

Anchorage Assembly Youth Summit

Report

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What is the purpose of an Anchorage Assembly Youth Summit?

The Purpose of the Anchorage Assembly Youth Summit is to increase youth participation in the local politics of Anchorage by reaching out to the city's youth and inviting them to be active participants in their local government.

The Municipality of Anchorage administers several aspects of community that have an impact on childhood and adolescence, the stage of life between birth up to entering adulthood at the age of 18. The aspects most valuable to young people include: infrastructure such as roads and parks; mental health resources; education, such as the Anchorage School District; and the environment such as fires and litter. Therefore, the policies and funding of government services relating to those aspects have an effect on the livelihoods of the youth and their confidence in the government. For example, the ongoing budget deficit crisis in the Anchorage School District has a heavy impact on the core youth aspect of education. While the decision to cut schools and services in order to address the budget deficit has lowered student confidence in ASD and the State of Alaska.

A single-day civic youth summit will thus focus on the government's role in infrastructure, mental health, schools, and the environment. Discussions on issues closest to youth livelihoods can give participants the opportunity to identify community issues impacting them and the solutions to act on, be aware of the resources given by the local government to help them, build connections among the community, engage in local government and politics, and talk with their representatives. We believe that the Anchorage Assembly Youth Summit will help

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students understand how to communicate and work with the local government as well as gain hope and faith in their future in education, government, and the city of Anchorage.

Who should participate? How do we get them to participate?

We believe that the Youth Summit should target older teens, ages ranging from fifteen to nineteen. Teens around these ages are more likely to have a better understanding of politics and constructed their beliefs. Promotion should target both students of the Anchorage School District, alternative education such as private education or homeschooled students, and UAA middle college students. The Municipality should also encourage students involved in United States History or United States government, the Student Advisory Board, and Student Government to attend the Youth Summit. We believe having people actively involved in Anchorage politics—such as current assembly members—should be the ones to teach the youth attending the summit about local politics, the history of youth involvement, and leadership. Students are most likely to participate when they see issues they are interested in discussing or learning about such as the environment, mental health, and infrastructure.

Schedule and Classes

Proposed One-Day Agenda

The approximate date for a Youth Summit will be between February and April of the year 2027. The one-day agenda would be held from 8:30pm-4:30pm.

8:30am - 9:00am - Morning Meeting at the Lucy Cuddy Hall or Rasmuson Hall

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- ↳ overview of activities, hand out pamphlets

9:05am - 11:25am - Morning Classes

- 9:05am - 9:45am - Local Politics¹

↳ This class will teach how local politics directly influences the livelihoods of young people, especially through educational policies. A mock election will also be held during this class, the content of the election shall be left to the decision of the Municipality.

- 9:50am - 10:35am - History of youth involvement¹

- ↳ how students have and continue to influence government locally and globally

- 10:40am - 11:25am - Leadership & Public Speaking¹

- ↳ learn/prepare to testify before a small group of Assembly Members

11:30am - 12:30pm - Lunch at the Lucy Cuddy Hall

↳ Have one Assembly Member seated at each lunch table to connect and mingle with participants.

12:35pm - 3:00pm - Afternoon Special Classes

- 12:35pm - 1:20pm - First Class² (Environmental Issues, Infrastructure, Mental Health)
- 1:25pm - 2:10pm - Second Class² (Environmental Issues, Infrastructure, Mental Health)
- 2:15pm - 3:00pm - Third Class² (Environmental Issues, Infrastructure, Mental Health)

3:05pm - 3:35pm - Preparing to testify¹

3:35pm - 4:05pm - Testimonies¹

- ↳ Create a mock assembly meeting. Six assembly members would be separated into pairs in each of the three rooms previously used for classes. The students would be split evenly among the rooms to testify on the actual bills on the table.

4:10pm - 4:40pm - Reflect & Review

¹Held in a rented classroom.

²Individual participants may be able to select the order in which they take the afternoon classes.

Afternoon Special Classes

Classes held in the afternoon will focus on more specific community issues, those that we believe affect the youth the most or ones that they would value. Participants may select the order of the three classes to take.

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The topic of the Environment is important to the youth as it pertains to the health of the natural environment as well as the changes and challenges to the health of the environment that may impact the future of the youth. The topic of Mental Health is important to the youth demographic as adolescents experience mental troubles at a higher rate than other demographics and impacts those in crisis and their close family and friends. Lastly, the topic of Infrastructure is also important to the youth as it relates to the roads, public facilities, and recreational areas they use in their daily lives.

Guest Speakers

We recommend inviting guest speakers to present the Afternoon Specialty Classes. If available, a good candidate for a class is one that:

- Possesses credentials to teach such subject
- Is a local, at least within the state of Alaska
- Relatable to a young audience, such as in their own youth.

We found the following individuals or organizations to be good candidates to help conduct these classes:

- Environment
 - Quannah Chasinghorse - Chasinghorse (Lakota/Dene) is an indigenous model and land protector from Eagle Village, Alaska. Through her fame as a model, she uses her platform to advocate for the protection of Arctic native lands and has spoken at numerous organizations including the United Nations.
 - Researchers and scientists may also be good candidates to work with students on the topic of the environment through an informed and unbiased perspective.

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- Mental Health

- Krista Schooley - Schooley is a mental health advocate from Soldotna, Alaska. She serves in the Alaska Mental Health Board, the Kenai Peninsula Suicide Coalition, and is the Alaska Policy Director for the National Shattering Silence Coalition.
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI Alaska) - NAMI is an organization that hosts youth-led support groups and classes educating on mental health, as well as acting in advocacy.

- Infrastructure

- Government officials such as those from the Anchorage Assembly's Infrastructure, Enterprise, & Utility Committee-of-the-Whole may be the best candidate to teach about infrastructure from a local view. The Committee is currently chaired by Zachary Johnson and vice-chaired by Erin Baldwin Day.
- The current Municipal Manager and former Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality of Anchorage Bill Falsey may also be a credited candidate for a class on infrastructure.

A few candidates have features to request for public speaking or presentation on their website. Their pages are linked at the top of the Links & Contact Information section.

How should youth be recruited? What should outreach look like?

We also suggest the most effective ways to promote the Youth Summit are handing out flyers to local high schools or youth organizations, coordinating with high schools to incorporate them into their morning announcements, and promoting the flyer on social media. Flyer templates are provided as attachments to this report. Specific organizations that might be interested in the youth summit are:

- Alaska Youth for Environmental Action
- Arctic Youth Ambassadors from the Alaska Conservation Foundation
- The Spirit of Youth
- POWER Center (formerly Alaska Youth Advocates)
- Youth Philanthropists Alaska
- Anchorage Youth Vote
- Anchorage Youth Court
- Alaska Teen Media Institute

Outreach should focus on encouraging the Youth to be involved in local politics. Many teens in Anchorage are interested in addressing issues that concern Anchorage youth but are unaware as to how they should get involved.

Costs of Amenities

The main costs to hold a one-day youth summit consists of renting rooms in the University of Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) and the cost of food to feed all participants of the summit. This includes:

- Rooms
 - UAA has available classrooms, conference spaces, and auditoriums to rent across its campus. We recommend renting three classrooms in the university's Rasmuson Hall to use as the space for the morning and afternoon classes. One classroom rental is listed at a rate of \$330 for a full day. Therefore, we can expect a total cost of \$990 to rent three classrooms.
- Food
 - The Lucy Cuddy Hall serves UAA's culinary students and is also the host to the student-run restaurant Lucy's. We believe Lucy Cuddy Hall may serve well as both the meeting spot for the summit's large group and the eatery for lunch during the summit. UAA has listed renting Lucy Cuddy Hall for a rate of \$880 for eight hours.
 - An alternative option to feed the participants of the youth summit is through catering, such as from a nearby subway. We estimate the cost to cater for this summit around \$800.
- Other costs may include travel and guest speaker fees, as well as decoration and mock election properties such as mock ballots and ballot boxes.
- We also recommend that the summit allocate the remaining budget to S.W.A.G. (Stuff We All Get) for the participating youth. SWAG will give students a physical symbol of the

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summit and a reminder of what they learned, even years later. This is called associative memory.

What outcomes should result from a summit?

A successful Anchorage Assembly Youth Summit should ultimately engage young people to participate in politics and local government as young people and in adulthood.

The content taught during the summit will enable participants to learn the basics of politics and advocate for solutions on issues impacting their livelihoods and their communities. The morning classes — that being Local Politics, History of Youth Involvement, and Leadership & Public Speaking — should allow the youth to learn the basics of political participation, form the skills that empower them to contribute to local government, and motivate them to be active in politics. The content taught at the afternoon specialty classes — that being Environmental Issues, Mental Health, and Infrastructure — will enable participants to apply the skills taught in the morning towards important issues that impact them today. They will learn to identify community topics or issues and form ideas or solutions to such issues independently or in collaboration as a community member.

Another important manner of developing young people into active community members is through immersion. In this summit, both a mock election during the class Local Politics and a mock business meeting in the afternoon will be held for the participants to engage in two major aspects of a democratic government. A mock election which simulates similar political elections will help participants familiarize themselves in the process of voting through a ballot and bring the motivation to vote in future elections of which they are eligible and registered to vote. Meanwhile, a mock business meeting that simulates a government meeting will also help

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participants familiarize themselves in an environment where they face elected officials and bring the confidence to speak up and contribute to discussions in the time allotted for audience participation.

How should the Assembly continue youth engagement after the summit?

While a single-day event may motivate its participants to be active in local government, it is equally important to have these participants continue their activity after the summit. One way to retain youth in local government is by presenting more opportunities and programs within the Municipality to join. These include promoting the various programs and youth positions available throughout the municipal government, such as the Anchorage Assembly's Youth Representative Position where three representatives participate in the Municipality of Anchorage's Legislative process, the Anchorage School District's Student Advisory Board that advocates on education from the student's perspective, and the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission that advises the Mayor and the Assembly on issues impacting Youth. Outside of special youth programs, the Assembly can also keep the participants updated on real-life topics through the Assembly Newsletter and various other newsletters in the government that can be promoted to the participants to follow. By further immersing young people in government and keeping them up-to-date on important issues, the future adults of this city may continue to be active citizens of a democratic government.

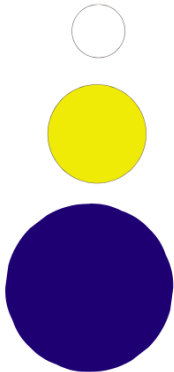




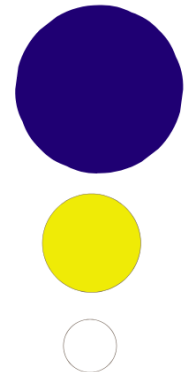
2026-2027



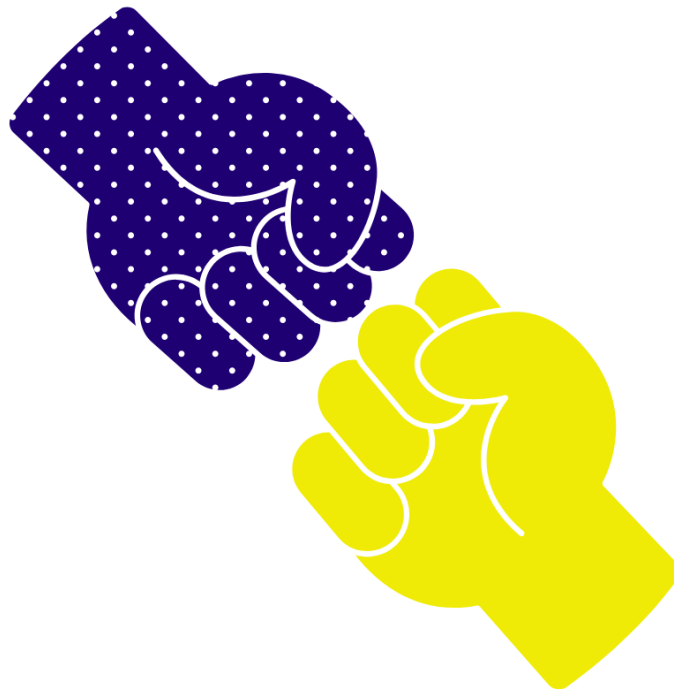
ANCHORAGE YOUTH SUMMIT



FEBUARY 2027



Join other youth 15-19 years old to
learn WHY we need you to lift up your
voice in your communities!



2027 Civic Anchor Youth Summit

DAY AND MONTH
@ UAA 8:30 - 4:30

- Engage in Local Politics
- Interact with your
Government Officials
- Become an Active Citizen



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Links & Contact Information

Quannah Chasinghorse - Harry Walker Agency

<https://www.harrywalker.com/speakers/quannah-chasinghorse>

NAMI Alaska, request a presentation

<https://namialaska.org/support-and-education/presentations/request-a-presentation/>

Alaska Youth for Environmental Action

<https://akcentereducationfund.org/alaska-youth-for-environmental-action/>

(907) 274-3621

Arctic Youth Ambassadors from the Alaska Conservation Foundation

<https://www.arcticyouthambassadors.org/>

AYA@AlaskaConservation.org

Spirit Of Youth

<https://www.spiritofyouth.org>

(907) 929-3939

POWER Center (formerly Alaska Youth Advocates)

https://www.bethechange907.org/agency/detail/?agency_id=8376

(907) 929-2633

qbracken@akbh.org

Youth Philanthropists Alaska

<https://www.ypak.org/>

ypa.alaska@gmail.com

Anchorage Youth Vote

<https://www.anchorageyouthvote.org/>

anchorageyouthvote@gmail.com

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Anchorage Youth Court

<https://www.anchorageyouthcourt.org/>

info@anchorageyouthcourt.org

Alaska Teen Media Institute

<https://alaskateenmedia.org>

907-272-2864

news@alaskateenmedia.org

UAA Event Services

reservation@alaska.edu

(907) 751-7273

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