Youth Development Branch
2013 - 2015

Established in 2003, the Youth Development Branch (YDB) will work towards ensuring that *each child, in each school, in each community is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged* (from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Whole Child Approach to Education). The YDB provides technical assistance and support to local school systems, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations in the areas of Extended Learning and Out-of-School Time, Service-Learning, Social and Emotional Learning, and Student Government.

The challenges of the 21st century require that we educate our youth in a manner that will equip them to compete and survive the many demands of life. We understand that academic achievement is only one facet of what is needed to be successful in life. Thus, the YDB has adopted the five tenets of ASCD's approach to educating the whole child: Healthy, Safe, Engaged, Supported, and Challenged.

It is our belief that each child needs to be fully prepared for college, career, and citizenship. This preparation will be fulfilled through the shared responsibility of students, parents and families, schools, and communities.

Youth Development Defined
Youth development is a philosophy and approach of working with youth that recognizes that: there are multiple domains of development that are all interconnected; all young people have strengths and abilities; and they are active agents in their own growth and development process.

Vision
All Maryland youth will become positive, productive citizens engaged in their community.

Mission
Provide resources and technical assistance to local school systems, communities (including non-profit and faith-based organizations), and students to promote academic achievement, facilitate the engagement of school-aged learners in programs and activities that develop character, civic responsibility, independence, and productivity. Youth Development facilitates the growth of school-aged learners into active, caring citizens with the will and capacity to contribute positively to their local and global communities.

Tenet #1	Youth Development	**21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)** Requires all funded programs to partner with USDA, etc. to provide snacks, supper, etc. Require activities that help participants identify and avoid behaviors and situations that put them at risk.
Healthy Each student enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.	Considers the targeted population and proactively addresses specific risk factors that would be harmful to the health of youth.	**Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC)** Promotes healthy lifestyles amongst students by working to get legislation passed regarding health risks to youth and supporting related initiatives that support protective factors.
		Service-Learning Requires students around the state to engage in health related service-learning experiences, including projects on reducing childhood obesity and preventing HIV/AIDS.
		Social and Emotional Learning Supports universally accepted character traits that enable the student to function successfully in school and the outside world.

Tenet #2	Youth Development	**21st Century Community Learning Centers** Requires all funded programs to explain how students will travel safely to and from the center and home. Programs may only occur in buildings that are secure and meet all established safety and environmental standards.
Safe Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.	Understands that youth must be able to safely and easily get to and from offered programs. Expects adults to provide support and guidance and understand that youth need long-term consistent relationships with caring adults.	**Maryland Association of Student Councils** Strongly supports and is heavily involved in the anti-bullying campaign. Recognizes the worth of students regardless of gender, faith, or sexual orientation.
		Service-Learning Supports school and personal safety through experiences that deal with topics like anti-bullying, development of peaceful conflict resolution skills, safe driving campaigns, and the development of disaster preparedness plans.
		Social and Emotional Learning Strives to teach students to develop character traits which will keep them emotionally and physical safe. Students learn through character education how to handle situations effectively and safely.

Tenet #3	Youth Development	21st Century Community Learning Centers Requires and charges programs to use active learning strategies, such as cooperative learning and project-based learning and must offer a wide array of enrichment activities that reflect student interests, goals, and learning profiles.
Engaged Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.	Provides opportunities to promote a strong sense of connection while enhancing competencies by providing opportunities to develop new skills and occasions to be of help or service.	**Maryland Association of Student Councils** Provides leadership training and many opportunities for youth to meet and share information with peers within Maryland and nationally.
		Service-Learning Improves students' academic skills by providing opportunities for them to apply what they learn in school to a real world problem in their communities and use their skills to help to resolve it.
		Social and Emotional Learning Helps students develop more of a positive connection to the school and avoid the many distractions that occur in that and their home environment.

Tenet #4:	Youth Development	21st Century Community Learning Centers Provides opportunities to help make families become aware of available services and how to support their children's learning as well as acquire skills to advocate for their children's needs.
Supported Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults.	Believes that programs must set high, clear standards and offer support to ensure that youth rise to meet these higher expectations.	**Maryland Association of Student Councils** Provides and facilitates mentoring of student council members by school and regional advisors as well as experienced leadership trainers from partners like Maryland Leadership Workshops.
		Service-Learning Provides opportunities for students to develop relationships with people who work in the non-profit and community service sectors of the community.
		Social and Emotional Learning Supports the idea of mentoring - the need for positive role models and relationships between students and adults.

Tenet #5	Youth Development	21st Century Community Learning Centers Collects and uses qualitative and quantitative data to support student academic achievement. Requires all programs to use curriculum and instruction that include evidence-based strategies.
Challenged Each student is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.	Engages youth in the development, planning, and execution in the programs in which they participate. Expects youth to consistently show high levels of responsible behavior, positively resolve conflicts, and develop and exercise leadership skills.	**Maryland Association of Student Councils** Is deliberately structured so that students serve as official officers that lead the member organization, as well as serve as Student Member of the State Board, etc.
		Service-Learning Provides opportunities for students to explore career options by completing projects that grant access to real life experiences.
		Social and Emotional Learning Ensures that students actively participate in rigorous academic curriculum and develop habits of self-discipline and organization by practicing positive character traits.