

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Friday, January 30, 2026

Start: 1:07 P.M.

Recess: 1:28 P.M.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - 8th Floor - Hearing
Room 2

B E F O R E: HON. ALTHEA STEVENS, CHAIR

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Simcha Felder

Rita C. Joseph

Chi A. Ossé

Nantasha M. Williams

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

A P P E A R A N C E S

Andrew Miller,
Assistant Commissioner for External Relations
for the New York City Department of Youth and
Community Development (DYCD)

Sarah Marks,
Senior Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for
the New York City Department of Youth and
Community Development (DYCD)

Joshua Mosby,
Representing: Girl Vow

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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2 SERGEANT LEWIS: Mic check, mic check,
3 this is the mic check for the Committee on Children
4 and Youth. Today's date is January 30, 2026. This is
5 being recorded by Walter Lewis in Hearing Room 2.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good afternoon, and
7 welcome to today's New York City Council Hearing for
8 the Committee on Children and Youth.

9 At this time, I would like to remind
10 everyone to silence all electronic devices. At this
11 point, and going forward, I remind you that no one is
12 to approach the dais.

13 Chair, Stevens, we are ready.

14 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Good afternoon. I'm
15 Council Member Althea Stevens, Chair of the New York
16 City Committee-- New York City Council Committee on
17 Children and Youth.

18 I want to thank everyone for joining us
19 today for today's hearing on Introduction Number 448,
20 sponsored by me, which would amend the New York City
21 Charter in relation to the structure of the
22 responsibilities of the Youth Board.

23 The Youth Board plays an important role
24 in advising the City on policy that affects young
25 people and elevating prospective forms from across

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2 the sector that serve youth, including education and
3 healthcare, social services, labor, and community-
4 based organizations. This legislation is intended to
5 strengthen the role by modernizing the board
6 structure and classifying the relationship with DYCD.

7 Specifically, this bill would establish
8 term limits for board members, reduce the size of the
9 board from 28 to 18, and ensure balanced appointments
10 by both the Mayor and City Council with
11 representation from every borough. Those changes are
12 designed to support a more focused, engaged, and
13 effective Advisory Board while still maintaining
14 board community representation and youth
15 participation.

16 This bill seeks to improve the
17 accountability engagement by formalizing the Board's
18 responsibilities to issue annual policies and
19 legislative recommendations and by requiring DYCD to
20 respond in writing to each recommendation within 90
21 days. This reporting structure is intended to foster
22 clear communication between the Board and the agency
23 to ensure that youth information-- youth-informed
24 recommendations receive meaningful consideration.

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2 Today's hearing is an opportunity to hear
3 from DYCD, members of the Youth Board, advocates, and
4 other stakeholders about how those process changes
5 could work in practice and how we can best ensure
6 that the Youth Board remains a strong, formal
7 formation for advancing the welfare of young people
8 across the city.

9 I would like to thank the committee staff
10 for their hard work in preparing for this: Elizabeth
11 Arzt, Senior Legislative Policy Analyst; Rie
12 Ogasawara, Senior Legislative Counsel, as well as my
13 Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff, Tyreke and
14 Greer, and the whole A-Team back in the district.

15 With that, I will turn it over to
16 Committee Counsel to swear in the Administration.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good afternoon, we
18 will now be hearing testimony from the
19 Administration. Before we begin, I will administer
20 the affirmation.

21 Panelists, please raise your right hand.
22 I will read the affirmation once, and then call on
23 each of you individually to respond.

24 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
25 whole truth, and nothing but the truth, before this

2 committee, and to respond honestly to council member
3 questions?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: I do.

5 SENIOR DIRECTOR MARKS: (UN-MIC'D) I do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: You may begin.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Good
9 afternoon, Chair Stevens and Members of the Children
10 and Youth Committee. I am Andrew Miller, Assistant
11 Commissioner for External Relations. I am joined by
12 Sarah Marks, Senior Director of Intergovernmental
13 Affairs. We are pleased to be here to discuss the New
14 York City Youth Board.

15 The New York City Youth Board advises
16 DYCD on the development of youth programs. The board
17 is comprised of leaders from business, academia,
18 government, foundations, and the nonprofit sector.
19 There are currently 28 seats, and half of those are
20 appointed upon recommendation of the City Council.

21 As the Youth Bureau for the City of New
22 York, DYCD is eligible to receive state funding from
23 the Office of Children and Family Services.
24 Currently, we receive funding that supports
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2 afterschool programs, runaway and homeless youth,
3 residential programs, and youth sports.

4 State law requires that all county youth
5 bureaus maintain a Citizen Youth Board. New York City
6 chose to permanently establish the Youth Board within
7 the City Charter to serve as a forum for
8 representatives of the disciplines directly concerned
9 with the welfare of youth. A well-functioning Youth
10 Board is critical to the agency's ability to maintain
11 its funding sources.

12 As mandated by law, the full Youth Board
13 convenes for meetings four times a year. A typical
14 quarterly meeting includes a report from the DYCD
15 Commission or a representative about the major agency
16 initiatives, policies, and budget updates, and other
17 changes since the previous meeting. Additionally,
18 DYCD staff provide in-depth presentations about
19 agency programs.

20 In 2025, those topics included
21 presentations on runaway and homeless youth, mental
22 health, workforce development, and afterschool
23 programs. At each meeting, the Board engages in
24 robust discussions and provides valuable suggestions
25 and support to DYCD. Board members also form working

1 groups to look more deeply into relevant topics. In
2 the past, working groups have included workforce
3 development and provider relationships.
4

5 Youth representation on the Board is
6 important, and currently, there are three young
7 people who actively participate in Youth Board
8 meetings. In addition, the Youth Board includes
9 members who have spent their careers in youth
10 development and members with diverse backgrounds from
11 the private sector.

12 Members have provided valuable support to
13 young people through their service on the Youth
14 Board, often offering opportunities for young
15 participants in our workforce programs, tours of
16 workplaces, career panels, and spaces for special
17 events. Board members have also promoted DYCD
18 programs through social media, offered feedback on
19 DYCD concept papers, and served as judges for special
20 events.

21 This Introduction aims to restructure the
22 composition of the Board by decreasing the number of
23 its members to 18 while increasing the proportion
24 that the City Council may appoint. It also influences
25 term limits and adds geographic requirements. This

1 bill would also mandate two new annual reports, one
2 from the Board and one from DYCD.

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4 We have been discussing the bill with the
5 committee staff. We will be recommending amendments
6 to satisfy the intent of the law by preserving DYCD's
7 ability to continue to have a well-functioning Youth
8 Board.

9 Thanks once again for the opportunity to
10 testify today, and we're pleased to take your
11 questions.

12 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: At this time, I
13 would like to acknowledge my colleagues: Dr. Deputy
14 Speaker Nantasha Williams and Council Member Chi
15 Ossé.

16 At this time, I have some questions. Can
17 you describe the role that the Youth Board currently
18 plays in supporting DYCD's work and informing the
19 agency's policies and program decisions?

20 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER:
21 Absolutely. From a historical perspective, the Youth
22 Board Members have been front and center in advancing
23 new initiatives and giving input to new program
24 models and requests for proposals. For example, one
25 current board member worked on building our current

1 COMPASS program over 20 years ago, which was then
2 known as Out of School Time, with a budget of \$46
3 million. In the time since then, the system has
4 flourished and grown, thanks to the Council's
5 support, to \$755 million. Most recently, they
6 actually made recommendations around workforce, such
7 as making the SYEP application earlier, and that just
8 opened last week, very early in time for the summer.
9 They also talked about offering financial literacy
10 components in workforce programs, which we did
11 implement. They also suggested a driver's license for
12 occupational pathways that require that, and we
13 actually introduced a CDL program, which offers high
14 paying jobs.
15

16 And I know that these are all initiatives
17 strongly supported by this Committee.

18 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Intro 448 will
19 require that the Youth Board submit an annual report
20 that includes recommendations from DYCD. The
21 department would then be required to respond to all
22 the Board recommendations in writing.

23 How often does the Youth Board submit
24 recommendations to DYCD, and how does DYCD currently
25 engage with those recommendations?

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2 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Sure,
3 we're in constant conversations with the Youth Board
4 members. At each meeting where DYCD staff present
5 information about ongoing programs, board members
6 engage in a discussion with the staff, offering
7 questions and suggestions.

8 We are the folks who actually do the work
9 with the Youth Board, and we do so in a variety of
10 ways. The give and take of the Board recommendations
11 is an ongoing process that takes place throughout the
12 year and during the concept paper for an RFP. This
13 bill will actually formalize this process, which we
14 can see the benefit of, but we want to make sure that
15 we are taking into account our agency resources.

16 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: In the past, has the
17 department implemented the majority of the
18 recommendations suggested by the Youth Board, or were
19 there instances where the department has not
20 implemented the board-suggested changes?

21 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Sure.
22 Given the nature of how we receive the
23 recommendations, the limitations of our contracting
24 process, and the funding of resources, we can't give
25 an exact number of recommendations (UNINTELLIGIBLE)

2 implemented, but we gave examples earlier about the
3 CDL licenses, financial literacy, and the SYEP
4 application timeframe.

5 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Prime example of for
6 me—and this is a question that you're probably not
7 prepared for, but even thinking about us going into
8 the RFP, the biggest RFP we've had in a number of
9 years, around afterschool programs. How did you
10 engage with the Youth Board? Were they able to put in
11 any recommendations? Have they been in support of,
12 like, even picking some of the providers?

13 How were they implemented, and some of
14 that stuff?

15 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: They...
16 (CROSS-TALK)

17 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: How were they
18 implemented at all?

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Well, they
20 give us suggestions about what it should look like.
21 You know, we have very robust feedback sessions about
22 the RFP, which you actually participate in.

23 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: I know.

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: They
25 helped us as well.

2 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Okay. And so did
3 they--were they part of the feedback for the concept
4 papers as well, and things like that?

5 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: She's giving you a
7 note.

8 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes, I
9 see.

10 ALL: (LAUGHTER)

11 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: How would the
12 requirements to formally respond to each
13 recommendation change existing practices?

14 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: One point
15 to say again is that there are a number of factors in
16 the contracting process, funding realities that may
17 impact the implementation of any of their
18 recommendations from the Youth board or from really
19 anybody. Generally, this bill would codify the
20 existing practice, and we're happy to talk about how
21 to make that happen.

22 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: This will reduce the
23 number of seats on the Youth Board from 28 to 18. How
24 is the current 28-member structure functioning in
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2 practice? Have there been challenges with quorum,
3 attendance, or decision making?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: We're
5 actually very pleased that Youth Board Meetings are
6 well attended. Achieving quorum was never an issue.
7 We just need to ensure that we preserve DYCD's
8 ability to manage and support the board, meeting the
9 Charter and State mandates that we have, and the
10 ability to manage the geographical distribution of
11 the seats. For example, under the new bill, over half
12 of all the seats will be distributed by borough. So
13 that might be problematic.

14 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Can you tell me a
15 little bit more about why that would be problematic?

16 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: So we
17 always want to make sure that we have enough members
18 on the board to meet quorum. And one concern is--
19 between the interplay and between the different
20 requirements, so reducing the number of members could
21 make it challenging enough that we have at least two
22 members from each borough. But we are actually
23 pleased to say we have a representation from all five
24 boroughs.

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2 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: I know when we were
3 thinking about putting in this bill together, some of
4 it was that 28 seemed like a lot of trying to get
5 people on the same page. So, trying to reduce it so
6 that there can be more robust conversations and move
7 things along. And so that was kind of the spirit and
8 intent of (INAUDIBLE) the bill...

9 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER:
10 Absolutely, and we do see the benefit of it.

11 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: But I can't see how
12 there can be concerns around the geographical
13 location. But I feel like what-- we are a city of
14 millions of people. I think we can find two people
15 from each borough, no?

16 Do you believe reducing the board to 18
17 will improve efficiency or engagement? Why or why
18 not?

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: We
20 actually do see the benefit, but again, we just have
21 the question about making quorum if there are fewer
22 people. But we could explore that with you.

23 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Yeah...

24 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: And the
25 committee staff.

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2 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: The law requires
3 that the participants, at least three of the members
4 of the Youth Board, shall be between the ages of 16
5 and 24. How does DYCD currently recruit and support
6 those members?

7 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Sure.
8 Absolutely. We're very proud that we have young
9 people who offer their perspectives, which are really
10 beneficial to the board and actually to DYCD itself.
11 And we actually appreciated the bill that you passed
12 to codify this.

13 So we actually use our network of
14 programs, and other members of community
15 organizations—I'm going to ask Sarah to sort of talk
16 a little bit about our Youth Leadership Program.

17 SENIOR DIRECTOR MARKS: Sure. Hi, thank
18 you.

19 Our current group of young people who
20 have been really active in the Youth Board came to
21 us through My Brother's Sisters Keeper Youth
22 Council, which is a youth leadership program. Since
23 then, some of them also became involved in the NYC
24 Youth Agenda, which is a citywide youth activism
25 program. And that is where some of our younger

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2 members came from. I believe we also have a member
3 or two who came in as a young person appointed by
4 the City Council.

5 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Yes. Currently,
6 there are no term limits for the members of the
7 Youth Board; this bill would impose a one-term
8 limit. The term limits would last four years, with
9 the option to renew for a additional term. Does the
10 Department have any feedback on the duration-- the
11 term limits for the Youth Board?

12 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER:
13 Absolutely. We recognize that term limits can
14 benefit the board with new perspectives. We would
15 welcome a discussion about how long the term should
16 be to make sure we have continuity and expertise on
17 the board and strike a balance between bringing in
18 new people while preserving institutional
19 knowledge.

20 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Do you want to tell
21 me the recommendation now of what you guys were
22 thinking around the term limits?

23 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: We would
24 probably play a little bit with the term limits,
25 maybe a little bit longer...

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2 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: I mean, like,
3 staggered, or?

4 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Staggered
5 might be an option, yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Okay, well, let's
7 note that. I think we can work on that. That sounds
8 like it makes sense.

9 Are there any technical or implementation
10 concerns that DYCD has with this current bill?

11 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: We
12 currently have a number of well-qualified members who
13 offer their experiences and backgrounds and
14 institutional knowledge, which may be lost. And I'm
15 going to point out Council Member Avilés actually
16 served as the Chair of the Youth Board, and she was
17 terrific.

18 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Mm-hmm.

19 ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: So, how do
20 we select which ones have to step down? Perhaps, as
21 we said earlier, there could be a phase-in period or
22 (INAUDIBLE)... (CROSS-TALK)

23 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Staggered term
24 limits...

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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER:

(INAUDIBLE) hold over language, that could be helpful here.

CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Okay. That seems

(INAUDIBLE)

Deputy Speaker, do you have any questions?

Okay, I don't have any more questions.

(PAUSE)

CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: At this time, we don't have any more questions for DYCD. Thank you, guys, for coming in today.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: We appreciate it.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER MILLER: And Deputy Speaker, good to see you.

SENIOR DIRECTOR MARKS: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: I now open the hearing for public testimony. I remind members of the public that this is a formal government proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at

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2 all times. As such, members of the public shall
3 remain silent at all times.

4 The witness table is reserved for people
5 who wish to testify. No video recording or
6 photography is allowed from the witness table.

7 Further, members of the public may not
8 present audio or video recordings as testimony, but
9 may submit transcripts of such recordings to the
10 Sergeant at Arms for inclusion in the hearing
11 record.

12 If you wish to speak at today's hearing,
13 please fill out an appearance card with the
14 Sergeant at Arms and wait to be recognized. When
15 recognized, you will have two minutes to speak on
16 today's hearing topic: *Introduction 0448-2026 in*
17 *relation to the structure and responsibilities of*
18 *the Youth Board.*

19 If you have a written statement or
20 additional testimony you wish to submit for the
21 record, please provide a copy of that testimony to
22 the Sergeant at Arms.

23 You may also email written testimony to
24 Testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours after the
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1
2 close of this hearing. Audio and video recordings
3 will not be accepted.

4 I would like to call the first panel. We
5 have one person here, and that is Josh Mosby. Come
6 on up.

7 MR. JOSH MOSBY: Good afternoon, Council
8 Member. My name is Josh Mosby, and I am coordinating
9 a sexual violence prevention program at Girl Vow.
10 Girl Vow is a gender focused mentoring nonprofit that
11 works with girls and (BACKGROUND NOISE) gender-
12 expansive youth aged 12 to 24 who have been impacted
13 by the juvenile justice system, foster care, and
14 poverty.

15 Our youth have access to life coaching,
16 and we've had over 1,540 participants in the last
17 year. In our work, we have seen firsthand how big an
18 issue interpersonal and sexual violence is in our
19 participants' lives. So, we've been expanding our
20 work to address these issues prevalent in the South
21 Bronx, specifically Hunts Point, Patterson, Mott
22 Haven, and Grand Concourse.

23 A central point of Girl Vow is centering
24 youth voices and having them lead and be a part of
25 the work and the solutions that are created for them.

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2 We try to say nothing with them-- nothing for them,
3 without them. And we've been speaking with youth in
4 the Bronx about their issues. We found the main
5 themes that are affecting their lives are the
6 acceptance of violence as a daily reality. This was
7 brought up several times in the interviews that we
8 held with youth. This led us to try to create our own
9 youth advisory board that is led by youth. We have
10 reached eight people who meet twice a month. They are
11 paid stipends. And we have seen much success in how
12 youth voices, when centered, can be very, very
13 effective towards solutions. I just wanted to
14 reiterate how important it is to keep youth voices at
15 the center of creating solutions that are supposed to
16 affect them. (TIMER) Okay...

17 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: (UN-MIC'D) You go
18 ahead. (INAUDIBLE)

19 MR. JOSH MOSBY: I think that the more
20 youth voices that are prevalent and centered in the
21 work are very important towards any initiatives. And
22 I just came here to make this clear and to say that
23 we have access to youth who are willing to speak and
24 participate, and we would love to assist in any way
25 to make this board successful.

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2 CHAIRPERSON STEVENS: Well, yeah, thank
3 you for being here. I know Girl Vow. I just saw Dawn.
4 How are you doing? I know of the great work that you
5 guys do, and we would love to continue to work, not
6 only with seeing if there is space on the Youth Board
7 for someone you may have to nominate or anything like
8 that. And also, we have a youth advisory board in my
9 office as well. So, you know, happy to see Dawn,
10 happy to see you. Welcome to the team, and thank you
11 for coming to center young people's voices, because
12 it is important. And it's something that I really
13 work hard at to make sure that we're bringing young
14 people into all spaces. So, thank you, and we will
15 continue to work together.

16 That concludes the in-person portion of
17 our public testimony. We will now move to remote
18 testimony. If you are testifying remotely, please
19 listen for your name to be called. Once your name is
20 called, a member of the staff will unmute you. You
21 may begin your testimony once the Sergeant at Arms
22 sets the clock and cues you to begin.

23 We have no one on Zoom. The following
24 witnesses were... If there is anyone else present in
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COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

the room who has not had the opportunity to testify
but wishes to do so, please raise your hand.

Seeing no one else who wishes to testify.
I now adjourn this hearing. Thank you all for being
here today. [GAVEL]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is no interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 2, 2026