



STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION'S
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE (YEC)
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 374-A
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<https://youthcommission.lacounty.gov>

Monday, April 13, 2026

6:30 PM

Video for the entire meeting. (26-2287)

Attachments: [Video](#)

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, and Land Acknowledgement. (26-1599)

YEC Chair Amanda Hernandez called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. County Staff conducted Roll Call. YEC Chair Hernandez read the County's Land Acknowledgement.

Present: Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Mercedes Jackson and Commissioner Clarissa Peña

Absent: Commissioner Joseph Roa

Approval of minutes from the meeting of February 9, 2026. (26-1600)

2. **On motion of Commissioner Mercedes Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Clarissa Peña, and duly carried, the minutes from the meeting of February 9, 2026 were approved by the following vote:**

Ayes: 3 - Commissioner Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Mercedes Jackson and Commissioner Clarissa Peña

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Joseph Roa

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. PRESENTATION

3. Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) - Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program (FYSCP)
- Jason Gutierrez- Coordinator III
 - Kesha Wood- Coordinator I
 - Maria Tello- Program Activities Specialist (26-1601)

YEC Chair Amanda Hernandez opened the presentation and discussion with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Foster Youth Services (FYS) Program. Kesha Wood, Coordinator I, provided an overview of the program, highlighting its five strategic objectives, program goals, student support services, core services, regional support, and school partnerships. Maria Tello, Program Activities Specialist, presented information on tutoring services, Postsecondary FAFSA and CADAA support, CalKIDS, data collection, and available resources.

Following the presentation, panelists addressed questions from Commissioners:

- **On increasing youth awareness of available programs, Ms. Tello noted that enrollment is not required to access FYS or tutoring services. Workshops are open to students, and tutoring is offered via referral. She shared that 63 staff members support 80 school districts, with Youth Ambassadors, former foster youth, assisting with community outreach. Ms. Wood added that the team also works with approximately 300 charter schools, providing outreach and training for principals, counselors, and liaisons. Youth Ambassadors regularly contribute feedback for program improvement.**
- **Liaisons are assigned to all districts and charter schools to serve as points of contact for foster youth and to provide information on the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.**

- School related complaints are managed through the Ombuds Office or the school counselor. Other concerns may be directed to the FYS Program through District Liaisons.
- For probation involved youth, the FYS team provides FAFSA and CADAA support, however, Probation Youth are transitioned to another LACOE program. The team also collaborates with the Independent Living Program (ILP) Coordinator to support broader foster youth needs.
- School counselors do not have direct access to the full list of foster youth but may request the information from the District Liaison.
- Youth, parents, or caregivers, may contact the FYS Program for a consultation. Schools display flyers advertising workshops, resources, and the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.
- The FYS Program serves students in grades K–12, with increasing emphasis on Transitional Age Youth and students in adult school. Postsecondary students receive support through college and career transition programs, FAFSA, CADAA assistance, CalKIDS scholarships, and one on one advising.

Panelists were invited to the Youth Commission's Listening Sessions and expressed interest in participating. Ms. Wood invited Commissioners to attend the Executive Advisory Council (EAC) meetings, to ensure the youth voice is heard. She will provide a flyer once available.

Ms. Wood noted that the FYS team has not yet worked with the Department of Youth Development (DYD). Discussion followed regarding the transition from the former Education Coordinating Council to the current Education Table and the importance of collecting youth data through surveys. Ms. Tello shared that surveys are distributed at various events by staff and encouraged Dan Wheeler, Youth Commission Community Outreach Coordinator, to attend the Regional Networking events for this purpose.

Executive Director Tiara Summers spoke about the importance of cross department collaboration with DYD, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Ombuds Office. She also described ongoing collaboration between the Youth Commission and DYD related to Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath's November 18, 2025, motion, "Strengthening Housing Supports, Care, and Services for Former Foster Youth and Those Exiting DCFS Care."

She provided information about the upcoming DCFS Youth Development Services Independent Living Program Celebration in June honoring foster youth graduates and offered support in promoting FYS Program resources.

Ms. Wood encouraged Commissioners to stay engaged with the EAC to ensure youth perspectives are represented. The discussion concluded with consensus on the importance of continued cross agency collaboration.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

III. DISCUSSION

4. Discussion on upcoming listening sessions and exploring engagement strategies. (26-1602)

YEC Chair Amanda Hernandez opened the discussion on upcoming Listening Sessions and strategies to increase youth engagement. Executive Director Tiara Summers provided an update on the Third District Listening Session scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2026, at Valley College. Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath is expected to attend. The session will focus on safe spaces, informed by feedback from the Youth Commission (YC) Retreat on mental health and safe spaces. Supervisor Horvath will facilitate an interactive Community Vision Board activity, and UCLA Behavioral Health Services will attend with a group of 30 to 40 foster youth.

Commissioner Clarissa Peña shared updates on the Fourth District Listening Session, scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Museum of Latin American Arts in Long Beach. The Session will highlight the Youth Commission's five strategic categories and the Foster Youth Bill of Rights as they relate to each category. Executive Director Summers noted that this will be the first time a YC Listening Session will be held in collaboration with the California Youth Connection and both the County of Los Angeles and the California State Ombuds Offices. This collaboration will honor the 25-Year Celebration of California's Foster Youth Bill of Rights. Commissioner Peña also provided a brief update on the First District Listening Session held on Friday, March 20, 2026.

YEC Chair Hernandez emphasized the importance of advocating for youth under age 18 by ensuring they receive clear information about available resources. Dan Wheeler, Community Outreach Coordinator, reported that over 300 surveys have been collected from recent events. He also announced upcoming engagements with the Los Angeles Unified School District on May 1, 2026, and the LA City Youth Expo on May 30, 2026.

Commissioner Mercedes Jackson expressed interest in strengthening collaboration with the CRCD (Coalition for Responsible Community Development). Executive Director Summers reported that the Second District Listening Session will be held at the Youth Build site on July 25, 2026. She also encouraged Commissioners to begin planning for the Youth Empowerment Commission's End-of-Year Report and associated event.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

- 5.** Opportunity for members of the public to provide comments to the Commission on item(s) not on the agenda, that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (26-1603)

No members of the public addressed the Committee.

- 6.** Adjournment. (26-1604)

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 11, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner Mercedes Jackson, seconded by Commissioner Clarissa Peña, there being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.