

116

**Lopez, Donna**

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**From:** C. Shipley [mc.shipley@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 12, 2012 11:39 PM  
**To:** City Council; Lopez, Donna  
**Cc:** Craig Kelley; Minka VB; Toomey, Tim (home); Reeves, Ken; Decker, Marjorie; Maher, David; Henrietta Davis; Simmons, Denise; Cheung, Leland  
**Subject:** Petitioning the City Council - 5th Time since 1991.  
**Attachments:** Ltr\_Kids\_Council\_Comm Schl budget.pdf

Please enter into the official record for the City Council for 3/19/12. Thank you.

To The Honorable, The City Council  
And  
Honorable Mayor Henrietta Davis

Councillors:

The attached document dated 4/25/2003 details the problems associated with proposed cuts to the Community School Program up until that date. It appears that the attached letter describes four proposed budget cuts and restrictions to the Community School Program, the fourth being in the year 2003 for the FY2004 budget.

While the Citywide Community Council found the prospect of budget cuts bewildering given the success of the program, we petitioned the City Council each time the cuts and program restrictions were proposed. You listened and restored the budget cuts and blocked some of the proposed negative changes to our programs.

The Citywide Community Council, made up of representatives from all Neighborhood Councils, was very grateful for your support.

We, now, find our Neighborhood Councils and Community Schools facing our fifth budget difficulty. Once again, it has been necessary to testify before the City Council in support of our programs and to ask for your support. Although we testified on 2/27/12, and Mr. Kevin Hill also testified before the City Council on 3/5/12, we expect to testify on 3/19/12 when the city manager presents his revised budget proposal for Community Schools.

The Citywide Community Council respectfully requests that you consider our petitions and help us maintain our outstanding Community School Programs. We will be submitting a petition to fund the King Community School, the Longfellow Community School, the Amigos Program Community School, and to fill the floater position promised in the budget beginning in FY 2004.

Just a comment that justifies every penny the City invests in the Community School Program: In 2003, the data showed that the cost to the City per child in the Community School Program was \$859.00, while the cost to the city of one child in the afterschool childcare program was \$5,926. The figures are from 2003, however, the range may be the same, i.e., almost six times more expensive per child in the childcare program.

Thank you for your past unwavering support of the Community School Program.

On behalf of the Citywide Community Council,

Respectfully yours,

*Carolyn Shipley, Chairperson-CCC*  
*15 Laurel Street*  
*Cambridge, MA 02139*

# Citywide Community Council

April 25, 2003

Coordinating Council for Children, Youth and Families  
Kids Council  
51 Inman Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Subject: Neighborhood Council Budgets

Dear Members of the Kids Council:

The upcoming City budget as submitted by the City Manager will deal a significant blow to the programs of the Neighborhood Councils of this City, and, in particular, our Community Schools.

Community School enrollments = 1500 children @ \$859 per student.* Child-care enrollment = ~295 children @ \$5,926 per student.* (* approximate)
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The City Manager will cut two full-time, benefited positions from our budget. The rough estimate of the savings for these two positions is \$80,000.

Specifically:

The City Manager is closing the Longfellow and the Graham & Parks community school programs run by the Longfellow and Graham and Parks neighborhood councils respectively. As you know, the Longfellow School and the Graham & Parks School buildings are closing as part of the City's school reorganization plan.

Is it because the schools that provide space for these programs are closing, that the community school programs in those buildings must be closed? If that is the reasoning, then why are the child-care classes that are housed in these same buildings not being cut? That would be a logical action, if that line of reasoning were indeed being employed.

In fact, not only is the City Manager not cutting the two after-school classes of the Child Care Program now housed in the Graham & Parks School, but rather, he has found space for one of those classes in the nearby Morse School and is assiduously looking for another venue for the second after-school class in Cambridgeport in order to keep those programs in the neighborhood. Yet, he is not looking for space in the neighborhood to house the Community School program.

One must ask again, why cut one program for children and not the other?

-1-

●●●Citywide Community Council c/o ●●●  
Carolyn Shipley ●●● 15 Laurel Street ●●● Cambridge, MA 02139●●●

# Citywide Community Council

Fact:

- Community School programs serve approximately 1500 children per semester.
- Child Care Programs serve approximately 295 children per semester.
- Youth Centers have between 600 and 800 children “enrolled.”

Fact:

- The cost to the City per child enrolled in Community School Programs is approximately **\$859** per semester.
- The cost to the City per child enrolled in Child Care Programs is approximately **\$5,926** per semester.
- The cost to the City per child enrolled in the Extended Day Program is approximately **\$3,343** per semester.
- The cost to the City per child enrolled in Youth Center programs is approximately **\$1,200** per semester.

In accordance with the goal of the Kids Council, it pleases me to tell you that Community Schools *provide children and youth equal access to safe, stimulating, nurturing and healthful out-of-school time activities.* ...and provides 1500 children per semester such activities.

Question: Since the City Manager is attempting to relocate one program currently in the Graham & Parks building that serves children, why is he not trying to relocate the other program in Graham & Parks building that serves children?

Question: Since the community school programs cost the City the least of the above listed programs, what is the rationale for cutting its budget?

Fact:

- The City has a reserve of over \$50 million and has three triple-A credit ratings. Why cut \$90,000 from the one program in the City that serves the most children when there's all that money in reserve?

Fact:

- Community Schools raise 36% of their budget from fees, thus bringing approximately \$460,000 to their annual budget. Community Schools raise 5 times the amount being cut.
- In the last fourteen years, the Neighborhood Councils have had to defend their budgets from cuts ~~three~~ <sup>five</sup> times, while the budgets of other programs servicing children and families have increased.

-2-

# Citywide Community Council

The first attack on our budgets was a request from the City for Neighborhood Councils to pay the City \$10,000 to cover the increased cost of overhead such as postage and photocopying. We organized a fund-raiser and raised only \$7,000. The City then asked us to pay the remaining \$3,000 out of our fees collected from our programs. In that year, the City had a \$30 million revenue surplus.

The upcoming budget for FY 2004 will be the fourth time the Neighborhood Councils have had to organize to stop severe cuts to their programs.

Two years ago, the City attempted to cut one full-time position, but after our huge lobbying effort, the City Manager promised us he would not cut the position. Yet, he has, in effect, cut the position: the position was never filled and the money was taken out of our program budget. At the same time the budgets and staff of the youth centers increased three-fold and a pilot extended day program was funded at \$400,000.

The Neighborhood Councils were founded 36 years ago by the City to provide services to children, families, adults, and seniors in the many City neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Councils created many programs, the most popular of which was their Community Schools. At the inception of Neighborhood Councils, the City funded two positions: a program director and an assistant program director. The councils created the programs, such as Community Schools.

Eventually, the Department of Human Services Programs grew out of the Neighborhood Councils and took over many of the services previously provided by Neighborhood Councils.

I am the Chairperson of the Citywide Community Council, which is composed of the members and chairs of all the Neighborhood Councils in Cambridge. I thank you for your patience with this long, explanatory letter.

On behalf of the members of all Neighborhood Councils, I hope for your understanding of our plight and would welcome an opportunity to tell your membership more about the scope and variety of our programs.

Thank you very much.

Yours truly,

Carolyn Shipley  
Chairperson  
Citywide Community Council

Attachment: Kids Council Objectives  
and Community School Programs

-3-

●●●Citywide Community Council c/o ●●●  
Carolyn Shipley ●●● 15 Laurel Street ●●● Cambridge, MA 02139●●●

# Citywide Community Council

## Kids Council Objectives and Community School Programs

- To promote services and other activities that are preventive rather than reactive;

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs meet the generally accepted criteria for preventive programs for children and families, as well as for seniors.*

- To promote services and other activities that are coordinated rather than fragmented, and that result in improved accessibility;

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs are tailored to the needs of their respective communities and are open to all.*

- To encourage innovative responses to needs;

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs are designed by the members of their neighborhoods according to their unique needs.*

- To generate activities that create opportunities for all children, their families, and other caregivers;

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs offer a varied program of activities for children and families throughout the year, including summer camp and school vacation and release-time-day activities.*

- To support families, their choices, and their strengths, recognizing diversity and the many different choices that families make about how to bring up happy and healthy children;

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs for children are planned by parents according to the interests of their children, not by some administrator sitting in City Hall.*

- To promote services and other activities that are comprehensive, oriented to the needs of children and families seen as whole people.

*Neighborhood Councils and their Community Schools programs for children and families are creative, varied, and extensive, and nurture the whole person in such areas of interest as music programs, sports activities, drama, dance, art, crafts, journalism, chess, legos, astrology, all created by parents in cooperation with the Director of the program according to the interests of their children.*