Building Momentum in a Year of Crisis:
2015/2016 Progress Report of the
Flint & Genesee County Opportunity Youth Coalition
Submitted to the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce
By the Forum for Youth Investment
August 2016

This report provides an overview of the context, objectives, timeline of activities and key accomplishments of the Opportunity Youth Coalition during the 2015/2016 school year. The report concludes with reflections on capacity-building “lessons learned” and notes assets and challenges for the year ahead.

CONTEXT

The City of Flint and the surrounding Genesee County is a resilient community that has made many efforts to plan for a brighter future. Unfortunately many young people, struggle with traditional education options and face barriers with homelessness, lack of family support, and lack of basic skills. Opportunity Youth are defined as, young people ages 16 – 24 that are disconnected from education and employment. Specifically, in Flint and Genesee County:

- 19.2% of youth, or 9,715, ages 16-24 in Genesee County are not engaged in work or education
- The dropout rate in Genesee County is 15.5%, compared to the State of Michigan which is at 9.6% (spring, 2014)
- 54.2% of students in the local school district were chronically absent during the 2014-15 school year (33.3% of students in Genesee County)
- 32% of children in Genesee County live in poverty, a 30% increase over six years
- 66.5% of children in the City of Flint live in poverty, the highest rate in Michigan in 2014

-Excerpt from Business Plan RFP

The Flint & Genesee Opportunity Youth Coalition is dedicated to addressing these challenges. The coalition engages over 60 community partners and is managed by the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce. In the context of the Flint Water Crisis, which broke in late 2015, issues threatening the well-being of children, youth and their families were high profile and high priority locally and beyond, making a collective impact approach to solutions particularly timely.

2015/2016 OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

Members of the Flint & Genesee Opportunity Youth Coalition (OYC) had been meeting together for several years, but 2015 marked the beginning of a new era. In the spring, the Chamber of Commerce was asked to serve as the “backbone” organization for the Coalition, helping to look at best practices, bring additional voices to the table, and build momentum to move the work of the coalition forward. The Chamber, in turn, secured external coaching and facilitation support from the Forum for Youth Investment.

The start of the 2015/2016 school year marked the beginning of a 9-month effort to relaunch, reengage and reinvigorate efforts to address the needs of opportunity youth in Flint and Genesee County. The group
focused on gaining traction during a time of overarching drama and crisis. It was a time for clarifying structure, setting priorities, and moving to action.

As the coalition heads into 2016/2017, a clear long-term priority has been set (i.e., establishing a re-engagement center) and processes for more “rapid response” projects are also in place. In both modes, ongoing engagement of critical stakeholders will be key.

**TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES, KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

While over 60 organizations are committed to the work of the coalition, the numbers engaged varied over the course of the year as the Coalition leadership worked to establish the structure and priorities. The activities and accomplishments are set forth below in 5 phases: 1) Relaunch (& Remix); 2) Goal-setting & Engagement; 3) Priority-Setting; 4) Distributed Leadership.

**PHASE ONE: Relaunch (& Remix) August – September**

**Challenges to Address:**
1) Relaunching the coalition under a new fiscal home and with a new “backbone” staff while being respectful of long-term core members of the coalition and the previous facilitator
2) Capitalizing on the foundation laid with Remix (web-based referral resource) at a time that its organizational home was transitioning.

**Key Activity/Approach: Training and Orientation for Key Stakeholders and Steering Committee**
Phase One focused on relaunching and reinvigorating an existing Opportunity Youth Coalition. Coalition leaders and backbone staff who had been involved in “collective impact” trainings and conferences determined that this outcomes-focused, population-level, cross-sector approach was essential in order to reframe the mission and objectives of the coalition around changing the odds for all 9,000+ opportunity youth in Flint and Genesee County. The planning and priority-setting process started with an education component to introduce community leaders to the collective impact approach and invite them to commit to the work. In early August 2015 a full day Leadership Retreat was held at Baker College designed to introduce key community stakeholders and steering committee members to the basic tenets of a collective impact approach and provide them with an opportunity to develop a common language and vocabulary around this work. The retreat was facilitated by the Forum for Youth Investment. Participants included CEO’s, nonprofit organizations, political representatives, and those involved in the previous iteration of the coalition. Data and information prepared in advance and brought into this meeting included: 1) outcome data on Opportunity Youth in Flint and Genesee County; and 2) an initial mapping of coalitions and networks working on issues related to opportunity youth. The sessions included an overview of the collective impact approach, trends in opportunity youth work from across the country, and facilitated conversations about the potential direction of work in Flint and Genesee County.

The afternoon session was for steering committee members only and was intended to focus on procedures for goal setting and strategic planning as well as on key infrastructure questions. Steering committee members discussed the roles of a backbone organization, as well as processes for determining strategies and setting priorities that bring solutions to scale and impact systemic changes.

During the afternoon session with the Steering Committee, a topic arose that was not on the agenda – the proverbial “elephant in the room” – Remix. Remix is an education and employment referral resource for Opportunity Youth that had been initially developed as a result of the work of the former Disconnected Youth
Coalition. Through the course of its development and the transition to a new home agency, Remix had changed both in service methodology and in some of its most prevalent clientele base. These changes needed to be discussed among the original Coalition members who had helped set the vision for Remix at its onset.

Results:
An Ad Hoc subgroup of the Steering Committee met to develop a better understanding of the scope, target audience, and sustainability of Remix with its new leadership at Mott Community College. The Steering Committee also demonstrated that it could work through a thorny issue in real time. The Backbone Staff (from the Chamber) demonstrated that they could provide support through this process.

PHASE TWO: Engagement & Agenda Setting

Challenge to Address: Engaging a broad group of service providers in a community where coalitions often “start off high energy” and with high engagement and then “dwindle fast” in terms of participation. Participants really need to see the purpose of coming together and see their work in the larger picture.

Key Activity/Approach: Workshop & Strategy Session (October) followed by team meetings
After the August Leadership Retreat, the work broadened to include a wide variety of stakeholders and service-providers who helped clarify the current state of programs, resources, and the population. A full day Workshop and Strategy Session – co-facilitated by the Forum for Youth Investment, the Chamber’s “Backbone” staff, and steering committee members that were trained as table facilitators – was attended by over 60 coalition members. The primary goal of the working session was to educate the group on how to do business differently as a coalition and get initial agreement on the direction of the work. Participants were asked to add to detailed maps of programming (who was focused on what areas of programming along the age continuum?), weigh in on which outcomes and indicators were of highest priority given their work, and unpack what local conditions were obstacles to Opportunity Youth achieving the desired outcomes.

Perhaps the biggest challenge put to the group, however, was what the Forum refers to as “the denominator challenge.” When asked as part of their “ticket of admission” to bring a tally of how many Opportunity Youth they connected with during a year – either intensively or through relatively light means (e.g., communications mechanisms) the collective tally of the group added up to approximately 3,800 intensively – barely 1/3 of the 9,715 Opportunity Youth in Flint and Genesee County – and 6,500 broadly. (Note: It was acknowledged that this likely included double-counting across the programs that were represented in the room). These numbers helped to crystallize for the room the following:

Question: “Why do we need to do business differently as a coalition? Why do we need to take a collective impact approach?”

Answer: “Because if we keep doing business the way that we are doing it, at best we’ll barely reach one-third of the young people whose lives we are trying to change with the kinds of intensive, transformative supports that we think they need. We need to think outside our current programmatic approaches to a different way of doing business. This is why need the Opportunity Youth Coalition.”

Results: This large group convening set the stage so that the full group could move head in the same direction. The mapping and information gathering exercises helped frame the key ideas that shaped the priority areas of work explored in Phase 3.

Related Products: October 27 Workshop & Strategy Session Meeting Report
**PHASE THREE: Priority-Setting**

**December – February**

**Challenges:** As the coalition began to meet on a monthly basis, opinions differed on how to set priorities within the larger agenda.

**Key Activity/Approach:** December through February was marked by exploration and activity around resources and grants (for example, exploring the federal grant opportunity with the Performance Partnership Pilots and developing templates for mutual letters of support) and building greater understanding about successful local examples (by featuring programs like YouthBuild and holding meetings at key service locations, like Christ Enrichment Center). But in the monthly meetings of the group, debates began to emerge about what the focus and priorities should be for the coalition.

Monthly coaching calls between the Backbone staff and the Forum consultant turned to questions like: How can you keep energy and momentum going when not everyone’s favorite idea is “picked” by the group? How do you keep members engaged, learning and energized over time? How do you balance the interests of long-time participants and those who are “new” at the table? And how do you ensure that a coalition is still seen as relevant when a major crisis – lead in the water – becomes a real and pressing concern for the community.

This last question was due to the onslaught of the Flint Water Crisis. Discussion between all parties involved – coalition members, Backbone staff, and Forum coach – focused on how to address the concerns of the community while also keeping in mind the real and present concerns of Opportunity Youth. Concurrently new funding came to the community specifically for the purpose of employing Opportunity Youth to help with water distribution. The Coalition and the new “Water Works” Initiative took time to determine how the program would be executed and what role the Coalition could have with its roll out.

While the primary consulting methodology during this time period was monthly coaching calls, the strategy developed to address the priority-setting conundrum was a simple one – deploy a survey. The priority-setting survey asked coalition members to weigh in on three questions that had been framed out during the meeting in October:
1. How are our young people doing? What indicators do you think the Coalition should try to influence?

![Graph showing indicators and their importance ratings.]

**How are our young people doing?**

**What indicators do you think the Coalition should try to influence? Rank the importance of each indicator.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeskills</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Grade 9 Dropout</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Unusual Attendance</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Juvenile Delinquency</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension Rate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Math/Reading</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. What issue areas do you want to address? (from issues/topics identified by the Coalition and its partners)

![Graph showing issue areas and their importance ratings.]

**What issue areas do you want to address?**

**Rank the importance of the issue/topics that were identified by the Coalition and its partners.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Violence</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports for Parents and Families</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth in Foster Care</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Transportation</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Use/Addiction</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Post &amp; Stay to Maters</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilient Relationships</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety/Crime</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Politics</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How should we affect change? (see attached for responses to this more detailed question).

These results were processed in a Steering Committee session on February 11.

**Results:** The coalition emerged from this priority-setting process with a consensus on direction. The oft-discussed “Re-engagement Center” was clearly the top priority on the “How should we affect change?” list. Based on these results, the group set the course for moving forward.

**Related Products:** The priority-setting survey, results and PowerPoint Presentation
**PHASE FOUR: Distributed Leadership**  
*February - May*

**Challenge:** Harnessing the dual energies in the Steering Committee related to getting to action and planning for long-term change.

**Approach/Methodology: Planning Session**

The February 11th Planning Session marked a pivot point – not only in priority-setting (processing the survey results discussed above) but also in establishing a new mode for doing business that clarified leadership roles and mechanisms for working groups separate from the support functions provided by the Backbone staff. The Forum helped to facilitate this session, with the goal of clarifying modes for working groups that responded to the different time horizons and action agendas of coalition members (e.g., quick turnaround vs. long-range planning). The session was also designed to encourage coalition members to take on leadership roles in the room (facilitator, time keeper, record keeper, scheduler) and then maintain those roles as the groups moved into longer term work.

Over the next several months, the work teams moved forward on the promotion of an upcoming Remix Connection Fair and the planning for the Reengagement Center. The Remix Connection Fair participation itself had mixed results but this served as an opportunity for the Backbone staff and core team to debrief with coalition members on what kinds of support and communications mechanisms are most useful for these “real-time,” “quick response” activities.

On the Reengagement Center, the action planning acknowledged and built upon the core capacities of the reinvigorated Remix work, while intentionally exploring effective models from other communities around the country. Through facilitated conference calls, planning around potential site visits and the development of an RFP for a business planning consultant, the Reengagement Center Action Team worked to hone the vision for the center and put in place a process that would buildout a long-term and sustainable infrastructure for identifying and supporting opportunity youth as the reconnect to education and employment.

**Result:** Two Action Groups were established:  
Team #1 Near-term – Quick response team focused on the Opportunity Youth “Connection Fair” in May  
Team #2. Business Plan and Fund Development for the “Reengagement Center”

**Related Products:**  
*Agenda February 11 Planning Session*
*Reengagement Center Business Plan RFP*
BUILDING CAPACITY: Reflections on Strengths, Assets, and Challenges Ahead

The Forum helped the group to establish common ground through its coaching relationship with Kristina Johnston from the Chamber of Commerce, who served as the Backbone staff – the neutral facilitator and convener for the Opportunity Youth Coalition. The Forum provided input on ways to frame questions for the group and providing materials and suggested agendas on what process steps to do next. Of particular value was talking through “the challenges” noted above in real-time and, together, thinking through solutions that were Flint and Genesee specific but informed by lessons learned from our counterparts tackling these challenges in other communities across the country. Forum coaching was noted as supportive in the work of Opportunity Youth Coalition in forging ahead in a helpful and meaningful way.

The following reflections are based on an interview with Kristina about lessons learned, current capacity and challenges that remain:

Consistent Energy is a Challenge. Participants vary greatly over time and consistency continues to be a challenge. While it is easier to get agreement on “common ground” and “common vision,” ongoing commitment to action is a struggle. On the plus side, those at the table are the ones who are very committed to this data-driven, outcomes-focused way of doing business. They are embracing the collective impact approach and are bringing a new energy to the work.

Balancing Consensus with Building Momentum. As the key change-maker for the backbone organization, Kristina developed the skills to balance the conundrum of consensus building while keeping the work moving forward and continuing momentum. In turn, the OYC was able to gain traction on things that made a difference. Kristina speaks eloquently about building the skills to balance this conundrum: “I came into this thinking everything had to be a consensus process. As a backbone, I feel more empowered to make decisions when I think we are getting stuck. We are moving faster and smoothly. They [the coalition members] are comfortable that we are doing something. Coaching with the Forum has helped us forge ahead in more meaningful and helpful ways. As the backbone agency, we have taken more of a leadership role as opposed to waiting for complete consensus.”

Having Clear Priority Areas Leads to Shared Leadership. A by-product of clear priority areas is that it is easier for coalition members to step up and lead. A conscious effort on the part of Backbone staff to step back and not be the only person leading has led to better and more responsive leadership from others in the group. Group members are now convening and applying for funding on components of the work. They are actively stepping up to be part of the solution.
Agenda/Meeting Notes

8:30 Continental Breakfast & Mapping Activity
Welcome and Introductory Activity
Participant List attached (Attachment A). Names highlighted in gray, are those that registered but did not attend.

As participants entered, they “interviewed” one another asking the following questions:

- **When it comes to Opportunity Youth, where is the focus of your work?**
  As a reference a program map was provided (Attachment B) to determine what type of program or service is offered to this population.

- **What service areas do you identify with or represent?** This referred to the following options: Health, Non-Profit, Education, Juvenile Justice/Child Welfare, Faith, or Other. These sectors were color coded on the participant nametags and used on the program map as shown.

Additions to the chart included: Public Safety/Quality of Life (Tom Wyatt – Kettering University), S.U.D. Community Awareness, Systemic Process (Lisa Fockler – Genesee Alcohol and Addiction Prevention Coalition), Students at-risk of dropping out of college (Dena Johnson – Kagle Leadership Initiative)
• **What program(s) do you offer that impact OY?** Interviewees and interviewers described to each up to five of their most core programs and services offered and then mapped them to the wall poster as shown above. (Blank Program Map attached – digital version of the mapped services will be available online).

**Number of OY Served.** As participants arrived they were asked how many OY they serve, annually, in a broad way and in an intensive way. Participants reported that annually they serve 6,530 broadly and 3,758 intensively (not including ReMix). ReMix reported serving 10,000 – 12,000 young people broadly and 672 intensively.

It was noted that in Genesee County has over 9,000 OY.
Stakeholder Wheel. Participants were asked to denote what sector and their work roles using colored dots on the graphic.

9:00  Who are our Opportunity Youth? Why are we coming together?
Participants collectively take a look at the data on Flint youth to discuss what’s happening behind the current indicators.

Merita Irby, from Forum for Youth Investment, presented some facts and figures about our community (Powerpoint Presentation Attachment C). Kristina Johnston, from the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce, presented about the Flint & Genesee Opportunity Youth Coalition and its role in helping drive better connections, better efficiency, and ultimately better service to OY.

An exercise around readiness was carried out by small groups. The groups noted “What they want to see” in a young person and then discussed how we would measure those skillsets and mindsets. The compiled results are attached (Attachment D) along with a document provided by Forum for Youth Investment outlining research-based Skillsets and Mindsets that demonstrate Readiness (Attachment E).
As the groups reviewed their notes, they identified their highest priority indicators and plotted them on a continuum of youth ages.

10:00  **Cross-Group Work: Vignettes**

In cross-sector/system groups, participants read through vignettes, looking first at current efforts and then at cross-sector ways to respond.

For this activity, groups consisted of people who worked in different sectors (cross-groups). They reviewed case studies provided by Kasie White of actual OY in Genesee County served by the ReMix program. The vignettes discussed are attached (Attachment F). Tables read their vignettes and described what services were necessary to serve the OY described.

10:45  **BREAK**
Within Sector Small Group Work: Successes and Barriers
Small within sector groups discuss what's been working, and what's been tried; including what can be built upon to create bridges between sectors and systems.

Sector-specific groups were assembled, consisting of tables for:
- K-12 Education
- Higher Education
- Non-Profit (Prevention Services/Youth Development)
- Workforce/Employment
- Health & Child Welfare
- Basic Needs
- System/Connectors/Coalitions

Tables assessed the state of the Environment, People, Experiences, and Space and Time, in which they do their work. A tool was provided (Attachment G) to determine whether these settings had prohibitive or incentivizing readiness practices. Each group plotted their status and a dashboard was compiled for the room (Attachment H; snapshot below)
From this discussion, tables paired up to discuss:

- What’s been working?
- What’s been tried?
- What are the policy and system barriers?
- What are the things that we need to build to other sectors/systems? (If we want to build on, rather than duplicate or reinvent, how do we quickly get a lay of the land?)

Table discussions resulted in the following lists of “Bridges” and “Barriers”:

**Bridges:**
- Case Manager – Holistic Plan
- Ecosystem Challenges
- Central Assessment Source
- Coalition to bring services together
- Communicate more – Values & Vision “Listening”
- Coordination of Resources
- Some support agencies
- Hospital-Rehab facility
- Access Center

**Barriers:**
- Lack of Sharing
- Lack of Response
- Communication
- Segmented
- Eligibility requirements
- Transportation
- Disability – for homeless shelters
- Must have a caregiver for many services
- Medical costs

**12:00 LUNCH**
Several Job Corps participants joined the group for lunch and shared their stories with Service-Providers over lunch. They then stayed to participate in the afternoon activities.
12:30 Engaging Opportunity Youth in Shared Diagnosis & Problem-Solving

The group engages in activities to model ways to co-design diagnosis and analysis for common community concerns related to the needs of opportunity youth using facilitated community conversation techniques.

- Root Cause Analysis
- 5 Whys Analysis
- Common Cause Analysis

To further identify the root causes of some of the communities’ challenges (as identified in the Indicators identified earlier in the day), participants worked in groups to go through the 5 Whys exercise and then identified their top three most impactful causes. Issues analyzed included:

- Social/Emotional (Emotional Intelligence) - ORANGE
- Graduation Rates – LIGHT BLUISH-GREEN
- Employment Rate – BLUE
- Arrest Rates - YELLOW
- Post-High School Enrollment and Attainment – DARKER GREEN
- Suspension Rates – BRIGHT GREEN
- Life Skills – PINK

Each team created sheets for each topic that denoted as many reasons why these issues exist. They were then plotted on the sticky wall and grouped into topics. See photo.
Common Themes/Groupings included:
- Parents & Families
- Support Services
- Youth in Foster Care
- Respectful Relationships with Professionals
- Appropriate Education Alternatives
- Trauma
- Substance Abuse/Addiction
- Available Jobs & Skills to Match
- Policies
- Housing & Transportation

Forum for Youth Investment will create a spreadsheet that captures our mapping exercise and provide it in upcoming weeks.

2:30 Engagement Strategy Discussion
Group discusses strategies for engaging various local stakeholders and groups.

The group was then invited to take one of the common themes from the issues wall or from the list of barriers to work on possible action strategies, who would carry them out, cost (high, medium, low), and effort (high, medium, low).

Issues selected and their top, most impactful strategy suggested were as follows:
- Youth in Foster Care
  - Create an informational card given to each young person as they age out of the system, that describes their legal rights and resources, with contact information
- Trauma
  - Bullying Task Force (staffed) that addresses bullying at all schools
- Transportation
  - Increase bus hours and routes to increase accessibility
- Parents & Families
  - Community programs to educate parents
- Available Jobs and Skills to Match
  - Create a scholarship fund for free driver’s training (define driver’s license as a portable skill)
- Substance Abuse/Addiction
  - Establish mentor groups – inventory existing programs in Genesee County to determine access and availability
- Appropriate Education/Alternatives
3:00  **Next Steps**

Group discusses near-term next steps.

To move toward implementation the group was asked to identify which areas of the work they were interested in supporting. Results were as follows:

- Data – 3 people
- Program mapping – 13 people
- Action Groups – 12 people
- Connecting with other audiences – 0 (however, the group acknowledged the importance of establishing a committee who engages parents, residents, and kids in the issue and the solution).

As a follow-up to this work, the Coalition Steering Committee will assess next steps and start activating some working groups and engagement strategies.

3:30  **Close**
1. HOW ARE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE DOING?: What indicators do you think the Coalition should try to influence? Rank the importance of each indicator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Highly Important</th>
<th>Moderately Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Birth Weight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspension Rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED/High School Enrollment and Attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-High School Enrollment and Attainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. WHAT ISSUES DO YOU WANT TO ADDRESS? Rank the importance of the issues/topics that were identified by the Coalition and its partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supports for Parents and Families</th>
<th>Highly Important</th>
<th>Moderately Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth in Foster Care</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful Relationships with Professionals</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse/Addiction</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=qGazj53Kzify924EahZT8ZkwbrIHVVYYqXEG0%2bGirTZ4zZaR%2bDGaEnSds0zbb3573z7ZMFnpPqDsCXED9vIBh…
Prevention & Treatment

Public Policies

Housing and Transportation

Available Jobs & Skills to Match

Education

Health Issues

Powered by

See how easy it is to create a survey.
HOW ARE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE DOING?
What indicators do you think the Coalition should try to influence? Rank the importance of each indicator.

- Literacy
- GED/H.S. Enroll/Attain
- Life Skills
- Attendance
- Suspension Rates
- Post-High School Enroll/Attain
- Social/Emotional Intelligence
- Employment Rate
- Substance Abuse/Addiction
- Arrest Rates
- Low Birth Weight

Highly Important Rating Average

5 = HI

1 = LO
WHAT ISSUE AREAS DO YOU WANT TO ADDRESS?
Rank the importance of the issues/topics that were identified by the Coalition and its partners.

- Education
- Trauma
- Health Issues
- Youth in Foster Care
- Housing and Transportation
- Subst Abuse/Addiction Prev & Treatment
- Available Jobs & Skills to Match
- Respectful Relationships w/Professionals
- Public Policies

![Bar chart showing importance ratings for various issue areas.](image-url)

- **Highly Important**
- **Rating Average**

5 = HI
1 = LO
HOW SHOULD WE AFFECT CHANGE?
Rank the importance of the following issues/topics that were identified by the Coalition and Service-Provider.

1 = LO          5 = HI

**EDUCATION - Return to School Access Center (Re-Engagement Center)**

**HEALTH - Improve mental health services and awareness**

**TRAUMA & PARENTS AND FAMILIES - Parent Education Programs - trauma, social media, teachers/schools, healthy relationships, community programs, immediate needs, etc.**

**EDUCATION - Advocacy for changes to the educational system**

**SYSTEMS - Learning, sharing, and endorsing existing programs serving Opportunity Youth (i.e. YouthBuild, ReMix, Christ Enrichment Center, etc.)**

**SYSTEMS - Strengthen referral networks and intake processes**

**MENTORS - Recruit different types of mentors/adult role models (i.e. occupational, education, whole-person support, mentee-responsive programs)**

**MENTORS - Inventory mentor programs in Genesee County to determine access and availability**

**TRAUMA - Classroom supports for healthy relationships (between students, families, educators)**

**TRAUMA - Training for teachers for dealing with trauma**

**FOSTER CARE - Step-by-step legal rights document for youth exiting foster care**

**FOSTER CARE - Voluntary Foster Care programs for ages 18 - 21**

**TRANSPORTATION - Transportation for free/lower rates for low income students/families**

# Highly Important
Flint & Genessee Opportunity Youth Coalition
2016 Planning Session
Thursday, February 11, 2016, 8:30 am - 11:30 pm
Job Corps

Planning Session Goals: To set action agenda priorities for 2016 and clarify small group and large group roles/responsibilities related to delivering on those priorities.

Present: Mohammed Aboutawila, Renee Boals-Peel, Lisa Fockler, Dartanyan Jamerson, Kristina Johnston, Mike Kiefer, David Merot, Crystal Pepperdine, Verona Terry, Kenda Watson, James Yake, Angela Libkie

Facilitators.  Merita Irby, Co-Founder, Chief Program Officer, The Forum for Youth Investment
Kristina Johnston, Flint & Genessee Chamber of Commerce

8:30  Welcome, Session Goals & Agenda Review
The Group defined their ideal meeting outcomes as the following:
• We are ready to start doing something, rather than talking
  o Need to establish concrete things and plans
• Focus on one achievable item – how do we define this?
• Goals/Aims (Measurable Targets)
  o Something to coalesce around
  o Accountability
• Coalition addressing limitations of existing programs
  o Connect and fill gaps
• We need to identify what will it take to get the work done

8:45  Gaining Traction: Prioritizing Indicators, Issues and Work Areas for Common Action

What are the key questions that we tackled and how do they fit into our overall “theory” and “game plan” for change?

What are our criteria for priority-setting? (e.g., Do we want . . . a balanced slate of actions? to target focus all on one area vs. engage/iterate/innovate in a few? easy wins vs. biggest impact? activities where our collective input/action are essential?)

Criteria defined by the group
Discussion included:
Picking one project vs. a few short-term projects that gain traction

Challenge: Need a Budget? Need a Timeframe?
Need to know if there is funding available to do that?

Criteria Question: Is it about funding?
No$----------------Ante Up----------------Grand Funding

Criteria Question: Is it Coordination?
Awareness -------Alignment--------Collaboration---------Coordination

**Criteria Question: Timeframe?**
Now/Crisis-----------------------------Long-term

Processing the survey results: How are our young people doing? What are the most important indicators to keep an eye on?
- What issue areas do we need to address?
- What are our high priority “starting points” projects for 2016?

*(Slides with summary of the results are attached)*

The Group noted the following trends in the survey results:

 Indicator Feedback:
- Literacy Coalition has raised awareness
  - Need to be sure to coordinate coalition activities
- Higher ranked indicators demonstrate root causes
- Surprised that Substance Abuse wasn’t higher
  - It shows up in later questions as a higher priority
- High School attainment and employment seem to be the indicators that truly address the OY population by definition

 Issue Feedback:
- Education’s high ranking was consistent with indicator feedback

 Project Feedback:
- Mental Health surfaced
- Re-engagement Center came out strong
- Employment/Job Skills didn’t come out strong – might be represented elsewhere in the results

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9:30  Getting Concrete: Small group work on “starting point” projects
- What are the opportunities and challenges to moving this work right now?
- Are there key timing considerations (how important is it that we do this first/soon?)
- What specific actions are needed? Is it clear how this should be accomplished? (What other investigative work is needed?) Either way, please answer:
  - Who needs to do what by when?
  - What resources do they need to take this the next step?
  - Who else needs to be engaged? Informed?

Group Consensus: Need to identify 1 – 2 Quick Win Projects and One Longer-Term High Impact Project

**Capacity-Building, Quick Win Projects (1 – 2)**
These projects should: be realistic, have a game plan for resources, be timely, have adequate staffing/people/capacity (could use internships/students/volunteers), and address a key gap.

**High Impact – Longer-term Projects (1)**
These projects might need: infrastructure –building, coordination of services/doing business, new money – includes grant-writing, and Federal/State Funds (we can leverage the spotlight on Flint). They should be located in high-need areas.
Based on these criteria, the group identified two projects to investigate further:

**High-impact/Longer-Term Project: Re-Engagement Center**

**Smaller, Quicker Win: Support for “Light Touch” events that connect OY with programs and resources**

**Big Project – Re-Engagement Center**

A sub-group gathered to explore next steps for accomplishing this “big project”. The concept builds on ReMix, serving as a place for OY to access any services, following a “No wrong door”/ “One-stop” approach. The Center would have a Genesee County scope.

**Actions Needed/Partners/Timeline**

1. **ACTION:** Funding – build on existing ReMix funding – need a budget and business plan
   a. Needs to account for “In-Kind” contributions
   b. Create a strategy document (Case Statement) with a timeline; WHO: Dartanyan; TIMING: by March 10th
   c. OVERALL PLANNING TIMING: 6 months – 1 year
2. **ACTION:** Branding/Marketing
   a. Awareness Summit – Event (coincide with the branding/marketing)
   b. WHO: MCC, Chamber, RFP for local advertising
   c. TIMING: Develop now, by March 10th
3. **ACTION:** Benchmarking
4. **ACTION:** Populations Engagement – Capturing names of kids aging out of foster care; declared “dropped out” by school, etc.
5. **ACTION:** Wraparound – use existing model
   a. WHO: Staff Support
   b. TIMING: Current & Ongoing
6. **ACTION:** Engagement Network – use the OY Coalition – expand the membership to those that fit with the other objectives

**Next Steps:**

Renee will set up a Trello – Project Planning Portal – interactive and real-time

Meeting next week; Draft plan for March 10

**Shorter-Term, Capacity-Building Project**

The group determined that the short-term projects should reinforce progress toward the long-term project. As such this effort should strengthen the relationships between agencies, create forums to reach the target audience, and establish a baseline for collaboration that can be leveraged while pursuing resources for the big project.

**Objective:** Use existing “light touch” or “programmatic” to connect OY to other opportunities. These could include low-hanging fruit, like Reconnection Fair, ReMix, Holiday Party, etc. The rationale defined was that programs are not at capacity/are not meeting the needs of the population and need more and better on-ramps. In order to do this the Coalition should raise awareness of what’s available in the community – Where are they referring people? What can partners provide? How can we help?

The work can focus on a hub at ReMix, The Coalition can help where there are gaps – what do they need to strengthen? Intake, branding, materials, phone number, website, word of mouth – doctors, shelters, university connections, etc.
To focus this conversation, the group focused on the upcoming ReMix Connection Fair which is scheduled for May 12, 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm at Riverfront. Within this small project opportunities. The conversation was split into 1) Marketing/Outreach for the Event and 2) Content Design that reinforces partner agencies and other Coalition priorities (i.e. mentors, mental health awareness, partner connections, etc.

Marketing/Outreach Breakout
In order to increase the impact of the ReMix Connection Fair in May (hosted by Priority Children), the Coalition can help with marketing efforts that attract more OY to the event.

Strategies should include young people, and people who care about OY, as recruiters. These could include: parents, faith agencies, teachers, mental health professionals. Ideas included: Grassroots/Door-to-Door promotion (leverage other door-to-door efforts), “Bring a Friend” campaign, Transportation/Bus Passes provided (potential partnership with MTA), Incentives (i.e. pizza/food), partnership with foster agencies to reach young people.

1. ACTION: Redesign the flyer
   a. WHO: Brandon at MCC (examples from MEE Enterprises)
   b. TIMING: Now
2. ACTION: Engage Students through social media using existing youth programs – service projects; create a hashtag
   a. WHO: Job Corps, Pre-College Program, TeenQuest, MYOI, Young leaders/communicators in school media programs
   b. TIMING: Some now; Hashtag May 1st or after
3. ACTION: Radio Spots; Develop funds; Townsquare, 93.7 Hip Hop, 92.7 Soul (Cumulus)
   a. WHO: whole team + GCI, JaNel, Mohammed, Crystal, Communications Action Team, Jim Ply, Bruce Holiday, Carl
4. Volunteer Service – door-to-door work
   a. WHO: align with GISD outreach, partner with fraternities, Youth mentors, Faith-based partners, Summer Learning Alliance

Content Design Breakout
The Coalition identified an opportunity to increase visibility and impact of service-providers and programs that influence some of our key priority areas (as defined by the priority survey). These include: mental health of OY, mentors to help OY navigate, systems (referrals, outreach, intake, etc.), foster care services and legal rights.

1. ACTION: Establish a “fun lunch” for vendors to socialize and establish relationships
   a. Use as an opportunity to “map” connections to each other – “who do you partner with?” – document and make visual for the group to better understand the ways they support each other
2. ACTION: Offer networking or work sessions for providers prior to the Fair
3. ACTION: Create promotional “packets” that cluster service-providers – information sharing between agencies and for attendees
4. ACTION: Create common Snapshots of programs, with what slots are available, collect information about outreach challenges, who they are trying to reach (and who they aren’t) - Helps the Coalition identify common challenges and sets the stage for future collaboration
5. **ACTION:** Review/change the event layout and logistics to reach parents AND OY (currently the Connection Fair is separated from the Summer Program Fair) – Possibly identified common issues and bridge audiences

**Next Steps:**
Determine who within the Coalition can facilitate this work in cooperation with Priority Children
Establish an overall timeline that works for both groups

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**During the course of the meeting some other comments and considerations were raised:**

**Other Comments/considerations:**
Need an assessment of Federal Resources that are available

ReMix is expanding to include training and job resources – offering classes – connected to Workforce Development Services – helping to get financial aid resources

How do we connect young people, using the Coalition, to resources available through ReMix and others?

**Comments:**
Have to have a plan and then find a grant, need to avoid duplication of services – demonstrating collaboration is important – requires centralized activities (i.e. Re-engagement Center), requires high-capacity leaders, requires shared services, need a common language
Need to avoid administrative fees, use interns and shared resources – COORDINATION, COLLABORATION, COMMUNICATION

How do you demonstrate collaboration beyond a letter? Ante up? This is the baseline for collaboration – proof to a granter (is it possible for non-profits to “ante up”?)

Need to demonstrate results to potential supporters (financial and partners)
Show with near-term projects in order to get to the project that has the hope of tackling the 9,000

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**10:30 Structuring for Success: How do we connect efficiently and effectively to get the work done?**
- Small group report outs
- Key roles within teams – consensus and making commitments
- Key roles across teams – consensus and making commitments
- Structuring connections, communications and timing

Each group reported out on their plans. More work is needed and should happen prior to the March meeting. Other partners may need to be recruited to support the work.

This portion of the meeting was supposed to help the group establish an agreement for commitment expectations and meeting structures/procedures. This conversation will be tabled for a future meeting.

**11:30 Adjourn**
Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Request for Proposal for a Business/Sustainability Plan for a Flint Re-Engagement Center for Opportunity Youth

Posted: July 22, 2016

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce (FGCC) is seeking consultant support to complete a business plan for a possible Re-Engagement Center in Flint, Michigan. Ideal respondents will have a thorough understanding of non-profit business models. Preference may be given to applicants with knowledge of the Flint community and national best practice for re-engagement of the opportunity youth population. Based on the responses, the contract may be split between firms.

Important Dates:
Bid Period: July 22 – August 10, 2016
RFP Questions submitted by: August 1, 2016 (to kjohnston@flintandgenesee.org)
Intent to Bid Notification due by: August 3, 2016 (to kjohnston@flintandgenesee.org)
Proposal Deadline: August 10, 2016
Proposal Review: August 11 - 16, 2016
Projected Contract Period: August 23 – November 30, 2016

Background:
The City of Flint, Michigan is a resilient community that has made many efforts to plan for a brighter future. Unfortunately, many young people in Flint struggle with traditional education options and face barriers with homelessness, lack of family support, and lack of basic skills. Opportunity Youth are defined as, young people ages 16 – 24 that are disconnected from education and employment. Specifically, in Flint and Genesee County:

- 19.2% of youth, or 9,715, ages 16-24 in Genesee County are not engaged in work or education
- The dropout rate in Genesee County is 15.5%, compared to the State of Michigan which is at 9.6% (spring, 2014)
- 54.2% of students in Flint Community Schools were chronically absent during the 2014-15 school year (33.3% of students in Genesee County)
- 32% of children in Genesee County live in poverty, a 30% increase over six years
- 66.5% of children in the City of Clint live in poverty, the highest rate in Michigan in 2014

For more information about Opportunity Youth in Flint & Genesee County, Michigan, visit: www.opportunityflintandgenesee.org.

To combat these challenges, Mott Community College Workforce Development (MCC-WKFD) recently took over management of ReMix, a virtual and physical re-engagement center designed to connect opportunity youth to the resources they need. The current operations are housed at Genesee-Shiawassee-Thumb MiWorks where they have one full-time staff member and up to three interns from the University of Michigan-Flint Social Work department. The intensive and ever-changing needs of this population and the substantial economic and social impact of a disconnected population have led to the consideration of opportunities to expand current operations and the current business model in order to generate more positive outcomes for the target population and the community as a whole.

MCC-WKFD is one of 60 community partners engaged in the Flint & Genesee Opportunity Youth Coalition, managed by the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce. Scaling up the ReMix Re-Engagement Center is a priority initiative of the Coalition, which is why we are seeking consultant support to generate a business plan that would
not only help create an ideal business model, customized for our community, but will also help secure funding support and support long-term sustainability of the center.

Scope of Work:

The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce seeks an experienced consultant that can provide a business plan for an expanded ReMix Re-Engagement Center. The consultant or consulting firm will be expected to work with a Re-Engagement Center Planning Team:

- To capture and document current practices, resources and opportunities available in our community, unique considerations, and other input specifically for Flint & Genesee County
- To interview and document input from key community partners, especially Mott Community College Workforce Development, Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce, Flint Community Schools, local funders, etc. This input should advise the elements of the Business Plan.
- To develop a Business Model that accounts for best practice nationally, but is customized to Flint & Genesee County. It should include:
  - Location(s) – including a listing prospective sites (i.e. vacant school buildings, community centers, mobile units, etc.)
  - Staffing structure
  - Operating budget
  - Partner Engagement – how should the Center connect to schools and partners
  - Essential services offered on-site (i.e. career workshops, child care, food assistance, housing assistance, driver’s license, etc.); are they primarily academic, behavioral, career-focused, or a combination? What should they be?
  - Consideration for varying approaches for 16-18 vs. 18 – 24
- To assess Funding and Sustainability
  - Calculate City and State cost savings and other state policies for re-engagement centers/economic impact
  - Identify key state and federal grants that support opportunity youth and re-engagement centers
  - Identify private foundations that have an interest in supporting this population and projects
  - Include any key contacts, technical support people, or resources that can support efforts to raise funds
- To establish a proposed accountability system for re-engagement efforts, that includes:
  - A strategy to continuously connect with participants beyond their initial re-engagement
  - Trackable metrics of success
    - Goals based on the results of other similar communities
  - Identify software to track participant progress
  - Staff to follow-up, enter data, produce reports
  - Ways to identify service gaps, population needs, or other barriers that are preventing success of participants and partners
- To establish a recommended system for continuous learning and improvement
  - Feedback loops regarding program quality of partners/service-providers
  - Feedback/recommendations for policy or structural procedures in need of improvement
  - Ongoing identification of barriers to success
  - Continuous gap analysis and community/organizational responses
- Optional: To travel with key Re-Engagement Center planners to other Re-Engagement Centers in the country to learn about their structures/best practices
• Optional: To provide an analysis of current offerings, gaps in services, and steps to address these gaps
• Optional: To develop a recruitment strategy to access the target population and a way to track which efforts are successful

Proposal Content should include:
• Cover Letter
  o Include: a brief description of your firm indicating the primary office location for the performance of this project, the type of firm, areas of specialization, and the project lead. Include company name, address, contact name, title, phone number, fax number, email and website address. Identify all sub-consultants that will be involved
• Proposed process for the production of the Business Plan
  o Include the timeline for the development of the Business Plan
  o Include tools, data, or other resources that will be used to produce the Business Plan
• Proposed elements to be included in the final Business Plan
• Previous experience
  o Provide at least three references from recent or current clients (within the last two years) with: Name of client, Name and title of client’s primary contact, phone number, email address, and mailing address of the client’s primary contact; a brief description of the types of services provided the overall scope of the project, duration of the project and the current status of the project
  o Provide staffing plan and bios for individual(s) who will work on the project
  o Provide at least one sample Business Plan conducted for another client
  o Provide background on your staff/firm’s knowledge of non-profit management, collective impact approaches to complex community problems, and/or work with the opportunity youth population
• Experience and methods for including community engagement in your processes
• Plans to benchmark other communities
• Budget aligned with strategic steps and proposed project timeline
  o Include travel expenses, costs for consultation hours, etc.
  o Budget should not exceed $25,000 and work should be completed by November 30, 2016

Key Deliverables:
A consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:
• Complete Business Plan
• Documentation of input/interviews and observations on site visits
• Listing of funding opportunities and contacts for future consideration

Selection Process:
Final sealed proposals should be submitted by mail to:
Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce
Attn: Kristina Johnston
519 S. Saginaw Street, Suite 200
Flint MI 48502

Please include three (3) copies of your proposal along with an original signed by an authorized official. Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce will only accept complete submittals. No partial submittals will be accepted. Your submittal is limited to 25 pages maximum, with an additional 2 pages maximum for the cover letter, and 15 pages maximum for any appendix. Please also submit one digital copy (preferably in a pdf file) on a flash drive included in the mailed package. Questions regarding the RFP can be submitted to kjohnston@flintandgenesee.org no later
than August 1, 2016. If necessary, a bidder’s call will be scheduled. **Bidders should notify Kristina Johnston by email of their intent to submit a proposal, no later than August 10, 2016.**

Responses to this proposal will be evaluated on the following criteria: Quality of the proposed approach to fulfill the key deliverables; qualification and experience of prime consultant, any sub-consultants, and individuals who will work on the project; history of successful performance on similar projects and quality of sample products provided; proposed cost of the project; and adherence to the project schedule.

A review committee will review all proposals and set up follow-up meetings with finalists regarding the proposed methods, manpower, and measurements. The selection process is expected to be completed by August 16, 2016.
TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Preparing a Response
By submitting a response, respondents represent that they have thoroughly examined and become familiar with the scope of work outlined in this RFP and are capable of performing the work to achieve the objectives. The submittal must demonstrate that the respondent has sufficient and appropriate resources to complete the project. Consultants must designate the project lead and report where his/her primary office is located. Any proposed sub-consultants must be identified.

Incurred Costs
This request for proposals does not commit the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request. The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce will not be liable in any way for any costs incurred by respondents in replying to this RFP.

Right to Cancel
The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time and to decide not to consider any or all of the respondents submitting information in response to this request.

Severability
If any terms or provisions of this Request for Proposal are found to be illegal or unenforceable, then such term or provision shall be deemed stricken and the remaining portions of this document shall remain in full force and effect.

Collusion
By responding, the firm implicitly states that his/her proposal has not been made in connection with any other competing firm submitting a separate response to this RFP; is in all respects fair; and has been submitted without collusion or fraud.

Oral Presentation/Interview
Oral presentations are an option of the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce and may or may not be conducted. If presentations are requested, it should be noted that they will be for fact finding purposes, not negotiations.

Affirmative Action
The Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce is an equal opportunity employer and requires an affirmative action policy from all consultants and vendors as a condition of doing business, as per Federal Order 11246.

Assigning/Transferring of Agreement
The selected firm is prohibited from assigning, transferring, conveying, subletting or otherwise disposing of the resulting agreement or its rights, title, or interest therein or its power to execute such an agreement to any other person, company or corporation without prior consent and approval in writing from the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce.

Final Contract Negotiations
The final scope of work will be negotiated between the Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce and the selected consultant.