

Communication from Public

Name: Invest In Youth Coalition

Date Submitted: 03/22/2021 01:08 PM

Council File No: 21-0223

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Councilmembers, Attached, find a letter from the Invest in Youth Coalition and over 56 youth development providers across the City of Los Angeles asking you to take the necessary steps toward the creation of the City's first stand-alone Department focused on youth. Today, youth and young adults in the City of Los Angeles are facing the impact of the City's under-investment in youth development and over-investment in law enforcement, and this inequity has been magnified by the Covid-19 pandemic. Over the past 7 years, youth have been leading an effort to create a stand-alone department that will prioritize youth by investing in their future. The City needs a systemic change now in order to address the inequities faced by youth of color. As our elected leaders and representatives, we urge you to act now to take the following actions: -Schedule and hold a hearing on the motion to establish a Youth Development Department. -Approve the establishment of the City's Youth Development Department that will focus on youth development, youth employment, youth empowerment, and violence prevention. -Allocate \$1.7 million in the 2021-22 budget to seed the department per the CAO report. Our Invest in Youth leaders, along with our coalition, will be following up with your office shortly as we would love the opportunity to meet with your office to discuss our campaign and our letter. Respectfully, The Invest In Youth Coalition and Youth Leaders



March 15, 2021

The Honorable City Councilmembers
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Council File 21- 0223 Motion to Establish a Youth Development Department

Dear Councilmembers:

The Invest in Youth Coalition, comprised of nonprofit organizations, community leaders, educators, parents, and young people has focused the last seven years to elevate the voices of youth to lead change in the City of Los Angeles by advocating for the establishment of the City's first Youth Development Department. Today this call to action is more critical as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people of color because it has magnified the disparities in education, access to resources, safety, and employment opportunities. The City's youth are now faced with learning loss that will lead to dramatic future quality of life issues if we don't develop a strategic vision to address these disparities.

As our elected leaders and representatives we urge you to act **now** to take the following actions:

- **Schedule and hold a hearing on the motion to establish a Youth Development Department.**
- **Approve the establishment of the City's Youth Development Department that will focus on youth development, youth employment, youth empowerment, and violence prevention.**
- **Allocate \$1.7 million in the 2021-22 budget to seed the department per the CAO report.**

City Council established an Executive Task Force on Youth Development in 2019 charged with the important task of developing a framework and strategy for youth development in Los Angeles. The Task Force led by appointees of the City Council and Mayor held public meetings and town halls from April 2020 - January 2021, culminating with a report and recommendations to City Council. The report highlights the need to establish a stand alone youth department that is focused on violence prevention, youth employment and whole person care in order to address the inequities faced by the City's youth ages 10-25. It also calls for seed funding to develop the initial infrastructure as well as a redirection of youth employment and youth workforce development funds from the Economic and Workforce Development Department to the new Youth Development Department. It is critical to have a separate department that will focus on youth and young adults in order to improve outcomes for this population and to reduce violence in the City.

The lack of a dedicated department to serve the City's 800,000 youth and young adults not only prevents the City from creating a coordinated vision to serve youth but prevents the City from leveraging additional Federal, State and County funds as well as coordinating with philanthropic organizations to serve the needs of the City's youth. As a result, the City is leaving a large amount of funds on the table including its share of Measure J, Probation Department, and Public Health dollars that could be used to invest in the City's most vulnerable youth. Additionally, investing in young people is the most effective public safety strategy and must be a priority for the City given the increasing gun violence and homicides in the City.

As the City's leaders, you must act boldly and proactively to move beyond political agendas to invest our public dollars wisely and achieve better results for youth. The creation of a Youth Department will provide the City with an opportunity to build an infrastructure that will ensure greater accountability for public resources, and to demonstrate that this City's thoughtful, proactive and preventative investments reflect the value it places on our young people's future creating future generations of leaders in our communities.

Respectfully,

The Invest In Youth Coalition

Signed by individual supporting organizations and youth below





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Gabriela Arreola, 24

GRYD Case Manager

Valeria Arroyo, 14

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Jazmin Gonzales, 17

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Michelle Hernandez, 18

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Omar Hernandez, 12

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Adriana Jaime, 16

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