

Abstract/Summary

The City School District of Albany (CSDA) proposes to develop and implement a school-based Youth Court in its high school. Ninth through twelfth grade students will be recruited and trained to serve as Youth Court members and conduct the hearings. Ninth graders committing low-level violations, including disruptive behavior, minor altercations, intimidation, harassment, menacing, bullying, larceny or other theft and/or criminal mischief, have the opportunity to appear before the Albany High School Youth Court. The majority of these violations can be considered precursor behaviors that easily escalate into gun violence and gang violence. Youth Court will be a hearing court that determines sentences for the offender. Sentences focus on repairing the harm or damage done and connecting the offender with additional activities, resources and assistance. The school district will dedicate a staff person for the Youth Court. Additional adult volunteers will be recruited from various legal, law enforcement and family serving agencies.

In the development and implementation stage funded through this proposal the following is anticipated:

- 1 CSDA staff will oversee the project;
- 20 or more high school students will be recruited and trained as Youth Court Members;
- 2 Youth Court hearing dates will be scheduled monthly;
- 8 cases will be heard between September and December; and 24 cases between January and June
- Additional cases will be heard each month depending on recruitment
- Each respondent will be followed through by the CSDA staff to ensure completion of the sentence.