

# MINNESOTA YOUTH COUNCIL



*An Initiative of Minnesota Alliance With Youth*



## Minnesota Youth Council Committee Annual Report 93rd Legislature 2019

## INTRODUCTION

The 2019 Minnesota State Legislative Session was the sixth session in which the Minnesota Youth Council Committee represented the voices and interests of youth from across the state. The Minnesota Youth Council Committee grew out of an interest by the Minnesota Youth Council [MYC], a diverse group of 36 youth and adults representing each congressional district of Minnesota, plus one at-large district. The MYC's mission is to "work together to mobilize the 325,000+ middle and high school aged people to work towards a Minnesota where no decision is made about them without them!"

The MYC is an initiative of the Minnesota Alliance With Youth, a statewide nonprofit that serves as a leading youth development capacity-builder, convener, and collaborator in Minnesota. Legislation in 2013 formalized the relationship between the Minnesota Youth Council youth members and the Minnesota Legislature, putting youth voice into law with the formation of the Minnesota Youth Council Committee [MYCC]. Representatives from each party within the House and Senate act as liaisons to the Minnesota Youth Council Committee.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Weston Loughmiller, Fairmont High School
- ZamZam Abdullahi, Rochester STEM Academy
- Catherine McComas-Bussa, Shakopee High School
- Mimi Le, Eastview High School [Apple Valley]
- Harita Duggirala, Eastview High School [Apple Valley]
- Raina Meyer, Minnesota Online High School [Edina]
- Shreya Ram, Wayzata High School
- Cole Hartman, Wayzata High School
- Jack Prince, The Blake School [Minneapolis]
- Fatima Menawa, Stillwater High School
- Ava Kalenze, St. Anthony Village High School
- Bryan Forsman, Minneapolis Washburn High School
- Dontae Holland, Minneapolis Edison High School
- Emily Geier, St. Anthony Village High School
- Juwaria Jama, Spring Lake Park High School
- Brandon Wolinski, Rogers High School
- Saja Osman, Eden Prairie High School
- Genavieve Billiet, Watertown-Mayer High School
- Nicholas Armstrong, Blaine High School
- Amy Haney, Dream Technical Academy [Willmar]
- Robert Johnson, Voyageurs Expeditionary School [Bemidji]

- Ria Edberg, Mora High School
- Hannah Erickson, Greenway High School [Coleraine]
- Addie Ness, Mora High School
- Anushka Thorat, Edina High School
- Hufsa Ahmed, Mounds View High School
- Arjun Maheshwari, Edina High School
- Diamond Thlang, St. Paul Harding Senior High School

## BILL SELECTION

Bill selection began with the Minnesota Youth Council’s Policy Committee. The Policy Committee began the year by determining issues areas to focus on. Using the data from the Minnesota Student Survey, the Youth Representatives formed their 2019 policy platform.

<p><b><u>CONSENT EDUCATION</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The MYC supports having age appropriate conversations in the K12 classroom regarding consent and sex education, and ultimately around healthy and respectful relationships.</li> <li>● MYC 2018 <a href="#">Statement on Sexual Harassment</a></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>IGNITE AFTERSCHOOL FUNDING</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a new state funding stream of \$25 million/year that will provide after school programs for an additional 25,000 young people by funding competitive grants to afterschool programs.</li> <li>● Ignite’s Afterschool <a href="#">Policy Platform</a></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>INCREASE TEACHERS OF COLOR</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Minnesota Youth Council supports the bill created by Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers in Minnesota</li> <li>● <a href="#">Bill Summary</a> details how to support and retain Teachers of Color in MN</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>JAKE’S BILL: K-12 OPIOID EDUCATION</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The purpose of Jake’s Bill is to incorporate evidence-based substance misuse prevention curriculum throughout 5-12th grade to better equip youth in the dangers of drugs and especially opioids in order to prevent use, abuse, and overdoses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students are in support of providing more resources for students in the areas of mental health, such as more school counselors</li> </ul>	<p><b>SCHOOL SAFETY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● MYC 2018 <a href="#">Statement on School Safety</a></li> <li>● MYC 2019 Statement on School Safety</li> </ul>

These themes became the basis for the legislation youth members decided to hear during session. The MYCC co-chairs led the process and youth members were the only members who had voting rights. All

decisions ultimately came down to the youth members who were participating in the legislative session.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Youth Day at the Capitol Feedback Letters [February 27, 2019]

- [HF09 “Red Flag” Law \[presented by former Rep. Erin Maye Quade\]](#)
- [HF250 Affirmative Consent Instruction \[Rep. Kunesh-Podein\]](#)

Public Safety Committee Hearing [February 27, 2019]

House Education Finance Committee Meeting [January 17, 2019]

Spring Retreat Feedback Letters [April 26, 2019]

- [SF01 Mental Health Coverage \[presented by Sue Abderholden, NAMI\]](#)
- [SF1674 School Resource Officer Requirements \[Sen. Kent\]](#)

## HIGHLIGHTS

Social Media

- Twitter: [@mnyouthcouncil](#)
- Instagram: [@mnyouthcouncil](#)

[Youth Day at the Capitol 2019 \[YDAC19\]](#)

- On Wednesday, February 27, 2019, hundreds of young people came to the state capitol for YDAC, an annual event connecting youth, community experts and local policymakers. The goal was to get young people talking with their legislators about issues that are important to them. YDAC was presented by: Minnesota Alliance With Youth, [Minneapolis YWCA](#), [Minnesota Civic Youth](#), the [Minnesota Community Education Association](#), and the [Minnesota History Center](#).

[Youth in Educational Leadership Summit \[YELS\]](#)

- Across the state, young people are in positions of leadership in their schools and communities, working within the same system and towards similar goals regarding education and equity. However, we rarely have the opportunity to meet and collaborate directly. We know that strong youth voice, representation, and partnership is necessary in order to create a Minnesota that empowers ALL students.

The [Minnesota Youth Council](#) hosted the very first Youth in Educational Leadership Summit (YELS) on March 30th at Patrick Henry High School. It was an exciting day full of trainings and workshops designed and facilitated entirely by youth. Teachers, coaches, parents, and other

mentors also participated in our student facilitated Adult Partner track, where they learned how to best support young leaders. See a recap of the day's events in our [YELS2019 Wakelet!](#)

### [21st Century Grants](#)

- *“The 21st Century Grant Process has been proposed as a project by MDE to The SAC Committee. Since the Grant is of a great size, we as the SAC were hoping that the Policy Committee would also like to participate in this work. The 21st Century Grant is about 30 Million Dollars that go to different programs at schools around the state. This process for us as the Minnesota Youth Council entails reviewing grant applications as well as learning how to review grants. Because this decision will affect jobs and the lives of people around Minnesota, we were hoping that this could be an overarching theme for the Council for at least this year; and hopefully, many to come.”* - MYC Member and Education Committee Veteran Chair Jack Prince

### Other

- [“Learn With Us”](#) Video Series
- MYC graduates Elena Medeiros and Allyssa DeGrand returned as college freshman to serve as Adult Partners.
- Capitol Pathways Intern, Judith supported MYC during legislative session
- Summer internship with MYC alum Raina Meyer
- Step Up Intern, Juwaria Jama supported MYC with a summer internship
- Youth Reps Bryan Forsman and Hufsa Ahmed are volunteering during the summer to support MYC

### MYC Monthly Newsletters

- [April 2019 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [March 2019 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [February 2019 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [December 2018 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [November 2018 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [October 2018 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [September 2018 MYC Newsletter](#)
- [August 2018 MYC Monthly Newsletter](#)

## MEDIA

- #EdGovTownHall Twitter Event
  - Sponsored by Asian American Organizing Project, Children’s Defense Fund, EdAllies, Education Evolving, Educators 4 Excellence, Midwest Center for School Transformation, Minnesota Youth Council and Teach for America - Twin Cities.
  - Moderated by Youth Council Representatives Raina Meyer and Ava Kalenze.
- Minnesota Youth Council Representative Selection Announcements

- [Aaron Sopelle](#)
- [Anushka Thorat](#)
- [Ava Kalenze + Emily Geier](#)
- [Juwaria Jama](#)
- [Logan Clarke](#)
- [Nicholas Armstrong](#)
- [Saja Osman](#)
- [Arjun Maheshwari WikiWisdom](#)
- Harita Duggirala - [Science Olympiad](#)
- Alumni Jessica Mendoza - EdAllies
  - [Connecting Students With Community: My Story and Call to Action](#)
- Raina Meyer + Mimi Le - [Kavanaugh Statement](#)
- Mimi Le - [ExCEL Award Winner](#)
- Saja Osman - EdVoices on Teacher Diversity
  - [While Adults Talk About Teacher Diversity, Nothing is Changing for Youth of Color](#)
- Raina Meyer + Mimi Le - Youth in Educational Leadership Summit
  - [YMCA Expands Effort to get Minnesota Kinds More Politically Involved](#)