



STATE OF WASHINGTON
GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY ISSUES AND EMPLOYMENT
Employment Security Department ■ P.O. Box 9046 ■ MS: 6000 ■ Olympia, Washington ■ 98507-9046
Olympia (360) 902-9511 ■ Fax (360) 586-4600

Youth Empowerment Program Minutes

Friday, September 5, 2025

10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Attendees: Kristin DiBiase, Youth Empowerment Chair; Lucas Doelman, Youth Empowerment Co-Vice Chair; Autumn Harris, Youth Empowerment Co-Vice Chair; Jaida Barrows, Lyn Sowdon and Nancy Zellers.

Guest: Lilah Wakefield, Member, Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC)

Staff: Elaine Stefanowicz

Minutes: Nancy made a motion to accept the meeting minutes and Lucas seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion passed and minutes approved as written.

1. Guest speaker, Lilah Wakefield from Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC). Lilah shared the following information about the program.

- LYAC works with the Lt. Governor, and the students create questions, setup meetings to go through applications, interviews, choose final applicants for the cohort. All LYAC youth make the decisions.
- For recruitment: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) gave LYAC a list of all principals in Washington state and LYAC sent a recruitment email to all of them
- LYAC has a strong social media presence including Instagram and limited TikTok. They used videos created with Canva.
- They answer lot of real-time questions

- Students are allowed to participate in LYAC during school hours. They need to communicate with teachers and get their schoolwork done.
 - LYAC members must be in high school when they serve their term and have an option to apply for second term. They want to give as many students as possible the opportunity to be on the committee.
 - LYAC has weekly 1–2-hour online meetings and are given duties to complete. Subcommittees have checklists with students. Students can be put on suspension if they are not participating. Lilah will send us OSPI contact person.
 - LYAC’s budget comes from the Lt. Governor’s office. They have been in a budget crisis for the last two legislative sessions.
 - LYAC has four in-person meetings per year. They are reimbursed for transportation and food. For the Legislative Action Day, member’s transportation (flight to SeaTac Airport), hotel and food are covered.
 - Legislation is important to youth. Last year, they championed quite a few bills.
SB 5132: Mandatory reporting for sexual assault. It didn’t pass in committee.
SB 5030: Using inclusive language in documents. A bill for kindergarten allowing more than passport or birth certificate for enrolling in school. It failed in House.
This year they will choose 3-4 priorities and bills must stay within those priorities.
 - 100 students attended the Legislative Action Day last year
 - Covid protocol. LYAC didn’t require masks or social distancing on Action Day. They encouraged hand washing and asked members not to come if they were sick.
2. Discussion of next year’s event. There was a discussion of how the Youth Empowerment Subcommittee could participate in the Legislative Action Day with a cohort of students with disabilities.

Next Meeting: Friday, October 3, 2025, at 10:00 am