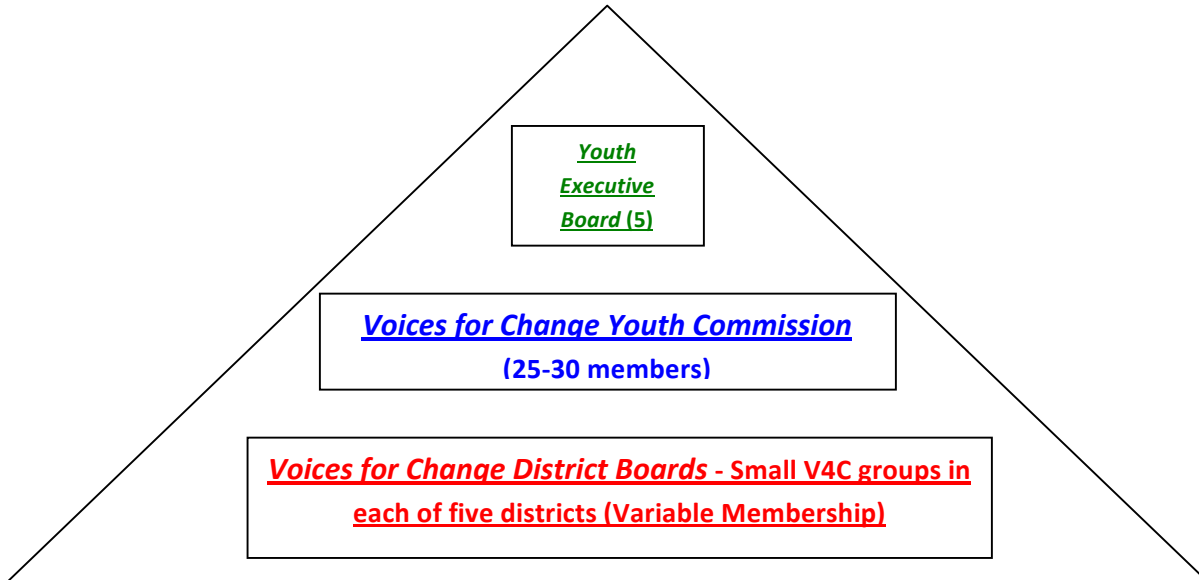


Youth Commission Proposal (DRAFT 5/13/10)

Vision HC Youth Task Force: "All Howard County youth will be supported and empowered to create positive change and involvement in their community"

Membership and Structural Design Goals- to hear as many youth voices as possible and to create lines of communication with county organizations.



Voices for Change District Boards: (Membership is variable) Identifies issues important to students in their district and works towards positive change.

- Minimal training. Works like current Voices for Change organization
- Meetings run by small groups
- Meetings once a month in district.
- Interested members may apply to be part of the V4C Youth Commission. No term limits

Voice for Change Youth Commission (25-30 members): Represents students in their district and responds to county requests

- Application process including an interview and references modeled after the Leadership U /Youth on Board applications. Membership Board (see below) oversees these activities.
- Leadership training and exposure to Howard County community organizations required.
- Meetings once a month. Serve on subcommittees (see below)
- Will work on issues raised by V4C District Boards and respond to requests from county organizations for input on issues they are working on.
- Must attend some V4C District Board regional meetings as well as V4C Youth Commission meetings. Big time commitment.
- Interested members may apply to be part of the Executive Board. No term limits

Youth Executive Board (5) Represents the Youth Board in county activities

- Elected by V4C Youth Commission Members. One year term limit.
- Direct interaction with county government
- Represent county at national and international gatherings.

Membership Board – Evaluate V4C Youth Commission Applications and recruit adult mentors for Voices for Change District Boards.

- **Membership Board** - Half youth volunteers and half adult members appointed by the county.
- **Adult role at all levels will be to act as “advisors” and “mentors”**
- **Diversity**-would like all boards to look like community they represent.
- **Age Range**-Middle School through 21. (Majority of the students will be 8th -12th grade)

Examples of Youth Commission Subcommittees:

- **Civic Engagement**-Increase Civic Participation; Facilitate dialogue and interaction between young people
- **Community Service** – Encourage Youth Volunteerism; Create opportunities for young people to give back to the community
- **Research and Policy** – Educate community on Youth issues through research-based advocacy; Evaluate long-term policies affecting the youth community
- **Social Opportunities** – Raise awareness about the many things to do in Howard county that young people might not know about; Hold fun events for young people to attend, especially to foster an alumni network
- **Youth Interests** – Raise awareness on an issue by issue basis; Further youth interests through education and outreach.

Activities:

- **Town Hall Meetings**-around youth issues. Anyone may attend
- **Youth Summit**-work on issues youth defines. Identified by school to attend.
- **V4C Youth Commission/Exec Board will be responsive to current legislation or community issues**
- **V4C Youth Commission/Exec. Board will be proactive, raising issues important to youth in the community**

Existing Organizations

- Approach current youth organizations about their role. Organizations maybe able to help with training or recruiting
- Partner with other groups such as HCASC , Student Member of the School Board, , Village Center Youth Leadership, Horizon Councils, and other youth organizations.
- Organizations invited to send members to V4C District meetings.
- Connect with adult groups so they are aware of the commissions’ work.