



Board Summary Report

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Agenda Date: 5/5/2026

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Michelle Halstead, Director, Commissioners' Office

Prepared By:

Kendra Davis, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office; Nico Johnson, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office

Presenter: Nico Johnson, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office; Kendra Davis, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office

Subject:

11:00 AM *Youth Engagement Proposal

Purpose and Request:

The Board of County Commissioners is asked to provide feedback and direction on a youth engagement proposal that includes details on possible formats, a review of available options within the County and through neighboring jurisdictions, and a recommendation for a youth internship program that fits the County's capacity and priorities, as well as an opportunity to provide more structured engagement options for high school students.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Workforce and Community Prosperity - Expand apprenticeship programs, internships, and workforce training opportunities.

Background and Discussion: In late 2025, the Board of County Commissioners requested additional information and options to foster youth engagement with the County. Staff prepared a memo that provides details on a variety of youth engagement programs and an overview of how the County and other local governments engage youth currently.

After conducting research on possible and existing programs, staff found that there were a number of ways to engage youth in local government activities, including:

- Youth advisory boards/councils
- Appointment of youth to existing boards and committees
- Youth forums
- Youth internships

Most of these examples require significant staff time and/or resources in order to ensure their success. Additionally, staff found great options for many of these opportunities already being offered in the region. Details on these and some of the available programs are listed in the attached memo.

Based on the research and available resources, staff identified a youth internship program (YIP) as

the option that best fits the County's needs and the priority of youth engagement identified by the BOCC. Additionally, offering a position in the Commissioners' Office would fill a gap in the current environment, as most internship opportunities focus on a specific area of interest or governance. Hosting an intern in the Commissioners' Office allows for a broader scope of engagement across the County.

Staff also recommends creating a fact sheet for high school students that outlines a more structured opportunity to engage with County government, as many of these students have civics or government class requirements.

The attached memo and draft program overview offer a more detailed picture of this proposal.

Alternatives: The Board of County Commissioners has the following alternatives:

1. Approve proposed YIP and structured high school engagement with adjustments and/or feedback as needed;
2. Propose alternative youth engagement opportunity;
3. Decline to move proposal or alternative forward at this time.

Fiscal Impact: If approved, the fiscal impact of the YIP would be up to \$4,500 per year based on the proposed salary of \$19/hr. This would include no more than 20 hrs./wk. for up to twelve weeks. There is available funding in the Commissioners' Office budget to accommodate this program.

Alignment with Strategic Implementation Strategies: The attached framework helps Arapahoe County institutionalize values-based, transparent decision-making, documenting how we make decisions and carry out actions to achieve the county's strategic plan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board approve both the proposed youth internship program pilot in the Commissioners' Office and the structured high school engagement opportunity and provide any feedback on the proposal.

Concurrence: This proposal was developed in concurrence with the Human Resources Department.