

Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board (YCB) – 1985 to 2010

A review of the YCB Coordination Framework

by Jane Leonard, December, 2010

“YCB: Ready for Anything”

Resilient, Relevant, Reliable After 25 Years of Service to the Citizens of Minneapolis

Overview

In an age when many politicians run on a platform of government reform and reinvention, “doing more with less,” there is in the City of Minneapolis a public services delivery model, now 25 years old, that continues to be a successful framework in which city, county, parks, and school governments coordinate and cooperate on a variety of services provision and policy alignment to champion children’s and youth development, for the ultimate benefit of Minneapolis citizens and the city’s community and economic vitality.

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board (YCB) began with a joint powers agreement, initiated by then-Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser, Deputy Mayor Jan Hively, and Superintendent of Schools Richard R. Green, and approved by the Minnesota State Legislature in May, 1985. Its official formation in 1986 occurred in response to recessionary economic and social conditions in the city, state, and nation that threatened the vitality of families and the city’s future. (It’s déjà vu all over again in 2010, in the immortal words of Yogi Berra).

What made the YCB a powerful champion then and now for the well-being of Minneapolis children and youth is its passionate staff and a 10-member board of elected officials from each of the jurisdictions listed above, as well as a Minneapolis member from the Minnesota State House of Representatives and State Senate. In an effort to foster collaboration and policy alignment outside the government sphere, the Board also includes, as ex-officio members, the functional leaders of several YCB partner entities and leaders of area foundations.

Today, in late 2010, near the midpoint of its 25th anniversary (2010-2011), the Minneapolis YCB continues to coordinate policy and programming across government and non-profit sectors to promote the health, safety, education and overall development of Minneapolis children and youth. Key to its future ability to maintain and improve on a successful 25-year record will be the willingness of its governing board members to set aside turf, ego, and policy barriers, embrace their power, authority, and responsibility as elected representatives, and actively move together to improve conditions so that the city’s children can thrive, ensuring the future of Minneapolis itself.

History of YCB

YCB was created with the understanding that by bringing together those systems or jurisdictions that touch the lives of our young people, a common vision for Minneapolis children and youth could be developed and used to guide policy and the development of new initiatives.

With this in mind, in 1987, YCB embarked on *City's Children: 2007 (CC: 2007)*. *CC: 2007* was a vision-oriented long-range planning project that involved citizens from every sector of the city: business, government, non-profit, education, the faith community, philanthropy. *CC: 2007* set in motion the YCB as a catalyst framework to ensure the positive development of Minneapolis children and youth over a 20-year span.

It recognized that all institutions, organizations and individuals have significant roles to play to ensure the future of children and youth. At its August 1988 Board meeting, the YCB unanimously endorsed and accepted the vision and key goals of *CC: 2007* as the blueprint for its continuing work plan.

Many successful YCB initiatives grew out of *CC: 2007*, including Way to GROW for early childhood development and the Step-Up program for summer youth employment, now both administered by independent agencies. More recently, the YCB worked with the Minneapolis Public Schools in summer 2010 to roll-out the successful We Want You Back community-wide effort to re-enroll and help students finish high school. These and other successful programs illustrate YCB’s ability to not only create a vision for children’s and youth healthy development, but to respond with action.

In the 1990’s, YCB began managing the initiatives it had helped to launch over the preceding decade. It grew into a 40-person, \$9 million program management organization.

In 2002, YCB reassessed this approach in light of its original mission and made a strategic decision to return to its original focus on coordination and policy alignment. It is now a small, 6-person team with a \$1.4 million budget that invests in and coordinates efforts. YCB remains a catalyst for shared action and incubator of good ideas.

It does not provide services directly to children or youth with the exception of the Minneapolis Youth Congress, a brain trust of youth in grades 8-12 who represent every neighborhood district and serve as advisors to the YCB.

In its 25th year of operation, YCB has re-embraced its coordinative beginnings and is again a capacity-building organization that pursues its goals through a set of overlapping functions:

- Convening: Gathering key stakeholders to facilitate improved coordination, cooperation and engagement.

- **Building Partnerships for Action:** Supporting, coordinating, or leading responses to concerns, and promoting effective policies and strategies for adoption across the city.
- **Analyzing and Disseminating Information:** Collecting, synthesizing and communicating accurate and timely information concerning issues facing children, youth and families.

Until fairly recently, YCB was unique in the United States; today it remains a model that other cities emulate. YCB also learns from innovations across the country. Not all issues brought to YCB are successfully resolved, yet the synergy created by having elected officials and city leaders from every level of government at the same table increases the chances of resolution, whether they are addressed at YCB or within a board member's own jurisdiction.

As the end year of *CC:2007* approached, in Fall 2004, with a planning grant from the Robins, Kaplan, Miller and Ciresi, LLP Foundation, the YCB embarked on a process of creating a vision and set of goals for its third decade, to enhance healthy children's and youth development in Minneapolis over a 15-year period. In creating the *Minneapolis Children and Youth Agenda 2020* alongside the arrival of a new Superintendent of the Minneapolis Public Schools that year, city leaders and many residents recognized that the schools cannot and should not do it all when it comes to the development of our children and youth.

This was the same motivation that helped create the YCB in the 1980s, that the entire community has a responsibility for the healthy development of children and youth, in and out of school time. As with the *CC: 2007*, attempts were made to include in the *2020* strategy creation many leaders in education, health, human services and justice; philanthropic organizations; the business community; the faith community; and all those who work and live in Minneapolis.

In September 2005, the YCB was selected by *The Forum for Youth Investment* (The Forum) to help pilot a new systems change initiative called Ready by 21™. The Forum is a national nonprofit nonpartisan action tank committed to bridging research, policy and practice to help decision makers and change makers ensure that every young person is *Ready by 21™: Ready for College, Ready for Work, Ready for Life*. They trained YCB staff in a theory of change and a framework for achieving and sustaining the kinds of systems changes that can change the odds for children and youth.

The YCB secured technical assistance from the Institute of Youth, Education and Families/National League of Cities and was a learning network partner in the Forum's *Ready by 21™* initiative. Leadership teams worked on developing plans for four focus areas, and a research team identified indicators and accountability measures.

The year 2010 found YCB continuing to implement elements of the 2020 strategic planning process, including the creation in 2009-10 of the *Call to Action Children's Report Card* that lays out key indicators on the health and well-being of Minneapolis children and youth and shares the YCB work plan for improving those indicators.

In January, 2010, the YCB hosted a *Call to Action* breakfast at General Mills at which the 25th anniversary of YCB was commemorated and the *Call to Action Children's Report Card* was announced. The festivity was balanced with sobering statistics on the levels of poverty and educational achievement gaps currently rocking the city. Much has been accomplished in the course of 25 years, but state and national social and economic policies since 2000 have deteriorated many gains made since 1985 in reducing poverty and elevating educational achievement.

We are in essence, "*Back to the Future*," experiencing a 2010 that looks and feels very much like the economic recession and resulting societal challenges of 1985 and 1986 that motivated city leaders to start YCB.

The January, 2010 YCB breakfast of Champions for Children at General Mills set off a recommitment to the straightforward strengths of YCB's beginnings, to re-embrace its role as the coordinating hub to improve children and youth development, align policy across jurisdictions and sectors, and foment collaborative action in Minneapolis.

Highlights of Some Current Strategies & Programs that Champion Young People

The YCB primarily coordinates existing community initiatives and programs. But from time to time, the YCB itself will create a program to fill an identified need in the community, such as the free bus service described below. Initiatives like this typically operate under the YCB for a few years, until the YCB finds a permanent home for the program.

YCB Action Team: A core group from jurisdictional partner agencies that advises YCB staff and reviews YCB strategy. The Action Team also coordinates youth events, activities and initiatives between and among member agencies.

Early Childhood: Early childhood and school readiness information and resources for parents, providers and teachers, access and program quality, state and national standards, policy and funding, and family activities, coordination of multiple programs and providers.

Youth Bus: Safe, reliable bus rides to activities. Anyone aged 9 to 18 can ride for free.

Youth Congress: Youth representatives from across the city in grades 8 through 12 give voice to the ideas and concerns of Minneapolis youth. Through the Minneapolis Youth Congress, YCB engages young people in policy development and decision-making so that there is "no decision about us, without us."

We Want You Back and We Want You Back Day of Action. Summer-long and citywide door knocking event to identify and welcome back students who had left school without finishing high school. A summer of outreach in many venues resulted in connections with 57 high school-age students, 162 middle school students, and 28 adult basic education students.

The September, 2010 WWYB Day of Action, a city-wide door knocking effort, attracted almost 300 volunteers who knocked on thousands of doors and connected almost 100 more young people with a school or program so they can get back on a pathway to graduation.

Several volunteers from the morning came back to the day's headquarters at the Park Board, turned in their maps, picked up new ones and turned right around and went back out for the afternoon, proof positive of how rewarding and meaningful this effort is to citizens, to young people, and to the city.

Planning is underway for the 2011 Day of Action and for a continued strong partnership between Minneapolis Public Schools and the YCB. The campaign and program to reach and help dropouts will be sustained throughout the year.

The Necessity of YCB as a Coordinating Framework in 21st Century Minneapolis

Thanks to the clear-eyed vision and concerted action of city leaders who began YCB in 1985 and 1986 during a severe economic recession, the children and youth in Minneapolis have had a champion coordinating resources and action to benefit their well-being and the city's vitality for the past 25 years.

There may be a tendency in this current era of recession to question the effectiveness of a 25-year-old agency. After all, much has changed in 25 years: scads of research exist, as do other models for addressing and coordinating children and youth development across a major metropolitan city.

And yet, the premise and promise of YCB from 1985 still stands today as a strong light of hope, shared vision, and concerted action to overcome the challenges that surround Minneapolis in the early decades of the 21st century. YCB's presence assures us that all opportunities will be tested and tried to improve the health and well-being of our children and thereby their and the city's future.

YCB's framework of common sense, cross-sector coordination (powered by the participation of elected officials who do have the power, authority and responsibility to move mountains if necessary), and its flexibility and inclusiveness will ensure its continued responsiveness as a catalyst organization to "strengthen cooperation and provide an improved means to identify and remedy conditions which hinder or prevent the community's youth from becoming healthy, productive members of society."

Some might argue why Minneapolis doesn't re-engage with the *Ready by 21TM* framework (or other coordinative models) in which it participated in 2005, when the YCB was selected by *The Forum for Youth Investment* (The Forum) to help pilot the then-new *Ready by 21TM* systems change initiative.

The simple answer is this: **YCB was doing Ready by 21TM before Ready by 21TM was invented.** Twenty years before, in fact, in 1985, the YCB was created from a massive outpouring of leadership from diverse stakeholders (government agencies, nonprofits, businesses, the faith community, philanthropy, education) responding to dire circumstances in their community. They together created the *City's Children 2007* strategy, created a shared vision, set big picture goals, developed common language and messages that connected to that big picture, and coordinated themselves, the messages and the actions – all elements of a typical *Ready by 21TM* framework.

In a refreshment of *CC: 2007*, the *Minneapolis Children and Youth Agenda 2020* was developed in 2004-2005. The 2020 planning effort helped YCB strengthen its existing coordinating model with the addition of youth-centered data and information that cut across systems and organizations to reveal a current picture of the state of our children's health and well-being (the 2009-2010 Call to Action & Children's Report Card). This is another part of a typical *Ready by 21TM* framework.

The *Ready by 21TM* change framework articulates five essential components. Simultaneous attention on all components is required to achieve and sustain change, according to the *Ready by 21TM* precepts. These components (which have been essential and simultaneous elements of YCB's operating system since the 1980s), are:

- **an identified change maker(s) and structure** – *the YCB*
- **engaged stakeholders**, at all levels, sharing a common understanding of the need for BIG strategic planning and prioritization – *the jurisdictions and other partner organizations and agencies represented on the YCB and in various elements of its work*
- **shared accountability** in the form of identified goals, outcomes and indicators for measurement, as well as public ownership of those goals – *the 2009-2010 Call to Action and Children's Report Card*
- **a common vision** – *the YCB's strategic plans: City's Children 2007 and the Minneapolis Children and Youth Agenda 2020; the 2009-10 Call to Action Children's Report Card*
- **four integrated change strategies** (increasing demand, aligning policies, improving and coordinating services, and engaging youth and families), which when combined, ensure that change can occur and the results sustained – *the day-in-day-out work of the YCB*

YCB pioneered the model of coordination and policy alignment across a continuum of agencies, time, and space to better serve and improve children's and youth development in a city, well before other parts of our country caught on to the coordination advantage.

Certainly there is more to be done here in Minneapolis, to create a more comprehensive mapping of the existing organizations, identify their place on the development continuum, and in doing so create a virtual and easy-to-navigate pipeline of services, resources, and entry points accessible by all residents of Minneapolis. There is more to be done to create and/or align policies that champion children at local, state and national levels. YCB has the leadership, vision, resources, and persistence to make those desires a reality.

YCB Goals to Ensure Healthy Children and a Vital City

As YCB has matured, it has remained firmly committed to its coordination and policy alignment mission, and has strengthened its ability to convene the annual and ongoing assessment of the well-being of Minneapolis youth and children.

To keep its goals for Minneapolis youth on track, the YCB created the *Call to Action Children's Report Card*. It assesses how Minneapolis children and youth are doing now, and outlines objectives to improve their well-being for the future. The hope is that each person who reads the *Call to Action Children's Report Card* will engage in the YCB mission.

The YCB is charged with coordinating policies and practices among member agencies working with or affecting children and youth. On a practical level that means scanning the horizon and looking for opportunities to enhance existing efforts, call for new efforts, promote opportunities to collaborate and highlight areas of success.

The *Call to Action Children's Report Card* is the first policy report issued by the YCB. You can read the entire report at http://www.ycb.org/client_files/PDF_Documents/ycb-reportcard-final.pdf. One goal of the report is to paint a common picture for community leaders, presenting individual pieces of data that, if taken together, tell us how kids are doing overall in Minneapolis today.

The data highlighted in the report tells us whether children are getting what they need as they grow, if their environments – home, school, parks, clinic – are healthy, appropriate, and providing the right kind of support. The numbers also direct our attention to what should be done. Rather than respond to a shifting set of priorities that rise and fall, the YCB seeks to identify key indicators and underlying causes of poor outcomes for children.

By 2020, the YCB wants all Minneapolis youth to:

- Be connected to family, caring adults, peers and organizations in their community
- Be physically and psychologically healthy
- Be prepared for, take advantage of, and be transformed by learning opportunities in school and in the broader community
- Be fully prepared for and engaged in building their future

The YCB is committed to these goals for children and youth, but it can't achieve them alone. It needs community-wide support—everyone from policymakers to parents. The first step is to learn more about the overall condition of Minneapolis youth.

For example:

Poverty

In 2008-09, 63.8% of Minneapolis Public School students received a free or reduced-price lunch. This indicates the large number of students living in poverty.

Language Proficiency

In 2007-08, only 22.7% of Minneapolis Public School students were classified as English proficient.

By knowing these and other indicators and focusing on those that need improvement, the YCB believes that its member agencies and partner organizations can focus their energies and through YCB, their collective energies, on where they can do the most good. Doing “good” is the second goal of the report. Below is the set of actions the YCB believes will make a difference for Minneapolis' children. The YCB invites the community to join in this effort.

The YCB embraces its role as the coordinating hub for children and youth development, policy alignment, information, and collaborative action in Minneapolis.

- Toward this end it will update the “*Call to Action and Children's Report Card*” on an annual basis and report on outcomes.
- The YCB will continue to engage young people in becoming active partners in initiatives and policy decisions that affect them.
- The YCB will continue to create a coordinated legislative agenda with partner jurisdictions and develop a strategy for achieving and reporting on that agenda.
- The YCB will assess best practices for the development of a children's budget, to track and evaluate public investment in children and youth development.

- The YCB will work with the YCB Action Team of staff from partner jurisdictions to share information across jurisdictions and build partnerships to address emerging issues and remedy gaps.
- The YCB will convene key stakeholders from the larger youth serving community to build partnerships and to address overarching issues of concern.

Within this context of community engagement and to provide sustained support in meeting the above target goals, the YCB recommits to the following four goals and its role in making them happen:

1. All Minneapolis children enter kindergarten ready to learn.

- We will work to ensure low-income children and families' access to high-quality childcare and early learning opportunities.
- We will support a seamless transition from early childhood to kindergarten.
- We will work to ensure all children receive early childhood screening by the age of 3 and that health care support is available in child care centers throughout Minneapolis.

2. All Minneapolis children and youth succeed in school.

- We will support school and community efforts to eliminate the achievement gap.
- We will support the expansion of comprehensive, bi-cultural social services in schools for families who are English Language Learners.
- We will work to improve the collection of data from student surveys.
- We will support expansion of career and education initiatives such as the Minneapolis Promise.

3. All Minneapolis young people have access to quality out-of-school opportunities.

- We will create and maintain an online Out of School Time information resource.
- We will work with youth-serving agencies to create a common framework for quality program assessment.
- We will work to increase public and private funding for Out of School Time activities.
- We will support the goals of the Blueprint for Action: Preventing Youth Violence in Minneapolis.

4. All Minneapolis children and young people have opportunities to prepare themselves for the responsibilities of an active civic life.

- We will support the Minneapolis Youth Congress with staffing, funding and training.
- We will support the establishment of an annual convention between young people and community leaders from both the public and private sectors.
- We will work with and encourage our jurisdictional partners to develop and strengthen formal mechanisms for authentic youth engagement in their decision making.
- We will coordinate with youth engagement programs community-wide on policy initiatives, programs and planning.

Status in 2011

The YCB is a time-tested framework for coordinating across multiple sectors and public jurisdictions to create and sustain a network of caring adults and a caring community in which children can safely grow and develop into healthy, productive adults.

Its 10-member board includes key elected officials: the mayor of Minneapolis, two county commissioners, the county attorney, a district judge, two school board members, two city council members, a park board commissioner, two state legislators from Minneapolis; and ex-officio members from the non-profit sector, the county library, the parks superintendent, and the public schools superintendent.

A small staff of a half-dozen people carries out the day-to-day work of the Board, assisted by the wisdom and bureaucratic negotiation skills of the YCB Action Team (staff level personnel from each jurisdiction who meet monthly to coordinate across sectors).

This collection of elected officials and community leaders has the legislative and influential authority to respond both to short-term crisis needs and the long-term planning and action necessary to sustain an environment conducive to healthy children's and youth development.

The YCB Vision

YCB works to ensure that "Minneapolis is a richly diverse city where every child is cherished, every talent nurtured, and every voice respected; where no child or youth is hungry, homeless, hurting or afraid; where children, youth and families are celebrated and supported; where youth and adults

treasure what they offer to one another; and where young people grow to enrich their community now and into the future.”

YCB's Recommitment to its Coordinating Role in the City of Minneapolis

In its 25th year of operation, the YCB has recommitted to its original coordinating role as the hub for children and youth development policy and program alignment, information dissemination, and collaborative action in Minneapolis.

To better serve the citizens of Minneapolis, the YCB coordinates in 2010 by:

- **Convening** across jurisdictions and engages community members, to strengthen the alignment of and advocacy for children and youth policy, programs, plans, and other resources,
- **Communicating** credible and helpful research and information, including mapping and marketing existing resources, and,
- **Collaborating** to build partnerships that address emerging issues and to identify and remedy gaps.

It coordinates through a set of interconnected YCB functions:

- Convene and engage young people and other community members in becoming active partners in civic decision-making.
- Convene key stakeholders to align policies, programs, and services across jurisdictions and facilitate improved coordination, cooperation, resource-sharing and engagement.
- Map and promote existing programs and services for children, youth and their families.
- Build partnerships for action by supporting, coordinating or leading responses to concerns and by promoting or aligning effective policies and strategies for adoption across the city.
- Analyze and disseminate useful research and information concerning issues facing children, youth and families.

Providing a Community Context for Coordination & Engagement

In its coordinating role across jurisdictions, the YCB strives to be aware of and understand the context within which children and youth development operates.

Children and young people in Minneapolis are a community resource. Individually, collectively, and supported by adults, they possess the skills and abilities to prepare themselves to lead and operate this community now and into the future.

Children and youth development and engagement operates within a larger community system, full of various socioeconomic challenges and opportunities. The YCB strives to better understand and work to improve the current and emerging community environment, because certain conditions must exist to help children and young people thrive in the community.

YCB's coordinative work is organized with the community context in mind:

- We will engage youth in programs, initiatives and policy that affect them.
- We recognize that youth are products of their environment, so we must understand and be willing to change that environment for the better.
- All adults are responsible for setting up a climate in which young people can thrive.
- We will engage community members in understanding and advocating for a community environment that is safe and supportive.

Research & Evaluation Base

To better frame, understand and strategically operate within the community context, YCB gathers and reviews current research on child and youth development and engagement, and on current and emerging socioeconomic conditions, from local and national sources, to ensure a thorough understanding of the community environment and the people who live in the community.

The YCB disseminates the research and information that helps engage and empower all stakeholders to better understand and work to improve conditions in the larger community environment. It works with its partners to identify and use best practices and evaluation methods that provide a common platform for measuring the success within this context, towards YCB's vision and goals.

One example of this is the quality framework, *Once We Know It, We Can Grow It: A Framework for Quality Nonformal Learning Opportunities and Youth Work Practice*, from the University of Minnesota Extension's Center for Youth Development, disseminated by the Youth Community Connections organization, Minnesota's Statewide Afterschool Alliance.

Coordination Components

This next section provides some detail on each of the three major coordination responsibilities YCB undertakes – *convene, communicate, collaborate* – with current and recommended actions.

1. **YCB convenes** across jurisdictions and engages community members, to strengthen the alignment of and advocacy for children and youth policy, programs, plans, and other resources.

The current way YCB convenes is through a variety of meetings, phone calls, emails and other correspondence. Some are regular and formalized, such as the monthly YCB executive committee, Board meetings, Action Team and Youth Congress gatherings. Others are more spontaneous or day-to-day to deal with a dynamic environment. YCB is a neutral convener able to reach within and across the jurisdictions it represents.

Recommendation:

Continue current convening activities and add the following to help provide more context and connections, especially in regards to dealing with the environment and support systems in which children, youth, and their families must operate.

- Host ongoing gatherings of children and youth workers and service providers who provide services within Hennepin County
- Create a quarterly networking space and time in which children & youth service providers can meet face-to-face and share ideas, concerns, and resources. Presentations and hosting would rotate between the four jurisdictions of the YCB – County, City, Parks, and Schools. Topics of discussion and presenters might include those representing achievement gap overviews and strategies, preventing youth violence, economic development, workforce development, mental, emotional and physical health, early childhood development, financial education resources, anti-poverty strategies, etc.
- Continue to strengthen relationships with the planning and economic development units of the city and county to facilitate mutual understanding and support. Workforce and entrepreneurial development begin in early childhood.

2. **YCB communicates** credible and helpful research and information as a way to connect and inform citizens (youth and adults), service providers, and policymakers.

The current way YCB communicates is through convenings noted above, day-to-day conversations, emails, alerts, and a fairly passive website. Now that the *Call to Action and Children's Report Card* has begun, this will provide a good way to annually communicate the YCB work plan to constituents. The website can also serve as a more frequent update mechanism for key indicators and any relevant research and information.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen YCB communication tools, especially the YCB website and other social networking tools for YCB jurisdictional colleague groups and citizens, such as Constant Contact (for email blasts, e-newsletter, and news releases), Facebook, Twitter, etc. to encourage two-way communication.
- Create space on the website for youth and adult caregiver channels
- Build a system (human and technological) that searches available sources for credible research and information on children and youth development issues and use website and Constant Contact as vehicles to disseminate pertinent and timely research and information to jurisdictional colleagues, YCB partners, board members and other policymakers, and constituents. (This would be a good project to do with the Hennepin County Library partners as researching and data taxonomy are among their skill sets.)
- Revamp website into interactive and virtual cradle to workforce-ready pipeline for citizens and their families that in phases over time will become the Go-To hub for information and connections to children and youth services, resources, events, and programs across the YCB jurisdictions.
 - Create map of resources (for example, on Google maps) backed by contextual database to ensure YCB website has the information it needs to become the GoTo hub
- Using the website as a virtual space to communicate, organize, and advocate.

3. **YCB collaborates** to build partnerships that address emerging issues and identify and remedy gaps. This is where YCB shines. As a neutral convener, YCB can help connect and be a catalyst for its partner jurisdictional members and others to collaborate -- to avoid duplication of effort, to build on what one organization has already started, to provide additional support and encouragement for good works that cross organizational and sector lines.

A good recent example of this was the *We Want You Back* campaign which helped identify and reconnect students who had dropped out before they graduated from high school, to provide a customized pathway to graduation. YCB worked closely with the Minneapolis Public Schools and ultimately with all YCB partners to provide summer-long outreach and a full-day of community wide door knocking to get 100s of students back on the path to graduation.

Recommendation:

- Do more of the visible collaboration and advocacy efforts such as We Want You Back to help citizens and policymakers understand and experience the full power of the YCB coordinating role in Minneapolis
- Continue the behind-the-scenes collaboration as well.
- Reach out to partners beyond the jurisdictional members of YCB to start mapping and building a known continuum of services and resources that lessens the fragmentation of services and organizations we have now and makes accessing those services and resources more user-friendly for citizens.

Conclusion

Minneapolis is fairly unique among large cities in the United States in that its public schools and parks system are each separate governing entities from the city government. At the time of the creation of the YCB in 1985, the public library system was also governed by a separate elected board.

Minneapolis is also the most populated city in the state of Minnesota and the county seat of the most populated county (Hennepin) in the entire state. Hennepin County has its own governance structure and workforce separate from the city as well.

Given each jurisdiction's scope and direct involvement with and on behalf of city children and youth, you can see how easy it might be to fragment and silo children's and youth policy and services, frustrating citizens and policymakers alike.

At one time, schools were looked to be the primary service provider to the children and youth of the city. Kids spend the majority of their daytimes there. But as family lifestyles changed (more women in the workplace, for example), by the early 1980s recognition grew that the health and well-being of the city's children was a community-wide responsibility in and out of school time.

Concerns grew as well for the future well-being of the city youth when the 1980s recession caused cuts in youth employment during the summer. The business community took note of this as well, understanding how the resulting lack of work experience might negatively affect future workforce needs. The city's future well-being was in doubt.

Those conditions in 1985 pushed then-Mayor Don Fraser, along with Deputy Mayor Jan Hively and Minneapolis Public Schools superintendent Richard Green to bring together the partners to create the YCB, gaining state approval for the joint powers board:

"The legislature of the state of Minnesota finds that it is in the public interest to enable a major metropolitan city to improve the ability of its public agencies and services to promote the health, safety, education, and development of its youth, and finds that the creation of an organizational structure to improve coordination among the agencies and services will accomplish that objective by strengthening cooperation and providing an improved means to identify and remedy conditions which hinder or prevent the community's youth from becoming healthy, productive members of society. These activities are public purposes for which public money may be expended and are governmental functions in the promotion of the public health, safety, and welfare." *Laws of Minnesota 1985, CHAPTER 91-H.F.No. 1198*

Twenty-five years later the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board still champions the well-being and healthy development of Minneapolis children and young people. After several iterations of staffing levels and work scope changes as funding ebbed and flowed over the years, and two major strategic planning cycles, the YCB remains a unique collaborative effort of the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, and the Minneapolis Public Schools.

YCB was an innovation when it was created in 1985. It remains an innovation today. It is more relevant than ever and more needed than ever as the city, state, and country cycle through profound and permanent shifts in demographics and the economy.

After 25 years of service to the citizens of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board remains resilient, relevant, and reliable. In fact, the YCB Framework is "*Ready for Anything*" as the strong champion for the city's children, ensuring their vitality and that of the city itself, now and into the future.

APPENDIX I

Special act authorizing youth coordinating board (accepted by 85R-291 on Aug. 9, 1985), Laws 1985, Ch. 91. 86-Or-223 (adopted May 23, 1986)

Laws of Minnesota 1985

CHAPTER 91-H.F.No. 1198

An act relating to local government; authorizing the creation of a youth coordinating board in the city of Minneapolis.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. [MINNEAPOLIS; YOUTH COORDINATING BOARD; PURPOSE.]

The legislature of the state of Minnesota finds that it is in the public interest to enable a major metropolitan city to improve the ability of its public agencies and services to promote the health, safety, education, and development of its youth, and finds that the creation of an organizational structure to improve coordination among the agencies and services will accomplish that objective by strengthening cooperation and providing an improved means to identify and remedy conditions which hinder or prevent the community's youth from becoming healthy, productive members of society. These activities are public purposes for which public money may be expended and are governmental functions in the promotion of the public health, safety, and welfare.

Sec. 2. [YOUTH COORDINATING BOARD STRUCTURE.]

The city of Minneapolis, its park and recreation board, and its library board, and special school district No. 1, individually, jointly or cooperatively, may establish a coordinating board for the needs and issues of youth within the

city on the terms and conditions agreed to by the participating governmental units. The participating governmental units may establish the board as provided by Minnesota Statutes, section 471.59. An agreement establishing the board may provide for the participation of any other political subdivision whose jurisdiction includes all or part of the area of the city of Minneapolis. The coordinating board may have a governing body composed of persons selected by the participating governmental units. Members of the governing bodies of the participating units may serve on the board.

Sec. 3. [EXERCISE OF POWERS.]

The participating units may authorize the youth coordinating board to

(a) employ employees, permanent and temporary, as it may require, and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation;

(b) use the services of the participating local public bodies;

(c) execute contracts or instruments as necessary;

(d) receive and expend funds from public and private sources for its purposes; and

(e) take other actions as necessary or convenient to carry out its purposes.

No power given shall impair the authority or responsibility of the participating governmental units to carry out their regular functions.

Sec. 4. [DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS.]

The participating units may provide services and public funds to the coordinating board to carry out its purposes.

Sec. 5. [EFFECTIVE DATE.]

This act is effective the day after compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 645.021, subdivision 3 by the city council of the city of Minneapolis, its park and recreation board, its library board, and the board of special school district No. 1.

Approved May 8, 1985