



Maryland Youth Advisory Council
c/o Governor's Office for Children
301 West Preston St., Suite 1502,
Baltimore, MD 21201

Christina Drushel, *Co-Chair*
Senator Roger Manno, *Co-Chair*
Delegate John A. Olszewski, Jr., *Co-Chair*

Shobhit Kumar, *Co-Chair*
Hamza Siddiqui, *Vice-Chair*
Erin Dickenson, *Secretary*

August 22, 2012

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
State House
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor O'Malley:

In accordance with State Government Article Section 9-2701 enclosed please find the 2011-2012 Maryland Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) Annual Report. The report has been developed by the members of MYAC. The Governor's Office for Children has reviewed the report and is submitting it on their behalf.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at 410-767-2547 or Christina.drushel@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Christina Drushel

Co-Chair, Maryland Youth Advisory Council



Maryland Youth Advisory Council

Annual Report 2011-2012

Submitted to Governor Martin O'Malley and the Maryland General Assembly

By the Maryland Youth Advisory Council and the Governor's Office for Children

MYAC Council's Purpose

The Maryland Youth Advisory Council (MYAC) was established through the State legislature in order to ensure that Maryland youth are given the opportunity to provide feedback and recommendations regarding public policies and programs that affect their future and to take a leadership role in creating meaningful change. The MYAC members are appointed by the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the Maryland Association of Student Councils, University System of Maryland Student Council and the Maryland Higher Education Commission Student Advisory Council. All youth members must be 14-22 years of age, serve a one year term (September 1 until August 30) and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.

As outlined in the parent bill, MYAC:

1. Holds at least four meetings a year;
2. Holds at least one public meeting on issues of importance to youth;
3. Recommends one legislative proposal;
4. Provides testimony before legislative bodies on youth issues;
5. Conducts a public awareness campaign to raise awareness about the Council among Maryland youth; and
6. Provides an annual report to the Governor and the General Assembly.

MYAC fulfilled each of its responsibilities this year through its subcommittees and social networking activities. The following sections describe these actions.

Legislative Summary

This year, MYAC's Legislative Committee encountered a multitude of successes and a few struggles which will be discussed below to assist future Councils.

One of the major factors that led to a productive year was the Council's dedication to keeping open communication with members of MYAC's Legislative Committee. MYAC members worked in-person, over the phone, and via email, to coordinate the annual public forum on the issue of financial literacy. In order to arrive at the decision to take up the issue of financial literacy as the central issue of the Council for the 2011-2012 year, MYAC presented various issues to the general membership and gathered the members' opinions on them. MYAC members also facilitated a discussion with the aid of easy to follow PowerPoint presentations that helped to bring everyone into the discussion in order to decide on an issue for MYAC to work toward

throughout the year. MYAC members shared both pro and con opinions that allowed the Council to reach a stance as a group. Council members also gathered feedback continuously and raised brainstorming questions that helped to foster healthy and positive debate among the Council's general membership.

Once the Council had decided on a priority topic, the members began working on communication with a major proponent of the financial literacy initiative, Maryland State Comptroller, Peter Franchot. The Council reached out to his office and discussed the issue.

All of the combined pre-work and established communication made it very easy to plan and execute the public forum. A video was designed that was used to simplify the issue and to get the audience immersed in the issue that MYAC members had become so passionate about during the course of the year. The Council gained participation from legislators at the forum and was able to directly discuss the issue in depth, hearing testimony from not only the members of MYAC but from residents throughout the state of Maryland.

Public Relations Summary

The Public Relations Committee this year worked diligently to ensure that MYAC incorporated financial literacy stakeholders, legislators, and the Maryland State Board of Education (MSDE) in creating an official legislative priority. MYAC successfully hosted a Public Hearing where over 50 stakeholders, legislators, and other officials were invited to discuss the topic.

At this event, MYAC was able to inform the community of current actions being taken by MSDE to bring financial literacy to Maryland schools. MYAC also hosted two panels with experts from various State Agencies who discussed the importance of financial literacy in the schools. The panels cautioned the Council about the General Assembly passing legislation mandating the inclusion of financial literacy as a standalone course in school curriculum instead of coming down directly from MSDE.

This event, the main focus of the Committee this year, assisted MYAC in developing its perspective. However, this event also complicated the Council's actions as it realized the difficulty of pushing for a financial literacy graduation requirement. Unfortunately, this slowed efforts as the Council struggled to understand the best method of incorporating this necessity in Maryland's primary and secondary education structure. It is the hope of this Committee that in the future, MYAC will be able to advocate for instituting financial literacy in Maryland's curriculum.

Improvements for the Next Year

The legislative priority this year was controversial:

While it took a while for MYAC to decide on the year's legislative priority, it was ultimately decided to be financial literacy, a topic many students pushed for. Unfortunately, financial literacy was also a topic of controversy that student groups were not united behind (the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC), for one, had an opposing viewpoint). Given the split in student support, the uphill battle of passing decisive legislation was even more difficult. This also led to conflicts for students who were affiliated with both MASC and MYAC, two student organizations with opposing opinions.

Suggestion: To make the campaign for the legislative priority easier, the legislative priority should, in the future, be one that is simple and far less controversial.

Not enough meetings were held:

Meetings were held once a quarter with an extra one in the winter to prepare for the public hearing. While this scheduling works as many students are very busy and students in MYAC come from a variety of locations, it also meant that less work was accomplished.

Suggestion: While it may not be feasible to simply add more general meetings, perhaps there could be more frequent, smaller meetings based on committee or location. Also, the Council should take further advantage of telephone conferences, group chatting abilities, and email.

Follow through on plans could have been stronger:

There were many well-outlined steps from the beginning of the year. However, as time passed, much less of the plan was completed than desired.

Suggestion: Making plans reasonable given everyone's schedules is a must. After that, reinforcing steps and assigning deadlines can make follow through more feasible.

A back-up plan was needed:

After the financial literacy bill failed in the Maryland Senate, there was less work for MYAC to do.

Suggestion: Having a back up topic or bill that MYAC could support provides opportunities for MYAC to stay involved in all situations.

2011-2012 MYAC Roster

Michael Hawkins, Governor's Office for Children Co-Chair (appointed by Governor O'Malley)
Christina Drushel, Governor's Office for Children Co-Chair (appointed by Governor O'Malley)
Shobhit Kumar, Youth Co-Chair (elected by Council youth members to 1 year term)
Senator Roger Manno, Senate Co-Chair (appointed by Maryland Senate President)
Delegate John A. Olszewski, Jr., House Co-Chair (appointed by Speaker of the House of Delegates)

2011 – 2012 MYAC Youth Executive Board:

1. Shobhit Kumar, Youth Co-Chair
2. Hamza Siddiqui, Youth Vice-Chair
3. Erin Dickenson, Secretary
4. John Mannes and Megan Yan, Co-Chairs, Legislative Committee
5. Christian Hodges and Ashley Larkin, Co-Chairs, Public Affairs Committee

Member Appointments:

Appointed by the Governor

- Appointed in 2010
 1. Leah Berry
 2. Erin Dickenson
 3. Abigail Hoyt
 4. Linzy Jackson, III
 5. Ryan Martin
 6. Wesley Smith, II
 7. Yamina Ticas
 8. Zackary Valenti
 9. Megan Yan
- Appointed in 2011
 1. Cameron D'Aquila
 2. Emily Peterson
 3. Jacqueline Price
 4. Jessica Qiu

Appointed by the Senate President

- Appointed in 2010
 1. Christian Hodges
 2. Michael Rigali
- Appointed in 2011
 1. Jordan Cassell
 2. Ashley Larkin

3. Theresa Maseda
4. Ethan McComb
5. Gabrielle Winkey
6. Collin Wojciechow

Appointed by the Speaker of the House

- Appointed in 2011
 1. Washiq Ahmed
 2. Vanica Antrum
 3. Jessica Li
 4. Elena Massetti
 5. Hamza Siddiqui
 6. Abigail Shriver
 7. Ahmad Smith
 8. Ngong-Mendah Temateh

Representing Maryland Association of Student Councils

- Appointed in 2010
 1. Sara Calvert
 2. Connie Chen
 3. Hannah Elliott
 4. Eric Guhl
 5. Shobhit Kumar
 6. David Lee
 7. Mark Ritterpusch
 8. Hal Zeitlin
- Appointed in 2011
 1. Mia Chase
 2. Cody Dorsey
 3. Jessica Goodrich
 4. Patrick Holt
 5. John Mannes
 6. Evan McIntyre
 7. Jenny Park

Representing Student Advisory Council to Maryland Higher Education Commission

- Appointed in 2010
 1. Gabriel Stuart-Sikowitz
- Appointed in 2011
 1. Erin Buchanan
 2. Mattias Falcon
 3. Matthew Gabb
 4. Caitlin McNamara