

County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2013 Legislative Session

Legislative day # 1

RESOLUTION NO. 16 - 2013

Introduced by: Calvin Ball, Greg Fox, Mary Kay Sigaty, Jennifer Terrasa and Courtney Watson

A RESOLUTION requesting Howard County Voices for Change Youth Coalition to advise the County Council and the Howard County Public School System; requesting the Coalition to issue certain reports; requesting the Coalition to provide the County with certain information; and generally relating to the Howard County Voices for Change Youth Coalition.

Introduced and read first time on January 7, 2013.

By order Stephen LeGendre
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

Read for a second time and a public hearing held on January 22, 2013.

By order Stephen LeGendre
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

This Resolution was read the third time and was Adopted, Adopted with amendments, Failed, Withdrawn by the County Council on February 4, 2013.

Certified by Stephen LeGendre
Stephen LeGendre, Administrator to the County Council

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing language; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing language. Strike-out indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment.

1 **WHEREAS**, in 2009 the Howard County Youth Task Force reported that 93.5% of the
2 students who answered the survey believed that youth must be a part of the solution in problem
3 solving in the Community, 96% believed that students could contribute and communicate ideas
4 to a board or commission, and 57.9% voiced interest in participating in such a commission;

5 **WHEREAS**, in 2009, Howard County designated the Howard County Voices for Change
6 Youth Coalition as the resource to engage youth and create positive change in Howard County;

7 **WHEREAS**, bullying is recognized as a widespread concern for school aged youth and
8 is an often misunderstood problem in schools that results in serious implications for victims of
9 bullying and for those who perpetrate the bullying;

10 **WHEREAS**, bullying has become a national concern as state and local governments and
11 school systems struggle to find ways to address instances of bullying while empowering students
12 to stand up for themselves and for others;

13 **WHEREAS**, the National Center for Education Statistics, the primary federal
14 government entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the United States,
15 reported in its *Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2011*, that in 2009, about 28 percent of 12-
16 to 18-year-old students reported having been bullied at school during the school year and 6
17 percent reported having been cyber-bullied and about 39 percent of 6th-graders reported being
18 bullied at school, compared with 33 percent of 7th graders, 32 percent of 8th-graders, 28 percent
19 of 9th-graders, 27 percent of 10th-graders, 21 percent of 11th-graders, and 20 percent of 12th-
20 graders;

21 **WHEREAS**, the National Association of School Psychiatrists reports that over two-
22 thirds of students believe that schools respond poorly to bullying, with a high percentage of
23 students believing that adult help is infrequent and ineffective, and that approximately 25% of
24 teachers see nothing wrong with bullying or putdowns and consequently intervene in only 4% of
25 bullying incidents;

26 **WHEREAS**, the Howard County Public School System reported 300 incidents of
27 bullying, harassment, and intimidation for the 2010-2011 school year;

28 **WHEREAS**, the County Council recognizes the importance of bringing students into the
29 discussion of effective ways to address bullying in schools by empowering them to participate in
30 the development of policies and solutions for a community-wide prevention program that

1 promotes a positive school and community climate;

2 **WHEREAS**, the County Council wants to encourage the youth of Howard County to
3 work collaboratively with parents, teachers, government agencies and the Howard County Public
4 School System to help create a safe and civilized educational environment;

5 **WHEREAS**, the County Council believes that there could be an innovative approach to
6 addressing bullying that includes students in a review of best practices by the Howard County
7 Public School System and government agencies, and a proactive youth run resource for assisting
8 each other in standing up to bullying;

9 **WHEREAS**, the County Council recognizes that the topic of bullying is being addressed
10 by other agencies and organizations in the County, and that members of Voices for Change can
11 be the link between the various groups to promote idea sharing and limit duplication of effort;

12 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the County Council of Howard County,
13 Maryland, this 4th day of February, 2013 that the County Council requests that Howard County
14 Voices for Change Youth Coalition provide the County Council, the County Executive and the
15 School Safety Task Force with a report from the youth perspective on bullying in the community
16 by May 31, 2013;

17 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Howard County Voices for Change
18 Youth Coalition report may include information providing the youth perspective on:

- 19 (1) Frequency of bullying incidents and observed consequences in schools and the
20 community;
- 21 (2) The effectiveness of current programs and policies before and after occurrences of
22 bullying;
- 23 (3) Ideas for new programs and policies that may discourage and reduce instances of
24 bullying;
- 25 (4) The relationship between adults and youth in addressing instances of bullying; and
- 26 (5) The use of social media and technology in addressing bullying and as a means of
27 providing resources to youth who have been bullied.