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**Philadelphia's Juveniles for Justice and Youth Fostering Change Launch
Action Kit Focused on Educational Barriers**

Youth advocates describe their own experiences with education while in foster care and the justice system along with recommendations for reform

Philadelphia, PA (June 11, 2019): Juveniles for Justice and Youth Fostering Change, two advocacy programs for youth at Juvenile Law Center, today released an action kit entitled [Operation: Education: An Action Kit to Achieve Positive Educational Outcomes for Youth in the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems](#). The groups, who create yearly projects oriented towards system reform, believe that sharing their stories and recommendations for change will be critical to helping the public and decision makers understand how systems are failing youth educationally.

"This project is important because it is a chance for us to help change the future of education for youth," said I-sha-le Watson, Youth Advocate with Juveniles for Justice. "It will help ensure that youth coming after us will have a better chance at getting a good education."

Throughout the day, members of Juveniles for Justice and Youth Fostering Change will be in Harrisburg with advocates from Education Law Center and Juvenile Law Center meeting with lawmakers to discuss one potential remedy to educational barriers for youth with system involvement in Pennsylvania. Chiefly, they will be encouraging legislators to support SB 662, the Fostering Graduation Success for Vulnerable Students Act. This bill is sponsored by Senator Pat Browne, a long-time champion for vulnerable students.

"Youth who change schools because they are in foster care, experiencing homelessness or are in the juvenile justice system face difficult challenges to earning a diploma. These students are often unable to graduate because they changed schools mid-year before earning full credit, their new school may not honor credits earned or they did not have the opportunity to take a course that is a graduation requirement of the school they are currently attending," said Senate Majority Appropriations Committee Chairman Pat Browne.

"It is well documented that these students are at high risk of not graduating from high school. We owe it to these students to take steps to make it easier for them to succeed in school and in life. I am proud to sponsor SB 662, the Fostering Graduation Success for Vulnerable Students Act, to help make that a reality," he added.

Youth are hopeful that their action kit as well as their presence at the Capitol will motivate lawmakers to act on these issues on behalf of youth in the Commonwealth.

Youth advocates from the program as well as staff who oversee the program are available for comment.

Juvenile Law Center advocates for rights, dignity, equity and opportunity for youth in the foster care and justice systems. Founded in 1975, Juvenile Law Center is the first non-profit, public interest law firm for children in the country. We fight for youth through litigation, appellate advocacy and submission of amicus (friend-of-the-court) briefs, policy reform, public education, training, consulting, and strategic communications. Widely published and internationally recognized as leaders in the field, Juvenile Law Center has substantially shaped the development of law and policy on behalf of youth. We strive to ensure that laws, policies, and practices affecting youth advance racial and economic equity and are rooted in research, consistent with children’s unique developmental characteristics, and reflective of international human rights values. For more information about Juvenile Law Center’s work, visit www.JLC.org.

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