



## Legislation Text

**File #:** 19-198, **Version:** 1

Receive a presentation from Solano Youth Voices, a collaborative effort of the Children's Network, on their research related to the youth in Solano County

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒  
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

At the request of Supervisor Monica Brown, it is recommended that the Board receive a presentation from Solano Youth Voices, a collaborative of the Children's Network on their research related to youth in Solano County.

### **SUMMARY/DISCUSSION**

Solano Youth Voices (SYV) was formed in 2018 under the umbrella of the Children's Network. SYV is primarily funded by Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and receive funding from The California Endowment and United Way Bay Area. They are currently funded through August 31, 2019.

Members of the SYV Youth Council are aware that youth in Solano lack the resources and opportunities their peers in neighboring counties rely on and believe they should not have to continue being restricted by resource inequity. SYV Youth Council members set out to develop a policy platform to bring about positive change and ensure that Solano youth do not continue slipping through the cracks.

Through a grant from Walter S. Johnson Foundation, SYV conducted a research study which, after surveying more than 700 of their peers from across the county and convening 17 youth focus groups, SYV found that the most frequently cited issues facing youth in Solano were related to education, mental health, bullying, and homelessness.

While SYV's survey sample was comprised entirely of youth, its findings align closely with the determinations from the needs assessments conducted by Sutter and Kaiser Permanente, as well as the Community Health Improvement Plan for Solano County. Each of these assessments reiterates the resource and equity challenges facing the County.

### **Findings from Surveys:**

The top issues for youth were education (307); mental health (257); bullying (251); homelessness (179). Other issues were drugs and alcohol, gun violence, recreation, LGBTQ+, and youth employment.

The age groups responding to the surveys were 11-24 with 501 youth between the ages of 14-17 being the highest number of respondents. Fairfield and Rio Vista had the highest number of respondents.

Some of the statistics that relate specifically to Solano County on the issues in the policy platform are as follows:

### **Mental Health**

About 30% of 7th and 9th graders and over 1-in-3 11th graders (37%) in Solano's public schools reported that, in the past year, they felt so sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more to the point that they stopped doing some usual activities. (California Healthy Kids Survey: Solano County Secondary 2015-2017 Main Report)

Nearly 1-in-5 9th graders and 11th graders (specifically 18-19%) in Solano's public schools reported that they had considered suicide in the past year. (California Healthy Kids Survey: Solano County Secondary 2015-2017 Main Report)

Hospitalizations for mental health issues in Solano County youth ages 5-19 have increased between 2006 and 2016 from 3 out of 1,000 youth to 5.2 out of 1,000 youth. This is slightly higher than the average rate across California, which is at 5.0 out of 1,000 youth. (Kidsdata.org)

### Bullying Prevention

42% of 7th graders, 36% of 9th graders, and 30% of 11th graders reported experiencing any harassment or bullying at least once at school in the past year. (California Healthy Kids Survey: Solano County Secondary 2015-2017 Main Report)

1-in-4 7th graders reported being afraid of being beaten up at least once in the past 12 months at school. This is at 17% of 9th graders and 11% of 11th graders. (California Healthy Kids Survey: Solano County Secondary 2015-2017 Main Report)

### Homeless Youth

1,793 Solano County public school students in grades Pre-K through 12 were recorded as being homeless at some point during the 2016 school year. (Kidsdata.org) *NOTE: These data may include duplicate counts of homeless students; as homeless students move frequently, it is possible that the same student will be recorded by multiple school districts.*

- 1,398 had a nighttime residence living doubled up with friends or relatives
- 151 had a nighttime residence in a hotel/motel
- 204 had a nighttime residence in a temporary shelter
- 40 were unsheltered

Number of unaccompanied children and young adults found to be homeless during the national point-in-time (PIT) count of homeless individuals, by age group and shelter status (HUD 2018 Annual Homeless Report to Congress) 218 in Solano County on one night in 2018. (Definition of "unaccompanied homeless youth" is people under the age of 25 experiencing homelessness on their own.)

Through collaboration with public, private, and non-profit partners, the overarching goal of the Solano Youth Voices Policy Platform is to further develop schools into emotionally and physically safe spaces that allow students to learn and thrive. SYV will present their findings and recommendations to the Board.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed in District 2 FY2018/19 budget.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board could choose not to receive the presentation but that would not give the Board a chance to hear about the results of a countywide youth survey.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Solano Youth Voices and the Children's Network are presenting this item and submitted the report at the request of Supervisor Brown.