



American Youth Policy Forum

*Informing Youth Policy, Improving
Youth Outcomes*

WHAT IS AYPF'S VISION?

To ensure all young people, particularly traditionally underserved youth, have equitable opportunities and supports to become lifelong learners, earn a family-sustaining wage in their career, and actively participate in civic society.

WHAT IS AYPF'S MISSION?

To educate, engage, and inform policymakers, practitioners, and researchers about education, youth, and workforce policies to improve the lives and outcomes of traditionally underserved youth.

WHO IS OUR AUDIENCE?

Our audience consists of education, youth, and workforce policymakers at the national, state and local levels as well as practitioners and researchers.



✦ **WHAT MAKES AYPF UNIQUE?** ✦

- We make sense of the often-confusing education, youth, and workforce landscape by providing timely, clear, and concise information and resources.
- We focus on equitable policies that help traditionally underserved youth: those in the foster care or juvenile justice systems, youth with disabilities, first-generation college-goers, immigrants, and those from low-income families and communities.
- We anticipate emerging education, youth, and workforce issues and help frame those issues in language relevant to current debates.
- Our policy expertise spans numerous domains from K-12 education, career and technical education, afterschool and expanded learning, youth development, health, mental health, postsecondary education, youth employment to workforce development, and we see how policy connections can be made across systems.
- We are expert at designing nonpartisan convenings that bridge policy, practice, and research and allow ample time for discussion, sharing, reflection, and meaning-making.
- We believe in an assets-based approach to youth policy that focuses on the positive, not the negative, and that incorporates youth voice.

WHAT ARE AYPF'S POLICY PILLARS?

AYPF identifies several key policy areas that we believe are critical to the well-being of all youth, but particularly traditionally underserved youth. We believe that education, youth, and workforce policies should be designed to reflect:

Personalized Learning

Youth learn at different paces and in different ways. Youth should have access to supportive, engaging, and developmentally-appropriate learning opportunities that challenge them and build upon their interests and strengths, and they should have a voice in their education. Learning should be competency-based allowing youth to advance upon mastery of challenging material.

Pathways to College & Career Readiness Success

Pathways that connect middle school, high school, and postsecondary education and training help youth learn about various jobs, navigate difficult transition points, and help them acquire family-wage careers. With ongoing counseling, youth understand their career options and can select a pathway based on interest rather than being tracked into jobs based on gender, race, or income.

HOW WE DO OUR WORK

We carry out our work through various convenings, resources, and publications that bridge policy, practice, and research. Our convenings include **Capitol Hill Forums**, **Discussion Group Meetings**, and **Webinars**. We also conduct **Study Tours**. These professional field trips are developed for a national-or state-level policy audience. Our events are designed to bring together people with diverse perspectives to learn from one another and from the best practices and knowledge in the field.

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Comprehensive Connected Supports

Many traditionally underserved youth face challenges and need supports and services to become self-sufficient and to thrive. These services might include education, workforce training, health, mental health, food, housing, transportation, childcare, mentoring, and counseling. It is critical to coordinate these services and supports, customizing them for each youth.

Expanded Learning & Skill Development

Youth need a wide range of knowledge, skills, competencies, and behaviors (academic, employability, social and emotional) to be successful. Schools are one setting to help youth learn these skills, but youth learn many of these skills in non-school settings, such as afterschool and summer learning programs, service learning, volunteer projects, clubs and sports, jobs, work-based learning, and virtually. Having high-quality opportunities for out-of-school time learning for all youth is critical.



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT AYPF?

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