

Youth Futures Council Planning Day Top Voted Priorities

January 20, 2018, 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

Education to Employment

1. Experiential Learning
2. Essential Life Skills and Soft Skills Training
3. Ensure youth are able to transition from school to the real world

Infrastructure and Rural/Urban Development

1. Improve internet access across PEI
2. Offering subsidies or incentives for businesses operating in rural PEI

Foundational issues/Social Supports

1. Develop incentives for job creation in the private sector

Civic Engagement/Other

1. Promote greater representation of youth on agencies, boards and commissions
2. Update forms of communication to better match the way youth communicate and interact with information
3. Create a central hub for all information on apprenticeships, youth council opportunities, etc.



Youth Futures Council Records of Discussion

January 20th, 2017, 8:30 – 12:00 p.m AST

In Attendance:

Moira Shaw
Nicole Mountain
Emma Huestis
Ali Younis
Taya Nabuurs

Alex Dalton
John Ployer
Vivian Huang
Olivia Batten
Brezlyn Knockwood

Facilitator: Vernon MacIntyre
Facilitator: Doris Taylor
Ex-Officio: Alicia Bruce
Ex-Officio: Brad Colwill

Welcome

This meeting commenced at 8:30am with a welcome and round-table introductions of members, including new members Brezlyn Knockwood, Olivia Batten and Vivian Huang.

Doris Taylor (Health PEI) and Vernon MacIntyre (Family and Human Services) joined the council to facilitate this meeting.

Following introductions, council members participated in an ice-breaker activity leading into a facilitated discussion around the top 9 items from the YDAY report that received the most votes from council members.

Background

At the November YFC meeting the Council discussed the need to follow-up with the broader public on their action-items and recommendations in between YDAYs, and to seek out opportunities for engagement. Council discussed what some priority areas might be based on recommendations contained in the report and the transcribed YDAY canvases.

The council reviewed recommendations made at YDAY and voted on their top 5 preferences. It was decided that a Facilitator would be brought in to lead the in-person January meeting to help council develop a work plan and engagement strategy to further develop 5 recommendations to be submitted by the Spring sitting of the Legislature.

While each individual council member voted for their top five choices, there was ultimately a tie for 9 priorities.

Facilitated Session

This session was based on the top nine recommendations as voted on by council members after YDAY. These recommendations were discussed by council and grouped together in some instances based on similarities and crossover. The following were the initial priority recommendations:

1. Experiential Learning
2. Essential Life Skills and Soft Skills Training
3. Ensure Youth are able to transition from school to the real world
4. Improve Internet access across PEI
5. Offer subsidies or incentives for businesses operating in rural PEI
6. Develop incentives for job creation in the private sector
7. Promote greater representation of youth on agencies, boards and commissions
8. Update forms of communication to better match the way youth communicate and interact with information
9. Create a central hub for all information on apprenticeships, youth council opportunities, etc.

Below is a summary of conversations that emerged around each topic, and the ultimate groupings that took place.

1. Experiential Learning

- Need to diversify opportunities, particularly for Bachelor of Arts students
- Internships and co-ops are great opportunities to get work experience needed to start careers
- Strong need for mentorship.
- Holland College builds it into programs already
- Summer placements don't always match what students want
- Work being done at UPEI to revamp the co-op program
- Engagement opportunity: Talk to young people in different programs, find out what they're looking for.
- Pair experiential learning with businesses
- What are students learning in schools that private companies can benefit from/leverage as a mutually beneficial learning opportunity?
- Applied learning
- How do we make the jump to the bigger picture, and how do you know what skills are transferrable?

2. Essential life skills and soft skills training AND Ensure youth are able to transition from school to the real world.

- Topic that came up at REAC meetings attended by members
- Career Exploration Course. Mixed reactions from Council members. Some indicated there is not enough substance and more could be added.
- Girl Guides has a program called "Adulthood"- interesting concept
- Challenges in curriculum and some teachers are not well-matched to teach the courses
- Portfolio- resume and cover letter is covered
- Opportunity to offer interview prep skills- have someone youth don't know come in to go through it with them, simulates a real-life interview more than just practicing with classmates or a teacher

- Council suggested we invite someone in to speak to the CEO course from a curriculum standpoint
- CEO used MyPlan for budgeting, but it isn't relevant when you're at that age. What is the best way to deliver the message?
- Young people listen to slightly older peers. Could create a network of engaged "Peer mentors" who could come to classes to speak to real-life challenges of "adulting"
- Covering some of the CEO course topics in grade 12 rather than grade 10 may be more relevant to students
- Bring labour market info into schools (send younger employee in to share) and have information available online. Youth would prefer email to someone in person or having to search online.
- Real world is changing and high schools need to change with it and create interactive ways to learn about careers online.
- Youth don't know about RRSPs, mortgages, landlords, tenants, how to find an apartment or tenant's rights
- Many young people ruin their credit before they even understand what it is- how can we tackle this?

3. Offer subsidies or incentives for businesses operating in rural PEI AND Develop incentives for job creation in the private sector

- Council members have heard businesses cite that it is difficult to get young workers
- Keeping up with minimum wage cited as a challenge for businesses
- People look for jobs in their field only and won't consider other options to build skills/experience
- Students aren't looking for full-time work
- Often a minimum requirement is a Bachelor's degree
- Don't know what job opportunities are out there; hidden job market is a challenge
- Lack of exposure to opportunities is still a problem
- Contract work is a concern, no benefits, no insurance coverage, no ability to plan or save long-term
- Aging workforce and changing jobs. Older workers and employers should be supporting young workers by training up
- Recognition that while there are also greater demands on younger generation in terms of debt, there are often a lot of greater demands on aging population keeping them in the workforce as well
- Graduate mentorship program is a great start—applicable to graduates within three years of graduating
- Important part of retention, and keeping people on PEI
- Succession planning is important
- Need to incentivize opportunities in rural PEI

4. Update forms of communication to better match the way youth communicate and interact with information AND Create a central hub for all information on apprenticeships, youth council opportunities, etc.

- Engage PEI—not inspired to click it to find out about volunteer opportunities
- Intergenerational gap among youth, even by 5 years
- Need a central hub

- Could be hosting issue-focused events
- What is public engagement?
 - Council discussed what meaningful public engagement looks like and how they might like to better engage with Island Youth:
 - Town Halls—difficult to organize and facilitate
 - Social Media—ask public what life skills they think youth need
 - Polls
 - Small focus groups (students who recently took CEO course)
- Create a central registry that connects both Engage PEI and Work PEI, show linkages between volunteer opportunities and work opportunities
- Reduce the use of jargon and check the tone of voice on social media postings or website
- Consider Instagram ads in some instances
- Youth using Instagram more actively, but still on Facebook for information

5. Promote greater representation of youth on agencies, boards and commissions

- Promote at schools through counselors, put on school announcements
- Most members found out about the council through referrals. Youth are more into what they are told than what they read, they read so much that it's just background noise
- Partner with learning institutions to recognize as OJT hours
- Word of Mouth most valuable format- being recommended by a trusted adult or mentor is valuable
- Promote the value it adds to youth's resumes
- Promote ABCs where a youth voice is valued
- Many youth feel they can't contribute, so they wait to be told or wait to be invited
- Ensure youth know their voices are heard and are valued when they are there

6. Improve Internet Access Across PEI

- YFC requests an update on internet infrastructure
- Noted that it is imperative for business growth and development in rural PEI, or even for young people wanting to settle and live there.

YDAY Report

Council recommends that the report be released publicly as soon as possible.

Work Plan

Steps moving forward

Council members volunteered to form sub-committees on each of the five topics to further refine recommendations and develop engagement strategies.

Adjournment

Decision: The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 20th from 7:00-9:00pm via videoconference (Zoom).