

Youth Leadership Ad Hoc Committee Agenda

Thursday, May 26, 2022

1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

[YouTube Recording](#)

MEETING SUMMARY

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Committee Members Present: Vivienne Webb, Jill Hano, Chaney Guidry, Bambi Polotzola, Nicole DeJean, Harlon Cowsar, Madeline Young, Nicole Flores, Lillian DeJean

Committee Members Absent: Melissa Bayham, Dylan Sonnier, Pamela Allen, Liz Gary

Attendees: Karlee Cowsar, April Young, Lynsey Hebert (Transcriptionist)

Staff: Amy Deaville, Ebony Haven

II. Welcome, Member Introductions & Housekeeping

Meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. with a quorum present.

III. Approval of [February 3, 2022 Meeting Summary](#)

Bambi Polotzola motioned to accept the February 3, 2022 meeting summary with outlined amendments (changing “Council Members Present” to “Committee Members Present” and changing “Council Members” to “Committee Members Absent”). Jill Hano seconded the motion. Motion passed with unanimous consent.

IV. UL Lafayette – discussion of possible location for forum

Lillian discussed meeting between herself, UL Life Director, Dr. Caroline Jurisich, Bambi Polotzola and Amy Deaville about the possibility of having the first Youth Leadership Forum there. UL Life Director was excited and receptive to having YLF on the campus and offered the UL Life building free of charge for sessions of the forum, if available. Bambi provided some additional information about the UL Campus and the UL Life program in particular.

There was some discussion about the possible need for nursing staff during the forum and the possibility of being able to use nursing students from UL. Decisions on need for nursing staff will be made depending on the applications received and delegates accepted and their needs.

Motion - made by Nicole Flores that YLF Ad-Hoc Committee proceed with moving forward with UL to use their campus for the first Youth Leadership Forum. Vivienne Webb seconded the motion. No objections or abstentions. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

It was recommended that we discuss and set the dates for the first YLF at the next YLF meeting (in July). The legislative session in 2023 ends June 8, 2023. It was suggested that committee members look at different camps offered during the summer for youth self-advocates and the dates of those to be able to inform the discussion at the next meeting.

Lillian also mentioned that most YLFs have mock debates and those may be easier to do outside of session when there is less happening at the Capital. Jill Hano said that when she went to YLF they did not go to the Capital during session.

V. Funding from DDC and other possible funding sources

DD Council has allocated \$30,000 for YLF in next fiscal year. Louisiana Department of Education and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services have asked for a program overview to help them figure out what they are able to help with financially.

Nicole DeJean said that the Oklahoma YLF develops an outcome report and embedded in that is a logic model. She suggested that the committee needs to start developing some of these tools (Pre and post surveys with delegates and with staff; logic model; data gathering) to keep things organized and focused. For sustainability, if we could create a logic model and keep checking it/going back to it, it will help the committee to stay focused. Outline the desired outcomes for delegates and for staff. She

says that she believes that the committee can develop those things (surveys and logic model) themselves.

Lillian said that delegates in other states are supposed to have demonstrated leadership skills, but what that looks like varies from state to state. It was suggested that committee ask for letters of recommendation for delegates that are applying. Lillian said they could ask for references instead of letters of recommendation. Another suggestion was maybe emulating the Partners in Policymaking application process, because PiP students are supposed to also demonstrate leadership skills.

Lillian also mentioned that there is an interview for delegates too, prior to acceptance into the program.

- VI. **Oklahoma YLF** - Lillian DeJean is going to the Oklahoma Youth Leadership Forum in 2 weeks.

VII. Development of Program Overview

A draft version of a Program Overview was reviewed by the committee. Madeline Young suggested using the word “campers” instead of “delegates”. Nicole DeJean said that other states use other terms, if they are more focused on legislation, they tend to use “delegates” but if they have a more educational/developmental approach to their programs, they use “students” or some use “student delegates”. Another suggestion was to use “leaders” or “youth leaders.” Lillian said that she leaned more towards using “leaders”.

Madeline Young also suggested changing “staff” to “counselors”. Suggested by Nicole DeJean: Individuals with disabilities that work with the youth leaders should be referred to as “mentors” and would provide more peer-to-peer supports. “Counselors” would be the other staff that work with the youth leaders. Nurses would still be referred to as such or could be “nurse counselors.”

The committee supported using “leaders”, “mentors” and “counselors”.

Motion – Bambi Polotzola motioned to approve the program overview with the language changes mentioned (“leaders”, “mentors” and “counselors”). Nicole Flores seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

VIII. Revisit Mission Statement

Motion to change YLF mission statement to below, made by Madeline Young. Seconded by Nicole DeJean. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

The Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum will teach personal and systems advocacy skills, promote disability culture through networking with other self-advocates and empower young people with disabilities.

Discussion of potential dates for YLF: Through conversation, it was determined that the forum should happen after the end of the 2023 legislative session. It was also suggested that as a follow-up activity, there is a reunion that happens around a yellow shirt day during the 2024 legislative session.

It was suggested that committee members check on other camps dates in the summer to try not to conflict with those dates. Committee members will come back and decide on dates for the first Youth Leadership Forum at the next meeting.

Harlon Cowsar informed the committee that he reached out to the director of Affiliated Blind of Louisiana in Lafayette and that they can assist as a resource for our forum if we are in need of ASL interpreters or materials in Braille – they can provide it. Bambi said that we might be able to get funding for interpreters from the Commission for the Deaf.

IX. Public Comment

X. Closing Comments/Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Bambi Polotzola, seconded by Harlon Cowsar. Passed unanimously. Adjourned at 2:50p.m.