

**PHILADELPHIA YOUTH COMMISSION
FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET TESTIMONY**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT MISSION AND FUNCTION

The Commission represents Philadelphia's youth in public hearings and gives testimony that reflects the youth perspective. We work with city officials, non-profits, community organizations, and private entities to develop strategies to improve the lives of Philadelphia's youth. Youth commissioners range in age from and represent a diversity of ethnicities, races, genders, sexual orientations and serve as a bridge between youth and city officials. The Commission is committed to increasing the social and political engagement of Philadelphia's youth, through our efforts in advising key decision-makers and helping to train and empower the next generation of city leaders.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Comment on legislation and policies that impact youth
- Create public service programs that improve the lives of youth
- Monitor and measure the effectiveness of youth programs and policies
- Partner with neighborhood youth organizations on shared issues
- Prepare youth for leadership roles

In 2013, Joy Soto was hired as the Program Manager for the Youth Commission. Her main responsibility is to assist the Executive Director in increasing the impact and efforts of the commission. Following the founding of the Commission in 2008, the Commission partnered with the Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University to create a 3-year strategic plan which was implemented in 2011. As a result of the strategic plan, the direction of the commission was reevaluated and is now better guided to achieve its short-term and long-term goals for 2014 and beyond. The plan helped the commission to focus on youth-related advocacy, policy, and engagement and not just programming. To accomplish this, the Commission has developed short and long-term goals that will help to develop a more sustainable and effective platform:

Long-term:

- **Impact:** Increase the effectiveness of the Youth Commission and increased impact (District and Citywide)
- **Visibility:** Increase public awareness of the Philadelphia Youth Commission
- **Capacity:** Expand internal and external capacity

Short-term:

- Influence appointment decisions in order to ensure that Commissioners are qualified for the position
- Training and retaining Commissioners
- Increase meeting attendance and effectiveness
- Keep the organization's strategic plan active and relevant

With the short and long-term goals in mind, the Commission has spent the last few months gathering additional information and best practices from Youth Commissions around the country, which has allowed the commission to compare and contrast goals, agendas and to identify key areas for improvements in both engagement and tracking accomplishments. As we look toward the future of the Youth Commission a few key highlights from FY14 emerge:

- Provided testimony at three city-council hearings
- Advocated for school funding in collaboration with a number of youth organizations
- Hosted a half-dozen youth town hall meetings, including one on the Affordable Care Act
- Increased social media awareness on Facebook, Twitter and Youth Commission Blog
- Co-sponsored the Mayor's Public Policy Case Competition

- Developed the Mayor’s Youth Public Safety Task Force
- Collaborated with other youth commissions and national youth organizations.

I can say with confidence that over the past year we have taken steps to extend and sustain the work of the commission. Below is a summary of current and on-going initiatives:

- Teen Pregnancy Initiative, Family Planning Council: Youth Commission is working in collaboration with the Philadelphia Planning Council to implement and promote the “I Matter Philadelphia” campaign. This campaign is geared towards reducing teen pregnancy for youth in West and Southwest Philadelphia.
- National Forum on Youth Violence: Youth Commission staff and commissioners sit on a number of committees and on the working group for the National Forum on Youth Violence, an initiative that works in collaboration with Department of Human Services, Philadelphia Police Department and Family Court to reduce youth violence in the 22nd police district.
- Cities United: The Youth Commission’s Executive Director co-chairs the Youth Engagement Committee for the Cities United Initiative. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter and New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu launched Cities United in October 2011, partnering with 56 member cities and mayors. Cities United goal is to place black males at the center of city agendas to help reduce both the victim rates for black males and decrease the likelihood that they may become a perpetrator.
- Teen Court Initiative: The Youth Commission believes that youth courts are a unique opportunity for positive alternative sanctions. Youth courts provide a peer-driven sentencing mechanism that allows young people to take responsibility of their actions while being held accountable by a body of their peers. We also believe that youth courts provide meaningful experiences for young people to gain a broader insight on the law and its application. The Youth Commission has testified before City Council’s Committee on Public Safety on the benefits of youth courts and is currently working with decision makers to pioneer this system in Philadelphia.
- Youth Voter Engagement and Voter Registration: Each year the Youth Commission works in collaboration with youth organizations, colleges and universities to educate and register students to vote. In the last five years we have registered more than 10, 000 youth and young adults.

Philadelphia Youth Commission

Financial Summary by Class - General Fund

	Fiscal 2013 Actual Obligations	Fiscal 2014 Original Appropriations	Fiscal 2014 Estimated Obligations	Fiscal 2015 Proposed Appropriations	Difference FY14 - FY15
Class 100 - Employee Compensation	\$50,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$0
Class 200 - Purchase of Services	\$6,723	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$46,000	\$0
Class 300 - Materials and Supplies	\$247	\$2,580	\$2,580	\$2,580	\$0
Class 400 - Equipment	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
Class 500 - Contributions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Class 700 - Debt Service	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Class 800 - Payment to Other Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Class 900 - Advances/Misc. Payments	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$56,970	\$140,080	\$140,080	\$140,080	\$0

Staff Demographics Summary*

Total	Minority	White	Female
2	100%	0%	100%
1	100%	0%	100%
Average Salary - Executive Staff	\$46,000	\$0	\$46,000
Median Salary - Executive Staff	\$46,000	\$0	\$46,000

Employment Levels*

Budgeted	Approved	Filled
1	1	1
0	0	0
1	1	1

Contracts Summary* (Still waiting on the numbers)

	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14*
Total amount of contracts	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total amount to M/W/DBE	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Participation Rate	%	%	%	%	%	%

*As of December 2013

