

# STEPS FOR CREATING A YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD (YAB)

1

## *Know the Purpose*

### **DETERMINE THE MISSION & THE INTENDED OUTCOMES.**

It is important to know why a YAB is being created to know which student groups to recruit, which staff would be appropriate to supervise & what topics members should provide feedback on.

2

## *Hire Adult Facilitators*

### **SCHOOL STAFF THAT KNOW STUDENTS ALREADY ARE BEST TO USE.**

Even though YABs are youth-driven, to be successful at start-up, it is imperative to have supportive adult facilitators. These adults can help advocate for the YAB to local leaders & can provide leadership trainings to YAB members. Adult facilitators ensure the YAB space is safe for all members.

3

## *Recruit Youth Members*

### **BE COGNISANT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

If you are recruiting homeless youth for YAB, a suggestion is to receive private referrals from school personnel. If the YAB has a wider student focus, recruitment methods such as flyers and presentations may be used to advertise.

4

## Determine the Budget

**THINK OF WHAT WILL INCENTIVIZE YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE.**

If there is funding available for YAB, determine the fiscal needs of creating & sustaining YAB. If there is funding available, it may be used for stipends, gift cards, or food for participation. If there is no funding available, look into ways of obtaining donations, such as lunch for members at meetings.

5

## Find a Location

**YAB IS MOST EFFECTIVE IN PERSON, BUT MAY BE DONE VIRTUALLY.**

Find a consistent and confidential location on campus that YAB members can utilize for meetings. This location needs to be in a place where members can speak openly, without worrying outsiders can hear.

6

## Hold First Meeting

**USE THE 1ST MEETING TO SET MISSION, VISION & GOALS.**

The 1st meeting is best utilized finding out from the youth what issues they feel important & wish to work on. Determine logistics for future meetings with the youth, such as what days/times work best for them for YAB meetings.

7

## Hold Second Meeting

**USE THE 2ND MEETING TO VOTE IN OFFICERS.**

YABs are most effective when they have youth chair & co-chairs. The adult facilitators should only assist members with logistical matters. The chair & co-chair should be given leadership development training, allowing them to successfully lead a YAB.

8

## YAB to Work on 1 Initial Project

**TO GET THEM STARTED, THEY SHOULD ONLY START WITH 1 PROJECT.**

YAB members have many innovative ideas, but they will need assistance pinning down 1 initial project to work on. It is best for them to initially focus on 1 project, so they are not spread too thin. Some ideas for initial projects are creating a youth resource guide or giving a presentation to local leaders.

## Help Develop Leaders

**GIVE MEMBERS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.**

YAB adult facilitators should link YAB members to leadership development opportunities, such as trainings, internships, shadowing opportunities, etc. YAB should not only be utilized to obtain student feedback. It should also be used as a tool to help develop youth leaders.

10

## Keep Support Consistent

**CONSTANT SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL TO MEMBER RETENTION.**

In order for YABs to sustain themselves, youth must feel supported by administrators & adult facilitators. Members should feel safe to speak about their concerns & needs to adult facilitators, who in turn, assist them in remedying those issues.

11

## Be Flexible

**MEMBERS, VISION & MISSION MAY CHANGE OVER TIME.**

As members change, they may want to re-focus the YAB mission & vision. Be flexible & allow the YAB to grow organically. Also, be aware that youth may not always have consistent attendance. Work with them to help them try to navigate the barriers they are having to engaged membership.