



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT**  
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**Youth Empowerment Program Meeting Notes**

Friday, August 8, 2025

10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://esd-wa-gov.zoom.us/j/87816576823?pwd=kPjT7j13LLhbbEtz6bDqVfe2D3hYAP.1>

Meeting ID: 878 1657 6823

Passcode: 295769

Attendees: Kristin DiBiase, Chair; Lucas Doelman, Co-Vice Chair; Dave Carl, Lyn Sowdon. Staff: Emily Spears, Elaine Stefanowicz.

1. Debrief from Youth Empowerment Event Feedback Suggestions:

We need some sort of feedback built in next year, so that we can gauge our audience. We also need more engagement from our audience. Possibly planting questions that we answer in an effort to get our intended audience to answer?

Advertisement geared more towards our intended audience could be improved, as well. I thought we would introduce our Superhero that we would be, would have been a great idea, since that was our theme.

Overall. I do not have anything negative to say, as it was fun, and if we helped one of our target customers, we helped many. I thought the timeframe was perfect but perhaps we could have it during the school year. We could market to schools better that way.

This is really difficult type of event to do successfully because of the restrictions (Zoom bombing). Good at accommodating people with disabilities. Less engagement from participants.

Provide explanation of Zoom restrictions because of (reason). Staff call or email to verify people are attending. People could call in if having trouble connecting to Zoom. Send confirmation a week before and two days before.

On registration form: I am a youth (9<sup>th</sup> grade – 22 years old); support staff; government employee in the disability community. Send a reminder that event is coming up. Instructions: look for a confirmation email that says this. Check junk folder.

(Staff) Notes for YEP debrief [focus on members during meeting]:

- Consider using Event Brite (if accessible – mixed feedback per Google) instead of Zoom for registration (24 hr. reminder capacity needed, demographic info on registration form)
  - If using Zoom again, re-review how to send confirmation emails (goes 1 pg. at a time)
- Create protocol for cancelling (timeline/knowledge of confirmations)
  - Consider handling registration on behalf of members/speakers
  - Note that meeting won't be recorded
- Revisit outreach (an event for youth, not professionals)
  - Perhaps meet with ESD communications department for suggestions
  - Consider increasing engagement – such as a poster contest
  - Consider working with programs for enrollment (special education, transition, YMCA, etc.)
- Consider doing a possible youth advisory council or junior commission
  - Look at [Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council \(LYAC\)](#), [Washington State Independent Living Council \(WASILC\)](#), OR [LGBTQ Commission](#) for examples
  - Possibly reach out to WASILC/LGBTQ commission for more info
  - Elizabeth will also ask at the next Director's meeting
- Preparation was good, just not participation
  - Consider setup/creating a backup plan in that case
- Tech piece note: spotlighting changes view of interpreters/speaker
- Revisit overall event (and speaker) timings [thank them in the meantime]
  - Fridays and Mondays may not be the best days (extended weekends)
  - Summertime may not be the best timeframe for this type of event
  - Speakers may be able to join during breaks instead of start (slot afterwards)
- Revisit use of video with group
- During school year, work with transition students. In-school watch parties.
  
- Create a junior GCDE council; work with [Washington State Independent Living Council \(WASILC\)](#), and [Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council \(LYAC\)](#) program cohort. Work on one big project throughout academic year. Inspire advocacy and leadership for students with disabilities.
- Presentations went really well. Number of participants was disappointing. Registration reminder a week before, day before and day of.
- High school classes are 50 minutes in length
- Schools are not all on the same schedule

- Target specific school districts. Rotate schools. Washington state has 295 school districts.
  - Create a pilot project to see what works
  - Try online program again
  - Map out a pilot of working with school districts for next academic school year (fall 2026)
  - Can we get feedback from the 2 students who did attend?
  - Follow-up with speakers and get sense of how it went and what we can do differently next time.
  - Could we have a table at employee recognition event?
  - Youth Empowerment Awards for students with disabilities
  - Springtime event
  - Teachers know student leaders with disabilities--each school district chooses 2 student leaders to participate in our event. Becomes more like an honor.
  - Design a poster contest
  - Figure out an annual project
  - Teachers nominate students and we select who will be on Jr. GCDE Council. Sophomores and juniors in high school. Youth each get a 2-year term.
  - Invite a LYAC coordinator visit YEP meeting for either September 5 or October 3
2. List best practices and improvements for next year's event
  3. Registration questions
  4. Advertising for youth

**Next Meeting: Friday, September 5, 2025, at 10:00 am**