

**Lake County Juvenile Justice Council
Memorandum**

Date: September 24, 2026

To: Lake County Juvenile Justice Council

From: Linsay Hale
Juvenile Justice Coordinator

Subject: **Youth Advisory Board – Proposed Bylaws Survey Results and Recommendations**

Background: At the August JJC meeting, members requested that staff draft proposed amendments to the JJC Bylaws to formally establish a Youth Advisory Board (YAB). Members also requested that the proposed amendments be circulated electronically for review and comment prior to the September JJC meeting.

The proposed amendments were circulated to JJC members through an electronic survey. The survey presented the substantive YAB provisions individually and asked members to indicate whether they Approved, Approved with Suggested Changes, Did Not Approve, or believed the provision required Further Discussion.

A total of eight responses were received.

Survey Results: The survey demonstrated substantial support for the proposed YAB structure. Of the provisions presented for review, the majority received approval from six to eight of the eight respondents, with no provision receiving a "Do Not Approve" response.

Provisions Receiving Unanimous Approval

The following provisions received 8 of 8 responses approving the proposed language:

- **Establishment of the YAB as an advisory body** to the JJC, with YAB members not becoming members of the JJC solely by virtue of their YAB service.
- **Purpose of the YAB**, including providing a meaningful and structured opportunity for youth to inform, advise, and contribute to the work of the JJC.
- **Advisory and advocacy functions**, allowing the YAB to engage in youth-led advocacy, education, outreach, and leadership activities consistent with the mission and responsibilities of the JJC.

- **Member participation requirements**, including regular participation, constructive contributions, and compliance with applicable confidentiality, conduct, and meeting requirements.
- **YAB leadership structure**, including election of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and provisions addressing officer terms and vacancies.
- **Stipends and other participation supports**, allowing the Board to authorize support for YAB members when permitted by law, grant requirements, and available funding.
- **JJC Coordinator responsibilities**, including recruitment, orientation, meeting coordination, YAB oversight, youth engagement, leadership development, communication, documentation, and reporting.
- **Youth input on future YAB-related bylaw amendments**, when practicable.

These results indicate strong consensus regarding the fundamental purpose, role, and administrative structure of the YAB.

Provisions Receiving Substantial Support with Comments

Several provisions received strong support but generated comments or questions that may warrant minor revisions or additional discussion.

1. Evaluation and Accountability

Result: 7 approved; 1 comment.

One respondent recommended identifying a specific timeframe for reporting YAB activities and accomplishments to the JJC, noting that the term "periodically" may be too vague.

Staff Recommendation: Revise the provision to establish a specific reporting frequency. Staff recommends that the Coordinator provide a quarterly update to the JJC regarding YAB participation, activities, recommendations, and accomplishments.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

2. YAB Membership

Result: 7 approved; 1 comment.

The proposed language establishes a YAB of at least eight and no more than 15 members, representing a range of experiences, backgrounds, interests, and perspectives.

One respondent suggested that youth with direct experience involving the juvenile justice system potentially be prioritized during the application and selection process.

Staff Recommendation: Maintain the current language encouraging representation of youth with direct or indirect juvenile justice experience, while considering whether the recruitment strategy should specifically identify such experience as a desired characteristic during the selection process.

Staff does not recommend making juvenile justice involvement an eligibility requirement. Doing so could unnecessarily limit the diversity of perspectives available to the YAB.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

3. Age Range

Result: 6 approved; 2 comments.

The proposed language limits initial YAB membership to high-school-aged youth, approximately ages 14–18, while preserving the option to establish a separate component or branch for young adults in the future.

Two respondents raised questions regarding the proposed age range:

- One suggested limiting membership to youth who are actually high-school-aged, noting that some 14-year-olds remain in middle school.
- Another suggested expanding the age range to at least age 21 and considering youth as young as 11, noting that youth in that age range may be involved with juvenile detention.

Staff Recommendation: Retain the proposed initial focus on high-school-aged youth, generally ages 14–18, consistent with the direction provided by the JJC at its August meeting.

The comments regarding younger and older youth are important and can be considered as part of the Council's future discussion of whether to establish additional YAB components or modify the age structure after the initial YAB has been established.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

4. Application and Selection Process

Result: 6 approved; 1 "Need Further Discussion"; 1 comment.

The proposed language currently provides that individuals wishing to serve on the YAB contact the Coordinator, who presents membership to the Board Chairperson for approval.

One respondent suggested that the process include questions and/or a short statement from applicants explaining why they want to participate.

Staff Recommendation: Revise the bylaws to authorize a formal recruitment and application process rather than simply requiring youth to contact the Coordinator.

The specific application questions and selection criteria should be established through the YAB recruitment strategy (**ATTACHMENT A**), allowing the process to be modified without requiring a bylaw amendment.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

5. Membership Terms

Result: 6 approved; 1 "Need Further Discussion"; 1 comment.

The proposed language establishes two-year terms, with the opportunity for reappointment. One respondent suggested considering a minimum one-year term.

Staff Recommendation: Maintain the proposed two-year term but allow the Council to revisit the issue after the inaugural YAB has been established.

A two-year term provides continuity and allows members sufficient time to develop knowledge of the juvenile justice system and complete projects, while reappointment provides flexibility for youth whose circumstances change.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

6. YAB Participation in JJC Activities

Result: 7 approved; 1 "Need Further Discussion."

The proposed language permits the YAB to provide regular updates and recommendations to the JJC and allows YAB members to participate in Council or Board meetings, workgroups, trainings, seminars, or other activities when appropriate.

One respondent requested additional discussion.

Staff Recommendation: Retain the provision and clarify that participation is determined based on the purpose of the activity and does not confer voting authority on the YAB.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

7. Monthly Meetings

Result: 7 approved; 1 comment.

The proposed bylaws provide that the YAB will meet monthly. One respondent questioned whether monthly meetings are appropriate or feasible for youth and suggested that the meeting schedule could instead be determined by the YAB.

Staff Recommendation: Modify the language to establish regular meetings while allowing the YAB, with Coordinator support, to determine the most appropriate meeting schedule. This would preserve accountability while giving youth meaningful input into how the YAB operates.

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

8. YAB Voting

Result: 7 approved; 1 comment.

The proposed language provides that the YAB is an advisory body, does not require a quorum, and makes recommendations by a majority of members present.

One respondent raised a concern that an eight-member YAB could result in a 4–4 vote and suggested consideration of a two-thirds voting requirement.

Staff Recommendation: Further discussion may be warranted regarding whether the YAB should require a simple majority, two-thirds majority, or another threshold for recommendations.

Because the YAB is advisory rather than a decision-making body, staff recommends keeping the voting structure relatively simple and emphasizing that a YAB vote represents a recommendation to the JJC, rather than an action binding upon the Council. (In other words, a tied vote could be presented as a non-unanimous recommendation, highlighting the pros and cons identified by YAB members.)

Further Discussion?

Vote, by consensus, to approve/edit recommendation.

Attachments:

A – YAB Recruitment Strategy

B – DRAFT Lake County Juvenile Justice Council Bylaws w/ Edits

Action Item:

Vote, by consensus, to approve the amended bylaws for recommendation to the Board officially forming the Youth Advisory Board of Lake County's Juvenile Justice Council.