

Youth Board Repurposed with Focus on Youth Empowerment

Poughkeepsie... County Executive Marcus Molinaro has announced the Dutchess County Youth Board has been repurposed as the Dutchess County Youth Board and Coordinating Council to better address the current needs and challenges facing Dutchess County's youth.

The new law continues the work of the Youth Board and infuses it with much needed experience, guidance and skills found with agencies and organizations serving children in Dutchess County and expands the scope of the board's mission with new goals and objectives. As originally outlined in his [2014 State of the County address](#), County Executive Molinaro is modeling the Youth Board and Coordinating Council after the successful Criminal Justice Council with focus on strengthening the community and family interaction with youth in an effort to prevent crime, improve quality of life, and empower young people to lead productive lives and achieve greater success for themselves and their families.



County Executive Molinaro talks to high school students participating in a DCRCCOC Youth Leadership workshop at Marist College.

County Executive Molinaro said, "The future of Dutchess County relies on the success of our youth. By examining community risk factors, studying best practices, and developing strategies to better address the challenges confronting young people today, we can focus on recreational needs, teen violence, gang activity, child abuse and exploitation. The Council is one of many groups that will tackle the ongoing effort to address drug addiction in our community. The repurposed Dutchess County Youth Board will also work to strengthen the relationship between

County services, local non-profit organizations, and community-minded individuals through the development of community coalitions.”

The Youth Board and Coordinating Council will consist of no more than 22 members who will meet monthly. The membership will be balanced between government and nongovernment appointees with an emphasis on regional and diverse representation. The Council will have representatives from the County’s Departments of Children and Family Services, Mental Hygiene, Health and its Health and Human Services Cabinet. Nonprofits will have a strong presence with the Executive Directors of the Workforce Investment Board, Family Services, and The Child Abuse Prevention Center, Inc. all agreeing to serve. Two County Legislators, two members from the education community, two to five youth members, and up to five at large members are also included. The first meeting of the Youth Board and Coordinating Council is expected to be held in September.

Brian Doyle, CEO of Family Services said, “I applaud County Executive Molinaro’s initiative and the Legislature’s support for the reconstitution of the County’s Youth Board. Our Crime Victims Assistance Program witness the long-lasting hardships faced by families that have lost loved ones as a result of gang violence. At the same time, in our After School Programs, we see the promise inherent in each child. The County’s aggressive commitment to evaluate and develop preventative measures surrounding this issue will strengthen our community, families and youth.”

The Dutchess County Legislature unanimously approved the change at their July meeting. County Legislature Minority Leader Barbara Jeter-Jackson said, “The reorganization of the Youth Board will bring together local volunteers throughout the County to more effectively engage the community and empower our young people. As a Legislative Liaison to the Youth Board, I look forward to expanding our efforts with the new Coordinating Council so that together we can invest in Dutchess County’s greatest asset – its young people.”

Kathleen Murphy, Executive Director of The Child Abuse Prevention Center, Inc. said, “Child abuse is one of many issues that will be the continued focus of the newly reconstituted Youth Board and Coordinating Council. The presence of various youth organizations will provide

enhanced collaboration and valuable insight, knowledge and expertise regarding the problems and issues faced by our County's youth."

County Legislator Ellen Nesbitt, who also serves as a Legislative Liaison to the Youth Board said, "I am excited to have the opportunity to serve on a committee that will positively affect the lives of youth living and working in Dutchess County. I've seen far too many of my peers leave the County for school and employment, and we have the opportunity to change that trend through the work and outreach of the Youth Board and Coordinating Council."

Division of Youth Services Director June Ellen Notaro said, "This is a positive change to the governing structure of the Youth Board. I look forward to working with the Youth Board and Coordinating Council to better address the concerns and needs of our County's youth."

"On behalf of Dutchess County Government and its residents, thank you to those willing to serve on the Youth Board and Coordinating Council. I look forward to the work of this Council," concluded County Executive Molinaro.

The Dutchess County Youth Board and Coordinating Council operate under the auspices of the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services, Division of Youth Services.

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