents Recovering from Opioid Use Disorder (PROUD) grant, which is a 3-year grant from SAMHSA. CT Cares for Workforce Development Program and OEC collaboration with the Women's Business Development Center to provide grants to childcare programs that are in danger of closing. DCF COVID-19 website being visited by over 25,000 unique URLs. CT Women's Consortium stated they will show the film "Push Out – The Criminalization of Black Girls." The Hope Family Justice Center of Greater New Haven provide free wrap-around services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and crimes. YWCA Hartford has a virtual YWLC leadership development program to re-engage female students back into the school system. The Opioid Task Force grant was discussed along with future plans. The meeting diverted to two presentations: one discussing CCADV's work during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the second about the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW). A member of the CT Diaper Bank shared a legislative proposal with the Subcommittee regarding allowing a program to provide diapers through a network of providers. For detailed information, please view the meeting minutes.

Summary of Leadership Subcommittee Meetings:

The purpose of this subcommittee is to promote women leadership in both the public and private sectors, particularly government elected and appointed officials, corporate boards and executive management, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and the media with the ultimate goal of achieving gender parity such that gender in workforce leadership proportionately represents the Connecticut population.

This portion of the report summary summarizes the meeting minutes of the Leadership Subcommittee. In 2020, the Subcommittee met on January 8, February 26, April 8 (which was later cancelled), June 10, August 12, September 14, October 7, and December 9 (total eight meetings). For detailed information beyond the summaries below, please view the actual meeting minutes.

A. January 8, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Updates on initiatives, such as Women and Girls Day at the Capitol, Corporate Governance, and Aspiring Leaders. Women and Girls Day noted what has been done, what is in the process of being completed, and ideas circulating as the planning team finds funding sources. Corporate Governance discussed the Northeast Investors' Diversity Initiative and its objectives. The group touched upon broadening the procurement statutes with objective criteria. Further research and information are expected to be reported back to the Subcommittee. The Aspiring Leaders group reported scaling up and leveraging the buy-in for the program, while the Boards and Commissions Racial and Gender Report reported having all the surveys received for them to conduct the report. They are attempting to prioritize the promotion of gender and racial diversity by noting statistics regarding the information of the report and benefits for a diverse company. Goal is to present these benefits to companies and ensure pool of candidates have some women and people of color. As for the Legislative Proposal update, the Subcommittee addressed one proposal that they received to eliminate age discrimination based on date of birth or high school or college graduation years. This helps employers focus on skills, abilities, and knowledge of the applicants.

B. February 26, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Updates discussed on Women and Girls Day at the Capitol, Corporate Governance, and Legislative Proposal updates. For Women and Girls Day at the Capitol, members addressed the agenda, hopes and goals, and ways of bringing awareness to the event. For updates regarding Corporate Governance, introduction to ongoing work being done at the Treasurer's Office for gender and racial diversity. The re-mentioning of the Northeast Investor's Diversity Initiative was enacted, and detailed information was provided regarding their work (more details in meeting minutes). The Office of the Treasurer suggest promoting collaborations within state companies to practice

this initiative and the expansion of their efforts, which would be better to achieving the overall goals. Legislative Proposal updates included the re-discussion of a bill regarding age discrimination in employment applications. Multiple commissioners and legislatures have shared their favor of the bill. Another bill was highlighted concerning the creation of a pilot program for an Early Childhood Business Incubator Model (more details provided in meeting minutes). All members of the meeting mutually agreed that procurement will be a future topic discussion at the next meeting. Discussions regarding procurement services and their cost and accessibility were highlighted. Several members mentioned creating a database of women who are interested in very specific jobs or subject matters. Overall, women and girls in leadership needs to look beyond the procurement process to achieve overall state success.

C. April 8, 2020 (cancelled)

No meeting minutes.

D. June 10, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Updates regarding previous subcommittee topics before and during the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic were given. Northeast Investors' Diversity Initiative provided updates on companies being engaged and adding diverse candidates to their boards. Final numbers regarding the diversity of companies' candidates will be provided after their annual meetings. The bill regarding age discrimination in employment applications was revisited and noted that after being moved forward, legislature stopped acting. With the events of the COVID-19 pandemic, the subcommittee believe the new age discrimination is against the older population. Conversations on this topic tabled for later. Acknowledgement on female first responders and women in leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Recognized their sacrifice and were mindful of their contribution; thus, would like to celebrate and acknowledge them at a formal setting. An update of the spring cohort was provided, with a discussion of creating an online program instead. There were updates regarding employee development and training to DMHAS leadership and staff. The training was utilized to focus on enhancing equity and justice and promoting diversity as a strategy for cultivating and sustaining an inclusive culture within the agency. Tools and resources from these trainings have raised a few issues, like the classification of ethnicity being different in the "correct" system. Towards the end, closing remarks regarding the Women and Girls' Day at the Capitol were provided. With the success of the event and the programs/fairs within, the Lt. Governor's Office discussed hosting another one next year. During open discussion, there was questions and thought surrounding racial injustice and its effects on women and girls. A "Voice of Moms" team was suggested to tackle the conversations of what it's like raising a child of color today. For detailed information, please view meeting minutes.

E. August 12, 2020 ([minutes](#))

This meeting provided updates from four work groups: (1) Diversify Representation on Boards and Commissions, (2) Women in Leadership, (3) Employee Development and Training, and (4) Affirmative Action Review & Effective Recruitment Strategies. The first work group updates on their continuing process of scheduling a meeting with work group members. The second work group provided information regarding the upcoming Women in Leadership Monthly Panel Series and the acknowledgement of National Hispanic Heritage Month. They also discussed several panelists being considered and a quick description of each. The third work group provided updates consisting of DAS's work with OPM, such as their framework for restructuring operations and both recommended rounding out team to help lead initiatives. The group also provided system updates such as working on their partnership with LinkedIn. A few members of the subcommittee discussed their thoughts on group 3's discussion and main themes surrounded training for women in leadership, addressing micro-aggressions, racial and gender disparities, and providing racial justice and cultural competency. The fourth work group addressed goals to review and offer recommendations concerning methodology utilized to create affirmative action plans and to identify examples of success through the help of CHRO, and to look for process improvements to make affirmative action plans both more manageable/less burdensome for agencies and better aligned with the goal of diversifying our workforce. The group will be evaluating the current statutory and regulatory framework and identifying potential changes. There were brief updates provided regarding Legislative Proposals and the mention of reintroducing proposals submitted last year but not addressed. For more information on selected topics, please view meeting minutes.

F. September 14, 2020 ([minutes](#))

This meeting provided updates from four work groups: (1) Diversify Representation on Boards and Commissions, (2) Women in Leadership, (3) Employee Development and Training, and (4) Affirmative Action Review & Effective Recruitment Strategies. First work group provided details regarding their robust discussions about looking at where shortfalls are with getting a more diverse group of people to serve on boards and commissions. They are also working on legislative proposal language and some work group points were added and information regarding DAS application for the website portal. Second work group rediscussed the Women in Leadership Monthly Panel Series and the group decided on five panelists. Information regarding solicitation of the event panels will be provided later and the idea of syncing with school districts and children learning from home was suggested. Third work group provided updates regarding DAS and their discussions on one of the more helpful things to focus on to help the state by drafting DEI framework for agencies to use as a guide. The signing of a Statement of Work (SOW) is imminent as the procurement for a learning management system is underway. Discussions regarding how the group plans to build accountability for each agency to participate in the plan arose as the final conversation for the work group. The fourth work group provided updates regarding CHRO and evaluating what can be done to continue the progress that has been made with other Affirmative Action plans in the state. The work group also focused on bringing in DOL to provide data or feedback to the 2000 census data used and just how different would the Affirmative Action plans be if the census data used was

from recent surveying. With the current health situation, it was acknowledged that DOL has experienced significant delays. There were thoughts of more work being done to ensure the Affirmative Action methodology is consistent across the nation, and with exiting data being outdated, they discussed how this may affect the achievements of their goals.

G. October 7, 2020 ([minutes](#))

As previously mentioned, more updates were provided from the four work groups: (1) Diversify Representation on Boards and Commissions, (2) Women in Leadership, (3) Employee Development and Training, and (4) Affirmative Action Review & Effective Recruitment Strategies. The first work group contemplated what to put forward as actionable steps for policy regarding racial and gender diversity. They would like to diversify recruitment at the forefront of cultivation efforts, and changing the perspectives of companies' positions when selecting candidates for roles. The idea of the network and tasking the Commissioners to build their networks was brought up and making DAS's website more attractive to help encourage interest and for the General Public to better understand its content. The second work group updated on panel progress. The third group updated regarding assigning the Statement of Work (SOW) with LinkedIn Learning and more communication about it must be done. Regarding Diversity Inclusion, they met with DAS procurement to coordinate a soon to be developed RFP and have internally appointed a small group to draft a SOW. There is intent to have a discussion with legal counsel. The fourth group shared there being many layers to the issues they were assigned to address, such as current statutory framework. They need to do a deep analysis on where they are and need skillsets as the retirement cliff approaches. The group revisited the Age Discrimination and Hiring Bill, and a new proposal was submitted and further explained (please view meeting minutes for more details). Because robust diversity on State Boards and Commissions will take more than legislation, some operational changes that prioritize the recruitment of diverse appointees will be required. For closing remarks, the group brought awareness to women leaving the workforce because of COVID, and further questions and discussions will be evaluated and addressed as the subcommittee progresses.

H. December 9, 2020 ([minutes](#))

Corresponding to previous meetings, updates were provided from the four work groups: (1) Diversify Representation on Boards and Commissions, (2) Women in Leadership, (3) Employee Development and Training, and (4) Affirmative Action Review & Effective Recruitment Strategies – starting with the fourth group and moving in a backwards order. The fourth work group updated about their follow up meeting with CHRO and refining recommendations in respect to the data that is needed. They would like to focus on what was changeable and what can be done in the short term and would like bigger conversations on how agencies work on achieving the goals, with the more updated data they now have. The third work group provided insight on how they managed to make significant strides so that there would be a consistent vendor state-wide.

They also addressed that the subscription for LinkedIn Learning went live and are currently working on a communication plan. The second group provided updates on the success of the Women Leadership panel discussion for Latina Hispanic Heritage month. There is discussion of having contributions from a younger population and pulling together a panel for Black History month. The first group reported they looked at other opportunities to diversify our boards and commissions as well as how to prioritize for outreach and recruitment. Three areas were identified for major improvement. The Subcommittee plans on working on generating a list of organizations that could have some proactive outreach to diversify. Legislative Proposals are under review and need to be evaluated on what needs to be achieved legislatively versus administratively. The boards need to track and report their diversity, and they believe the public needs to know what opportunities there are. It was inferred that there is a lot of movement in 2020 that has declarations of intent to dramatically increase representation for women and racial diversity. A revisitation of setting a goal was insinuated and made clear that they need the most competent board while also striking the balance with diversity. They mentioned the Rooney Rule, which would be beneficial to utilize and then monitor and track for various boards. It should be utilized in the beginning and then a “check box” afterwards.