

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COMMISSION

NAME OF BOARD: Youth Advisory Board (2025-2026)
CHAIR: Robertza Joseph
CO-VICE CHAIRS: Nusaybah Arif & Gabriel Cadet
REPORTING TERM: August 2025 – May 2026
DATE SUBMITTED: June 3, 2026

33.503 ANNUAL REVIEW

At the first Commission Meeting in June of each year, the respective Advisory Board or Committee shall forward to the City Commission a summary of the Advisory Board's or Committee's accomplishments during the prior year, along with any recommendations or suggestions to the City Commission regarding any improvements to City operations, ordinances, or policies, they see fit to transmit based on their work and observations over that year.

OVERVIEW

The 2025-2026 school year was the third year for the Youth Advisory Board. The Board was represented by Flanagan High School, Pembroke Pines Charter High School, Somerset High School and College Academy. Franklin Academy and West Broward High School did not recommend a representative to be appointed to the Board by the City Manager.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THE REPORTING TERM:

During the reporting period, the Youth Advisory Board successfully established a strong foundation for collaboration, leadership development, and community engagement through the following efforts:

- Conducted the organizational meeting on August 27, 2025, including administration of the Oath of Office for all members.
- Provided an overview of the Board's purpose, mission, and governing ordinance, along with training on Robert's Rules of Order to support effective meeting procedures.
- Received a presentation from Assistant City Attorney Paul Hernandez on the Florida Sunshine Law to ensure compliance with public meeting requirements.
- Reviewed and discussed the prior year's (2024–2025) Annual Report to build continuity and inform current initiatives.
- Elected leadership following two tie ballots, resulting in the selection of a Chair and Co-Vice Chairs who rotated roles at each meeting to promote shared leadership.
- Approved the official meeting calendar for the 2025–2026 term.
- Facilitated ongoing brainstorming sessions to identify youth-focused initiatives, incorporating feedback from peers and school communities.

- Incorporated icebreaker activities into monthly meetings to foster engagement, collaboration, and team cohesion.
- Provided members with branded apparel to promote Board visibility and unity at events and activities.

Community Initiatives and Events:

- **Career Fair and Life Skills Event:**

Successfully hosted the second annual Career Fair and Life Skills Event at City Center on February 23, 2026, a city-wide initiative developed in direct response to students' questions about life after high school. The event included nine participating businesses and engaged approximately 60 students in interactive breakout sessions. Enhancements based on member feedback included inviting 10th and 11th grade students to expand participation. The event was supported in partnership with the Miramar Pembroke Pines Chamber of Commerce and included lunch for attendees.

The Youth Advisory Board was selected as a winner of the 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award from the Florida League of Cities—one of only three recipients of this prestigious recognition for this event. The YAB will receive a trophy and \$500.

- **Teen Takeover Event (Mental Health Initiative):**

Developed and implemented a new initiative focused on teen mental health and community engagement in City parks. Held on March 13, 2026, the “Teen Takeover” event featured a DJ, free food, a large inflatable obstacle course, a mental health walking path with resource stations, yoga sessions, arts and crafts, a photo booth, and open recreational activities at Spring Valley Park and Community Center. The event attracted over 80 teen participants and was supported by community partners including the Boys and Girls Club, Community Affairs Unit (CAU), and the YMCA.

- **City Commission Engagement:**

Coordinated a Commission Q&A session held on April 22, 2026. This initiative stemmed from a prior recommendation to provide Board members with a deeper understanding of municipal government roles and responsibilities.

Additional Activities:

- Continued the tradition of awarding graduation cords to senior members, with approval from school principals, in recognition of their service on the Youth Advisory Board.
- Maintained consistent governance practices by reviewing and approving meeting minutes at each session.

RECOMMENDATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION:

- Continue to expand opportunities for high school student involvement in City programs and initiatives.

- Enhance marketing, advertising, and outreach strategies to better connect with and engage youth across all local high schools.
- Expand programs like the Student Ambassador program and create a pipeline for High School students to shadow a member working for the city.
- Work with the City to continue to provide mental health resources that can be accessed by all residents on the City's website.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The Youth Advisory Board wishes to thank the City Manager for appointing the members to this board and allowing them to serve their community. In addition, the Board is appreciative of the city staff that guided them during the school year.

The final version was approved for presentation to the City Commission by the Board at the April 22, 2026 meeting.

Robertzsa Joseph, Chair

