

# Nevada Youth Advisory Board Bylaws

## **Purpose, Vision, and Mission**

The youth involved in the 04-05-2013 meeting identified the following purposes, group norms, and reasons for their involvement as a Youth Advisory Board member:

### Youth Advisory Board Purpose:

- to make changes to the system
- help/encourage younger youth
- establish system of peer mentoring
- establish and improve youth/adult partnerships
- improve youth-worker-parent relationships
- youth involvement in training of workers and foster parents
- improve youth advocacy
- relate to others
- to empower youth that are in out-of-home care
- provide a learning experience
- youth representing youth
- consistently educate youth and adults on independent living program and services
- improve better means of providing skills education
- improve the public image and reputation of foster youth

### Group Norms:

- participation
- attendance
- being on time
- try to stay focused
- listen
- end on time
- respect one another
- express your opinions
- okay to make mistakes
- one person talking at a time
- breaks on occasion
- being able to depend on others
- need to have fun/ humor
- don't give up
- cell phone respect

### W.I.I.F.M. (What's In It For Me):

- to let the system know what might be better for youth in care
- represent your area
- get your point across
- travel and meeting others
- a learning experience
- getting to know differences and similarities of other's foster care situations
- effecting change within foster homes
- getting to know other's experiences
- being a role model
- show respect for being asked to participate and share opinions
- be a resource for others

## **Mission**

We as the Nevada youth advisory board (Nevada LIFE) will continue to inspire, empower and give a voice to those in foster care, those aging out and former foster youth. We will further educate our community and fellow peers by ensuring they have a voice to advocate for their rights through legislation. Nevada LIFE will be a positive influence in the community. The leadership will provide opportunities to better serve our own communities through programs, events, resources available and ultimately help us achieve the goals we have set.

## **Membership**

The Nevada Youth Advisory Board is currently composed of 18 youth members and adults supports. Youth Board Members shall be expected to attend all regular business meetings of the Nevada Youth Advisory Board. Meetings are open to all YAB members and potential YAB members.

Definition of or criteria of youth board members;

- 1) Youth ages 15-21 (18) who are in foster care with a case plan establishing the need for independent living services.
- 2) Youth ages 15-21 who were formerly in foster care for a minimum of 6 months that have obtained their permanency goal but still qualify for independent living or who were receiving independent living services prior to the dismissal of their case..
- 3) Youth ages 15-21 who were formerly in foster care for a minimum of 6 months who have been adopted or placed in a guardianship from foster care and were receiving independent living services prior to the dismissal of their case.
- 4) Youth age 18 to 21 who were formerly in foster care for a minimum of 6 months who had a case plan establishing the need for independent living services.
- 5) Youth who are 18-21 who would otherwise meet the eligibility criteria above and who were in the custody of another state or were a “ward of another state” will be eligible if through the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.
- 6) Youth may remain on the youth advisory board up until the age of 23 as long as they are receiving ETV or Chaffee funds and/or services.
- 7) Foster Youth Alumni over the age of 23 can attend meetings by participating actively as honorary non-voting members, with pre-approval from the IL coordinator in their jurisdiction.

## **Adult Support**

The Nevada Youth Advisory Board is supported by the State Independent Living Specialist, adult support staff from each region and tribe, and adult volunteers.

Such support will include

- assistance in the development of meeting agendas
- being the center of communication for the board and council members
- supply food for meetings
- ensure that there is transportation available to board and council members
- participate by giving input, direction, advice
- be a voting member of the counsel

## **Voting**

Voting authority is extended to the 18 voting members that compose the Nevada Youth Advisory Board. A majority vote shall be required by the quorum of members present.

A majority of  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Youth Advisory Board shall constitute a quorum. Until such time that the Youth Board has reached full capacity of 18 voting members quorum will be  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the members plus adults, as additional members are added the  $\frac{2}{3}$  quorum will be refigured as needed. In the event that there is no quorum, any discussions that are held by those assembled shall be regarded as informal and nonbinding. Twelve of the eighteen board members are required in order to hold a vote. In the event that there are less than twelve members present, any discussions that are held by those assembled shall be regarded as informal and nonbinding.

Voting for officer positions shall be made by secret ballot. All other voting shall be done by show of hands to allow all voting board members the opportunity to see their fellow board member's position on the topic of discussion.

## **Officers- Appointment, Terms and Duties**

The officers of the Nevada Youth Advisory Board consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Historian/Social Media Coordinator. Potential candidates for office positions will self-nominate, seconded by other youth advisory board members. Prior to the elections, nominees will be allowed to give a nomination speech not to exceed five (5) minutes. Questions to the each nominee by the voting members will be entertained for an additional (3) minutes. Appointments for the Youth Advisory Board Officers shall be determined during the Spring in person YAB meeting.

Each Youth Advisory Board term will be for duration on one (1) year, not to exceed two (2) consecutive terms.

Vacancies on the Youth Advisory Board that occurs before the expiration of a term shall be filled by offering the open position to a Youth Advisory Board member who currently holds a lower level office position. An election will then be held to fill the open lower level position with current Youth Advisory Board member who has been nominated and elected through the appropriate appointment process. The appointment will be made for the remainder of the term.

**Officer Attendance Clause:**

Youth Advisory Board Officers cannot miss more than 2 meetings in a year, after two missed meetings the board can decide whether or not they will be removed from their officer position.

The following duties have been established for each position:

President

- shall preside at all meetings of the Youth Advisory Board
- maintain order of the meetings
- shall appoint standing or special committees as necessary to carry the Youth Advisory Board business
- shall supervise the efficient and responsible operation of the Youth Advisory Board.
- shall be the Youth Advisory Board liaison to other councils and organizations
- shall call for votes
- shall represent the ideas of the Nevada Youth Advisory Board as a whole.

Vice-President

- shall assist the President
- shall preside at Youth Advisory Board meetings in the absence of the President.
- shall assume specific leadership responsibilities as determined by the President.

Secretary

- shall take attendance
- shall keep records of minutes of the Board
- shall provide notes and summaries of each meeting

Historian/-Social Media Coordinator

- shall take pictures
- shall take care of the board's social media needs
- shall set up a pictorial presentation at the two in person meetings

**Meetings**

Other youth or adults beside board members may sit in and observe Youth Advisory Board Meetings. Only recognized board members will be allowed to participate in discussion and voting.

The Youth Advisory Board will meet at the least twice annually in person and bimonthly by video conferencing or teleconferencing. In person meetings will be held at one of the Rural/Tribal Districts. Specific meeting times and locations shall be established during the in person Youth Advisory Board meetings.

**Designation of Committees**

Sub-Committees shall be formed, as the Youth Advisory Board deems needed, in relation to the work of the board. Board members shall be expected to participate in at least one sub-committee at any given time.

**Amendments to Bylaws**

These bylaws and operating procedures may be amended by a majority vote at any official Nevada Youth Advisory Board meeting as long as a quorum of voters is present.