

Request for State Funding to the Vermont State Youth Council



Request for State Funding



Vermont Afterschool, on behalf of the Vermont State Youth Council (VSYC), requests that its federal funding be replaced by an appropriation of \$140,000 in State funds for FY27

- This funding is essential in order for the VSYC to continue providing youth a direct avenue to have a voice in policymaking, creating a more inclusive democracy in Vermont
- The VSYC also provides the Governor's administration and the Legislature with input from youth; a sought-after perspective that may be challenging for policymakers to otherwise receive



History of VSYC



The VSYC was established by H.293 (Act 109: An act relating to creating the State Youth Council), a bill signed into law by Governor Phil Scott on May 11, 2022

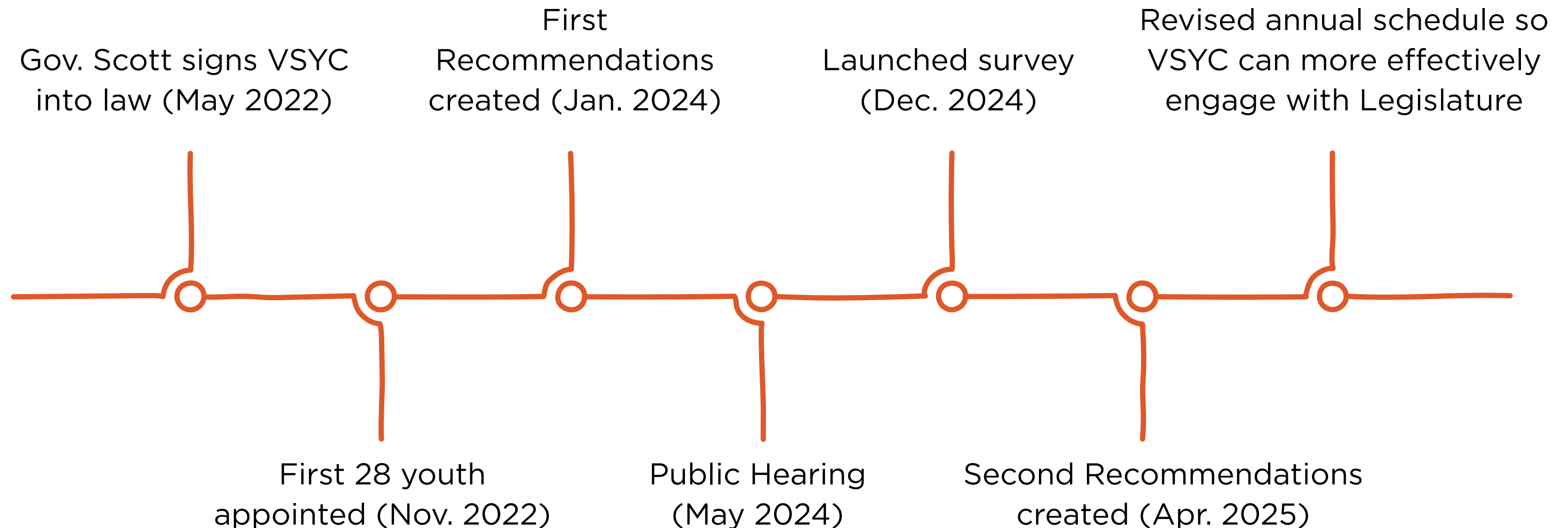
- A diverse group of 28 youth from each county responsible for annually advising the Governor and the Vermont General Assembly on the policies that impact young persons today
- The Council has five committees: Climate Change, Education, Equity and Anti-Racism, Youth Mental Health, and Youth Voice
- Meets bi-monthly during 90-minute virtual meetings, and may gather input from Vermont youth through surveys, polls, and public hearings



History of VSYC



Thus far, the Council has presented two sets of recommendations, testified several times, held one public hearing, and shared one survey for youth



Federal Funding Concerns



The current dependence on federal funding for the VSYC is causing concerns for the council members and Vermont Afterschool. Dedicated State funding will ensure youth council members have the right to fully express their identity and experiences, so they can truly represent the diversity and perspectives of young Vermonters

- There is an increasing concern of censorship and funding reductions for initiatives receiving federal funding. Currently, the Council has funding for FY27, but that could change at any time. We are flagging this as a potential issue, which could change depending on the federal government.
- VSYC members must be able to discuss issues using the terms of their choosing, and they must be able to speak freely to each other, their peers in the community, and to policymakers



Cost of the VSYC



The actual cost of the State Youth Council for FY27 is \$140,000

➤ This total includes \$47,000 in youth stipends; plus venue expenses and mileage reimbursement for in-person meetings

➤ Additionally, it includes costs associated with the administrative and technical assistance of Vermont Afterschool in support of the VSYC, which include staff time to coordinate Council and Committee meetings, logistical support, being a liaison for the Council, processing stipend payments, fringe benefits, and more



Young People Make a Better Vermont



“ The Vermont State Youth Council allows youth and legislators to impact one another, bridging the gap between generations of leaders. ”

—Harmony Devoe
SYC member and
past chair



Request for State Funding



Vermont Afterschool and the Vermont State Youth Council (VSYC) request that its federal funding be replaced by an appropriation of \$140,000 in State funds for FY27

- Protection from the increasing concern of censorship and funding reductions for initiatives receiving federal funding
- The VSYC members continue to have the right to fully express their identity and experiences, so they can truly represent the diversity and perspectives of young Vermonters represent
- Authentically provide the Governor's administration and the Legislature with input from youth

