Black Panther Party Final Paper

Giving the Youth a Voice

The irony of policing police seems unimaginable in today’s society, however, the Black Panther Party made just that possible. The police patrolling started 1966 (Hilliard and Weise, 53) and ended roughly around the 1980’s. The BPP armed themselves with weaponry as well as legal knowledge, both used as self-defense against police officers. The motive behind this action was to stop bring an end to police brutality. Along with the police patrol, the Panthers offered legal aid and educational program, as well as assisting prisoners with legal matters. The police harassment and brutality needed to end, and the BPP were going to do everything in their power for that to happen.

In society today, instead of the police doing their job, keep the community safe from harm, it seems more like they are the harm in the community. If you are a person living in a “not so good” or “urban” community, you understand just how equal the police treat the citizens living in that area. They spend most of their time harassing and arresting citizens on petty charges, than they actually do working hard to arrest the real hardened criminals working around in the community. Funny thing about that is, they really aren’t going to arrest themselves are they? In today’s society, with all the men and women that proudly wear a police officer’s uniform that profiling innocent and/or petty criminals of the world, we need leaders similar to the Black Panther Party. There’s need to be a patrolling of the police, as well as strong leaders that
are willing to be a face and voice for those that are afraid to fight back with the governments wrong doing. It is a must for communities to start to defend themselves against the mayhem.

With that being said, we would like to offer you a program, Young Voice. What Young Voice would be is an after school community youth center. The center is solely based around the idea of the Black Panther patrolling of the police and self-defense program.

The Proposal

Our proposal is to create a place where students can express themselves in ways that their school prevents them from doing so, such as having a voice about the current events that happen in society. Usually in schools when stuff happens like police brutality, there is never really an outlet during class time to express any feelings you have about such situations. This place would also be a center where we can help deal with any problems they are having with their school work, like a tutoring center, but more so teaching them and helping them learn in a way that fits their pace and enhances their learning skills. By that we mean that, everyone has a different way of learning, whether it be at a fast pace or a slow pace, or combining something they love to do with what they are trying to learn. This is where we will hold our own classes and workshop-like sessions that can help enhance the students skills, talents, and strengths, as well as work on overcoming their weaknesses (i.e. a class they don’t understand or a fear or trauma they might be dealing with).

Young Voice will start off at Oakland Technical High School for about 2 years to introduce the program to students and test the waters to observe its success. From there it will
expand to all OUSD High Schools. As the years progress we will then open up our own center in the heart of Oakland for the attending students to have access to when they need it.

The Benefit is that this center as well as the program will work as a comforting space for the teens to speak their mind but also a way to help them succeed in their classes at school as well. Almost like a hands-on, or maybe “minds on” if you will, tutoring center. This center and program is meant to stop the idea that it’s too late to help Young Adults in high school because by then they have already developed through life and society. This program would not only be a helpful opportunity for high school students but a helpful opportunity for the community as well because it would give so many jobs to the people of the community who fit the environment we are building. We will definitely need a big staff for when we open the center/ headquarters of Young Voice. Our mission would be providing a place for young people that not only enhances the skills and talents of the students but also gives the students a place to voice their opinions and ideas to change their communities in ways that public schools have not.

We would have requirements for the students in order for them to continue into the program. Some of these requirements would be:

- Attend all academic class at one’s high school
- Attend all meetings/sessions unless otherwise excused
- Be a Big Brother/Sister mentor to a peer or a student younger than you
  - Mentoring includes keeping them on the right track
  - Helping with tutoring them if possible or giving the resources to help them
- Achieving a 2.5 or higher in GPA
- Volunteer Hours 20 a semester- Many opportunities will be provided through the program
We would also have requirements of our staff as well, because we would want to set an example for the students:

- Have an Associate’s Degree or higher to teach the classes
- Have completed our 3 month Workshop of Leadership
- Have an open mind and understanding of student’s lives and situations
- Have passed the background check

**Classes/Discussion sessions offered**

**Basic Law and politics**

Where students learn the laws and politics in the state as well as in the country and discuss political news and events that are currently happening at that time. This class can help with the American History aspect that students need to learn HS.

**Culture**

This session will work as almost like a history class where the students will learn about the many cultures they lived right next door to and maybe even the ones they’ve never seen before. This way we can eliminate any ideas fed through stereotypes as best as we can if we introduce them to what really goes on in other people’s lives.

**Self Defense**

A course that teaches our students how they should properly handle themselves when in a situation with law enforcement or authority figure. These classes will include Martial Arts, Karate, Kung Fu, Jiu Jitsu, etc.

**Languages**
This class will serve more as a tutoring factor in the student’s lives, by helping them with any problems they have with learning a language and homework they have from the class. However, if students want to learn a language that is not provided in their school we can then either give resources to help them learn or find facilities that will teach them at a reasonable price.

**Art and Expression**

This a broad description of the many other classes/lessons we provide to help students a space to express themselves through dance, music, painting, sculpting, meditation, yoga, writing, sport-like activities, etc. This wouldn’t be as much as a class as it would be an open sessions for the students to release their feelings or ideas.

**Counseling**

This would be a place to help students, who are considered felons in society and government’s eyes or struggling in school or at home. We will provide a counselor to talk to and sessions that help focus on whatever problems the students may have. Problems can include being in and out of a juvenile facility of some sort, domestic violence, rape, depression, and suicide. Also offering job opportunities to the students to help them with financial needs as well.

**Timeline:**

**Late August/Early September 2017:** Promoting the program to students by grassroots, flyers, etc.

- Letting students know when, where, what it is that is happening

**Mid-September 2017:** The beginning the after school program will be up and running at Oakland Tech High School.
Providing an introduction to the program to the attending students

The after school program will be a place to learn and discuss about society outside of school. Discussions on politics, school system, prison, etc.

**August 2018:** After a good successful year of the program running we will start looking to expand the program to the other three OUSD high schools and hiring more staff to do so.

- By September of 2019 we should be able to run the program at, at least one more high school.

**September 2019:** After two years for running well, we now have the program running at both Oakland Tech High School and Oakland High School.

**August 2023:** We will be running in all five OUSD schools.

- These schools being Oakland Tech, Oakland High, Skyline High School, McClymonds High School, and Fremont High School.
- We will then begin workshops for the students to engage with other students at the other school sites.

**January 2024:** Begin to look for a building location to call headquarters…

- A place that can house office space and rooms for students who are having troubles in their household. A “safe-haven” so to speak.
- Housing to keep struggling youth off the streets
- Providing housing for runaways, emancipated teens, and homeless youth
August 2024: Begin allowing students from grades 1st-8th grades into the program.

❖ These students will be the little brothers/sisters, until they reach High School
❖ While the High school students will be their Big Brothers/Big Sisters until they graduate from the school as a part of their requirements of staying in the program.

August 2025: We will have now been up and running for 8 years and will begin to plan to further expand our program.

❖ We can then begin to look at the idea of adding this program to other cities outside of Oakland and hopefully cities/states outside of California.

Conclusion

Our prediction of the program will be that it will last for well over a decade and by then it will hopefully, if it has not already, expand to other cities so that we’ll as a country can finally enhance all youth to be great through their skills, talents, and strengths. We also predict that Young voice will bring change to communities and this country by doing what hasn’t been done in quite a while and, that is giving young people a path for the future.

Works Cited

