A

Joint Meeting
School Committee and City Council
May 4, 2009
5:30-7:30pm
Sullivan Chambers

1. Update from the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Youth Services [5:30-6:00]
   Vice Mayor Sam Seidel and School Committee Member Nancy Tauber

2. Update from Human Services Subcommittee and Harlem Children's Zone [6:00-6:10]
   City Councilor Ken Reeves
   - HCZ Baby College
   - HCZ Office of College Success

3. Update from the Department of Human Services [6:10-6:30]
   Assistant City Manager Ellen Semonoff
   - Afterschool programs, summer programming and support for Special Needs students

4. School Space Usage / Parking Issues/Cross Member Attendance at Subcommittee [6:30-7:10]
   - Use of school space during non-school hours – *Interim Superintendent Dr. Carolyn Turk,Assistant City Manager Ellen Semonoff*
   - Parking at Fletcher/Maynard School - *Mayor Simmons, Director of Traffic Susan Clippinger*
   - Cross member attendance on appropriate subcommittees – *Mayor Simmons*

5. Kid's Council Strategic Plan Update [7:10-7:30]
   Mayor Simmons and Mary Wong, Kid's Council Executive Director

City of Cambridge

Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Youth

Draft Strategic Planning Framework (April 2009)

Working Mission: **The City of Cambridge will seek to engage middle school youth in a range of quality after school and summer experiences that foster both their present *and* future learning and life success.**

Core Goals	Systems-Level Action	Systems Change	Youth Outcomes
To increase participation	Community Awareness & Outreach	Improved communication systems & products Improved data collection, analysis & reporting Ease of access to programs/activities	Increased participation rates Positive social-emotional development Increased academic engagement & skills
To enhance quality	Service Delivery, Coordination & Capacity	Greater collaboration between schools, city agencies, community organizations, higher education institutions & businesses Knowledgeable, skilled & committed staff	Improved physical health /reduced risk behavior & violence Increased sense of connection to community (peers and adults)
To foster youth connections to community	Quality Improvement	Increase in age/ developmentally appropriate program design and activities Greater focus on /support for informal learning	Increased future orientation/goals (e.g. plans to go college)

City of Cambridge – Mayors Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Youth

Strategy Mapping Worksheet

System-Level Action Area 1: Community Awareness & Outreach

Goal: ***To increase community awareness about: (1) The benefits of participation in after-school and summer programs and activities for middle school youth, and; (2) The availability and range of activities***

	Key Elements What are the important ideas, activities & products that will make this strategy work effectively? (E.g. interactive website, youth involvement, etc)	Existing Resources What current resources/efforts can be used to inform/support this strategy? (E.g. projects, working groups, expertise, staffing, technology, models)	Resources Needed What resources are needed to implement this strategy? (E.g. expertise, staffing, space, technology, funding)	Key Players Which people/ organizations must be involved to make this strategy happen? (E.g. youth, city agencies, content experts, etc.)	Measures of Success What outcomes will tell us this strategy is being effectively implemented? (E.g. products developed, events held, youth participation rates)
Short-Term Strategies (To be implemented within the next 6 months)					
Develop a social marketing initiative to attract youth	Related ideas/activities: Youth-to-Youth outreach (MSYEP)				
Launch a public awareness campaign to inform families & schools	Related ideas/activities: Online and print resources Resource fairs (like Camp Night)				
Develop a formal after-school & summer program information, referral & placement process across schools					
Mid/Long-Term Strategies (To be implemented within the next year / 18 months)					
Training for school and after-school/summer staff in effective outreach/support for families					

System-Level Action Area 2: Service Delivery, Coordination & Capacity

Goal: ***To effectively coordinate information and services across city and community organizations to increase middle school youth participation in and access to age and developmentally appropriate after-school and summer programs and activities***

	Key Elements What are the important ideas, activities & products that will make this strategy work effectively?	**Existing Resources** What current resources/efforts can be used to inform/support this strategy? (E.g. projects, working groups, expertise, staffing, technology, models)	**Resources Needed** What resources are needed to implement this strategy? (E.g. expertise, staffing, space, technology, funding)	**Key Players** Which people/ organizations must be involved to make this strategy happen? (E.g. youth, city agencies, content experts, etc.)	**Measures of Success** What outcomes will tell us this strategy is being effectively implemented? (E.g. products developed, events held, youth participation rates)
Short-Term Strategies: (To be implemented within the next 6-months)					
Create citywide data system that tracks middle school after-school and summer program participation					
Encourage programs to reprioritize to serve *targeted developmental age group – e.g. K-5 & Gr 6-8 versus wider K-8 span.*	Related ideas/activities: *Vertical integration – recruitment/enrollment process for advancing ("capturing") 5th grade students*				
Mid/Long-Term Strategies: (To be implemented within the next year / 18 months)					
Develop a citywide enrollment process, program schedule & access pass to network of programs to promote greater participation, mobility and diversity of experience	Related ideas/activities: *Coordinate transportation from schools to middle school focused programs/activities*				
Develop new middle school after-school program option in neighborhoods/schools where there is an identified need					
Increase partnerships/onsite delivery of enrichment and career exploration activities (academics, art, music and	Related ideas/activities: *Partnerships with area cultural, high tech and higher education institutions.* *Use of space in partner institutions*				

System-Level Action Area 3: Quality Improvement

Goal: ***To enhance the quality of programs and activities serving middle school youth by building from existing knowledge, strengths, and structures***

	Key Elements What are the important ideas, activities & products that will make this strategy work effectively? (E.g. interactive website, youth involvement, etc)	Existing Resources What current resources/efforts can be used to inform/support this strategy? (E.g. projects, working groups, expertise, staffing, technology, models)	Resources Needed What resources are needed to implement this strategy? (E.g. expertise, staffing, space, technology, funding)	Key Players Which people/ organizations must be involved to make this strategy happen? (E.g. youth, city agencies, content experts, etc.)	Measures of Success What outcomes will tell us this strategy is being effectively implemented? (E.g. products developed, events held, staff participation, student outcomes)
Short-Term Strategies (To be implemented within the next 6 months)					
Identifying quality guidelines for middle school age after-school and summer programs	Related ideas/activities: *Areas to be covered: developmental design, academic support, inclusion of students with special needs, future orientation activities*				
Establish CPSD academic content specialist team to consult with, train and model/co-teach with after-school and summer programs	*Related ideas/activities:* Include literacy, math & science and SPED specialists				
Promote best practices & professional development in after-school and summer programs by building from existing quality initiatives					
Mid/Long-Term Strategies (To be implemented within the next year/18 months)					
Develop college access initiative	Related ideas/activities: *Partnerships with CPSD and Higher Education*				
Develop citywide sports/exercise initiative, with focus on girls					

C1

City of Cambridge
Agenda for Children
Organizational Self-Study Areas

Focus on Quality

1. We have a vision of quality – we talk about what a quality program is and looks like for our children.
2. We have stated quality goals
3. We have strategies for reaching our quality goals
4. We reflect on what progress we are making in meeting our quality goals

Focus on Professional Growth and Learning

5. Our staff discuss professional challenges and request support
6. We collect sources of data to better understand our work
7. We encourage innovation and test out new ideas
8. We seek to collaborate with /engage external partners, resources and supports
9. We regularly meet to share what we are learning

Level of Trust/Inclusion of Staff

10. We feel open to discuss our short-comings and frustrations and voice appropriate forms of dissent
11. We have a clear, inclusive decision-making process
12. We resolve conflicts effectively

Level of team Work/Collegiality

13. We feel a shared responsibility for our work
14. We engage in collaborative planning & problem-solving
15. We acknowledge and respect each other's different roles, strengths and contributions
16. We have strong patterns of communication

Management

17. We/ Our managers provide effective supervision
18. We/ Our managers are able to complete and follow through on tasks and commitments
19. We/ Our managers are able to focus on both administrative/operational tasks and program improvement /quality

For more information contact Susan Richards at srichards@cambridgema.gov

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C2

Staff- Youth Relationships

Staff Interactions with Individual Youth	Rating
1. Staff engage in 1:1 conversations with individual youth.	
2. Staff provide individualized help to youth	
3. Staff encourage youth	
4. Staff exhibit appropriate, professional conduct around youth.	
5. When youth speak, staff listen actively, attentively and patiently to youth	
6. When an individual youth is having a problem, staff pay attention and try to help him/her	
7. Youth seek out positive contact/interactions with staff	

Positive Behavior Guidance

Staff Positively Guide Youth Behavior	Rating
1. Staff closely supervise youth and activities, demonstrating situational awareness	
2. Staff are relaxed and respectful in their interactions with youth.	
3. Staff are able to quickly and positively gain youth's attention and cooperation when needed.	
4. Staff are flexible in their management of youth.	
5. Staff apply rules and limits fairly and consistently to youth	
Staff Approaches to Behavioral Issues	**Rating**
6. When youth behavior is inappropriate, staff use simple reminders about what is/isn't appropriate behavior or redirect behavior	
7. When negative peer interactions occur, staff intervene.	
8. Overall, staff intervene in a manner that matches the behavioral issue.	
Positive Youth Participation	**Rating**
9. Youth appear to be enjoying activity	
10. Youth follow established program rules and behavioral expectations	
11. Youth appear relaxed and in control of themselves.	

Quality of Activities

Organization & Nature of Activity	Rating
1. Activities begin promptly.	
2. Activity time is free from interruptions/distractions.	
3. There is an appropriate amount of time allotted to complete the activity (or get to a reasonable stopping point).	
4. There is observable evidence that activity is part of an ongoing project, theme, or curricular unit	
5. Activity is cognitively challenging, stimulates thinking	
6. Activity is open-ended, requires that youth use creativity and draw upon own ideas to participate	
Staff Facilitation	**Rating**
7. Staff are energetic, enthusiastic, and/or upbeat.	
8. Staff help spark youth's interest/curiosity throughout activity or activities	
9. Staff are actively engaged in activities with youth	
10. Staff encourage youth to share control/responsibility for activity	
11. When providing assistance to youth, staff help youth think through problems themselves rather than offering answers	
12. Staff engage youth in structured time for reflection on how the activity went, what they learned, and on next steps.	

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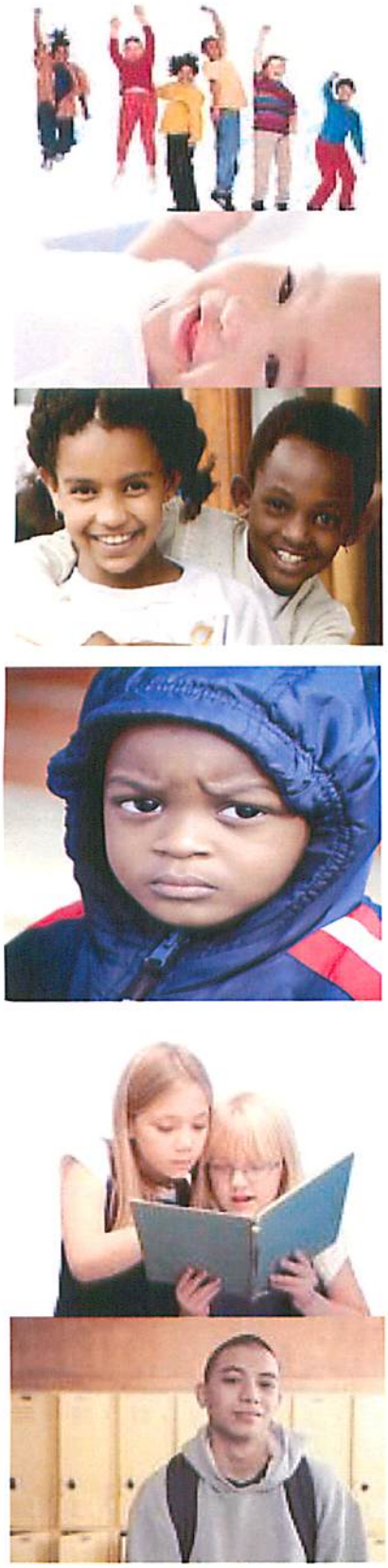

Cambridge Kids' Council Strategic Plan

FY2010 – FY2012

April 30, 2009

COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

CAMBRIDGE KIDS' COUNCIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Strategic Plan Working Group Members

E. Denise Simmons, Mayor, Chair
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Sam Seidel, City Councilor, City Council Representative
Ellen Semonoff, Assistant City Manager for Human Services
Mary Wong, Executive Director

Consultant

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INTRODUCTION

" A story that frequently plays out at the state or local level goes something like this: A coordinating group is established with a broad mandate to create a plan for children and youth, but the group is not really given the capacity or authority to do so. A crisis happens – an outbreak of gang violence, an increase in the dropout rate – and a separate task force is set up, charged with creating a plan and implementing strategies that are not connected to the efforts going on in the circle. Rather than bringing new energy, another competing effort is created, adding to the cacophony of messages and activity.

We will know people are acting and thinking differently when "they not only coordinate existing efforts but, when the need arises to address a new problem, they voluntarily bring it inside the tent to ensure that they build on efforts that are currently underway."

-The Forum for Youth Investment Ready By 21 Challenge

Children and youth are dynamic and multi-faceted. Accordingly, the agencies that seek to educate them, protect them and help them develop into adulthood should be dynamic as well. Faced with the constant trade-off between limited resources and public need, urban leaders must decide how to effectively and efficiently provide comprehensive services, supports and opportunities for children, youth and their families. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, the city leaders are trying to meet that challenge.

For most young residents, the City of Cambridge is a great place to grow up. City leaders want to equalize access to opportunities across the city and ensure that all young people successfully transition to adulthood. The Coordinating Council for Children, Youth and Families (Kids' Council) developed this strategic plan to clarify its role in this process and publicly articulate its priorities for the next three years. This plan covers fiscal years 2010 to 2012 beginning July 1, 2009 and ending June 30, 2012.

Process and Participants

In the fall of 2009, the Kids' Council membership began the strategic planning process. With the assistance of Amoretta Morris, a graduate student at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, they explored their expectations for the process and desired outcomes for the plan. A working group comprised of the Executive Committee and other interested Council members was established to guide the plan's development between Council meetings. In January, stakeholder interviews were conducted with select current Council members, a few former Council members, the Inclusion Subcommittee and the Youth Involvement Subcommittee. Additionally, staff wrote reports summarizing the status of the Council's major initiatives. These interviews and reports provided an overview of internal perceptions of the Council's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for action.

On January 15, the Council held a four-hour strategic planning retreat at the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Gutman Library.

History and Accomplishments

Cambridge is a well-resourced community that has pioneered many innovative youth and human service solutions to support their most vulnerable residents. The existence of the Coordinating Council for Children, Youth and Families (Kids' Council) is one example of the forward-thinking policy making that has contributed to the cities success as an ethnically and economically diverse municipality. The Kids' Council develops policy recommendations and programs to improve the quality of life for children, youth and families in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Chaired by the Mayor, the Council is comprised of senior elected and appointed officials, agency directors, parents, youth, at-large community residents and representatives of community-based organizations, philanthropy, business and the university community.

The initial duties of the Council as outlined in the 1991 Cambridge Policy and Ordinance for Children, Youth and Families include:

- Recommending children, youth and family policy to the City Manager, City Council, School Committee and other appropriate committees
- Reviewing and making recommendations regarding City expenditures affecting children, youth and families
- Mobilizing and coordinating efforts in the City targeted at children, youth and families
- Creating opportunities for youth to provide input on issues affecting them
- Raising funds to support the priorities and projects of the Kids' Council
- Acting as an advocate with regard to state and federal policies which impact Cambridge children, youth and families

Since its inception in 1991, the Kids' Council has addressed a number of pressing issues facing the city's children and families. In responding to community needs, it has grown new programs and overseen the adoption of new policies. Current initiatives address issues of out-of-school time (OST) quality and access, inclusion for children with disabilities, youth civic engagement, literacy and family support.

The Current Opportunity

After nearly two decades of work, the Kids' Council is at a crossroads. Its members and staff are engaged in a fundamental struggle to remain relevant. Since their inception, the policy and program landscape has changed. Due in large part to Kids' Council efforts, agency directors and front-line staff are collaborating with each other to improve quality and access to OST

opportunities, increase family support and literacy and provide social service interventions to youth engaged in risky activities. Youth leaders are visible and play a role in policy decision-making.

Over the past year, the Council has explored topics such as out-of-school time collaboration, community-based juvenile diversion, family mental health and the achievements of the Harlem Children's Zone.

During this time, key accomplishments of its subcommittees and related initiatives include:

- Members of the **Youth Involvement Subcommittee** testified at the State House on lowering the voting age, published a report on increasing access and utilization of Cambridge Youth Centers and represented the city at the 2008 and 2009 National League of Cities Conference
- Through the **Inclusion Initiative**, the Department of Human Services Program (DHSP) has significantly increased Positive Behavior Support and healthy play training for OST programs and in the summer of 2008 hired 23 inclusion support staff including four 1-on-1 aides
- The **Center for Families** served over 1000 families annually in 17 locations across the city
- The **Agenda for Children's Out of School Time Initiative** facilitated monthly Community of Practice groups for 90 OST staff and provided management or program-level coaching to 32 sites
- The **Agenda for Children's Literacy Initiative** visited 727 new parents at the Cambridge Hospital's maternity ward, sent 819 Born to Read bags to Cambridge homes with new babies, provided 182 Literacy Home Visits in 5 different languages and distributed over 6,500 books to families

As we look to future, we celebrate these accomplishments while directly confronting new challenges. In this strategic planning process, we sought to address several key issues including:

- How do we fit into the broader landscape of children and youth-focused coordinating & oversight entities? What's our niche? What value do we add?
- How do we translate data to action? How do we measure progress and hold ourselves accountable?
- How do we decide when/if its time to let go of old initiatives to make space to address new issues and needs?
- How do we more deeply engage youth and community?

This plan reflects our belief that the Kids' Council still has a valuable role to play in Cambridge as a "big picture" visionary, convener and coordinator of citywide efforts to better children and families.

Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

VISION

We promote policies and programs that make Cambridge a city where children and youth are healthy, safe, educated and civically engaged. From birth to college graduation and gainful employment, we want all Cambridge children and youth to succeed.

We measure success according to the following desired outcomes for child, youth and family wellbeing:

1. Children are ready for school.
2. Children and youth are healthy and live in safe communities.
3. Children and youth succeed in school and are prepared for work.
4. Children and youth are engaged in enriching activities and civic life.
5. Children and youth live in stable, self-sufficient, supportive families.

MISSION

The mission of the Kids' Council is to develop a comprehensive, local response to the needs of children, their families and other caregivers.

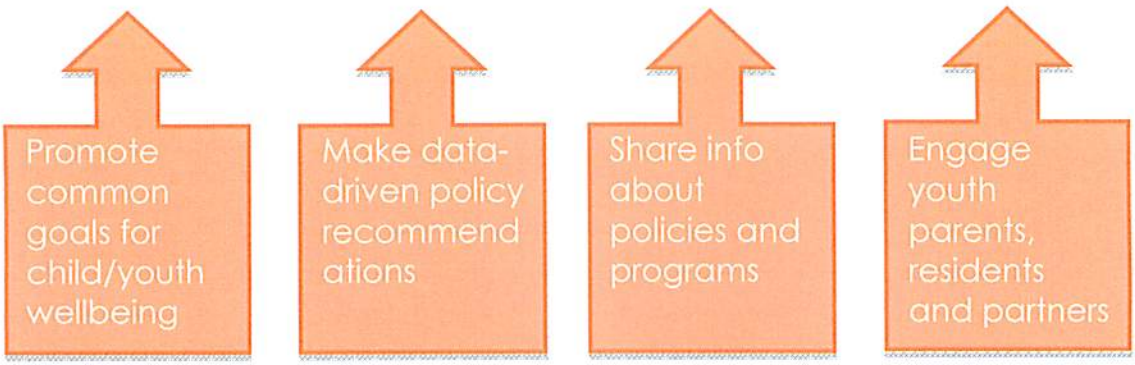
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In accomplishing our mission, we are guided by our belief in:

- Prevention
- Coordination
- Innovation
- Opportunities for all
- Diversity and Choice
- Comprehensive Approaches

WHAT WE WANT FOR CAMBRIDGE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES – DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Children are ready for school
- Children are healthy and live in safe communities
- Children and youth succed in school and are prepared for work
- Children and youth are engaged in enriching activities and civic life
- Children and youth live in stable, self-sufficient, supportive families



HOW WE WILL HELP ACHIEVE IT – CORE STRATEGIES

STRATEGIC GOALS AT-A-GLANCE

POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS

Strategic Goal 1: Promote common goals and measures for children and youth

Objective 1.a.	Promote desired outcomes, or states of wellbeing, for children and youth
Objective 1.b.	Set specific, measurable indicators to define broad outcome measures

Strategic Goal 2: Make data-driven recommendations about policies and allocation of resources to close the gap between desired outcomes and the status quo

Objective 2.a.	Collect and analyze data to measure progress on these goals
Objective 2.b.	Publish biennial report on the status of children, youth and families in Cambridge
Objective 2.c.	Explore development of children's budget detailing spending for children and youth across all city agencies

Strategic Goal 3: Share information about policies and programs with the community and among agencies to improve program coordination and quality

Objective 3.a.	Maintain program inventory
Objective 3b.	Conduct outreach and education to increase public awareness of city policies, programs and investments in children and youth.

Strategic Goal 4: Engage youth, parents, residents and community partners

Objective 4.a.	Increase retention efforts for community representatives
Objective 4.b.	Maintain strong youth participation through sustained support and active engagement of the Youth Involvement Subcommittee
Objective 4.c.	Leverage community resources through increased university and business partnerships

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Strategic Goal 5: Restructure Council meetings and subcommittees to maximize member expertise and increase focus on desired outcomes

Objective 5.a.	Use meetings for collective problem-solving and policy innovation
Objective 5.b.	Restructure Subcommittees around desired outcome areas

Strategic Goal 6: Evaluate our progress

Objective 6.a.	Institute annual self-evaluation

POLICY AND PROGRAM GOALS

Strategic Goal 1: Promote common goals and measures for children and youth

Cambridge needs a "big picture" coordinating body that is responsible for monitoring the progress of children and youth across all ages along diverse developmental domains. The Kids' Council should be that body.

The Council has set broad outcome goals for child and youth wellbeing. These broad outcomes will be defined by a set of more specific, measurable indicators. Together these outcomes and indicators create a "data dashboard" which provides policy makers and residents a snapshot of how children are faring in the city.

Objective 1.a. Promote desired outcomes, or states of wellbeing, for children and youth

Each of these outcomes are cross-agency goals that cannot be attained by one agency alone. Success requires interagency collaboration. These outcomes build upon agency-level performance measures which when met help achieve broader cross-sector change.

Objective 1.b. Set specific, measurable indicators to define broad outcome measures

Indicators will measure conditions the city has the power to influence. In establishing the dashboard, the Council will consider the timeliness and availability of proposed data. And, we will maintain a data development agenda that documents areas of priority that are not yet being measured. Importantly, the group of measures as a whole should reflect a positive youth development approach. We won't just measure the bad stuff. Though as a public entity, there is a duty to protect children from harm and danger, telling a story of child wellbeing should not just be limited to the negative things children are not doing (i.e. not getting pregnant, not smoking, not getting arrested.) It should also reflect the rates of pro-social behavior and success we want for our children and youth.

Strategic Goal 2: Make data-driven recommendations about policies and allocation of resources to close the gap between desired outcomes and the status quo

Setting big picture goals is not enough. The Council must also track the city's progress on these goals. And, it can use data and analysis developed by Kids' Council members and stakeholders to develop recommendations for policy and program changes that will ensure no young people are falling through the cracks.

Objective 2.a. Collect and analyze data to measure progress on these goals

It can gather data to analyze and determine whether trends are moving in the right direction. This does not mean the Council will necessarily collect new information. It can request data that agencies are already collecting to measure their own performance or to satisfy various legal and funding requirements.

> "We need different ways to approach the work so kids who need it the most are getting what they need from the city."
>
> - Agency Staff

This analysis is guided by the Results Accountability framework which suggests three key performance management questions: *1) How much did we do? 2) How well did we do it? 3) Is anyone better off?* And, the degree of specificity depends on whether you are focusing on outcomes for region or service system, for which you would use population-level data, or if you are assessing the performance of a specific program or agency level.

The Kids' Council will use the Results Accountability approach as a guide for analyzing data about Cambridge children and youth. Data for each big picture outcome will be presented to members and analyzed with the intent of determining how the city is doing compared to the results they want to achieve in that area. For each data indicator, members and other stakeholders will develop analysis about what the data is telling them, what activities are happening to effect that data point, whether those activities have been successful with the desired population and if not, what else needs to happen to "turn the curve" in the desired direction. The Council will rely on its members' expertise to gather information about child wellbeing, programs and policies impacting progress on each goal.

Objective 2.b. Publish biennial report on the status of children, youth and families in Cambridge

The Council will publish a biennial report on the status of children and families in Cambridge. The report will be a public document showing baseline data,

trends and policies in each of the citywide outcomes. It will help the Council translate data into action. It offers a way to measure and track the city's progress in a transparent fashion and promotes public accountability. It can also be used, as reports have in other localities, as an advocacy tool for residents, non-profits and policymakers. And, it will be a tangible product to promote the work of the Kids' Council and build public support for a common vision of what the city seeks to achieve for children across age and outcome areas.

Objective 2.c. Explore development of children's budget detailing spending for children and youth across all city agencies

The Council will consider developing a Children's Budget detailing spending for children and youth across all city agencies. Coupled with the Children's Report, a Children's Budget is a tool for elected officials and administrators to align budget resources to programs that work and areas that need focus. Short of a separate document, the Council will review spending for children and youth in each of the desired outcome areas.

Strategic Goal 3: Share information about policies and programs with the community and among agencies to improve program coordination and quality

The Council can act as a clearinghouse of information about children and youth. As a repository for information and a convener of the primary actors in the system, the Council is positioned to support and grow current staff-level collaborations while increasing communication and complementary approaches and messages among elected officials and senior administrators. Agency staff have already laid the foundation for deep collaboration across multiple service areas. But, they need senior officials to champion this work, fund this work and make policies that strengthen these efforts.

> "There's a lot cooking. We need to figure out how to keep it in the same pot."
>
> -Kids' Council Member

Objective 3.a. Maintain program inventory

The Council will maintain a program inventory of youth programs and services detailing program name, program sponsor, location of services, age served, service capacity and size of waiting list. The programs will be organized by citywide outcome to show which result areas are being aided by each program. The program inventory must do more than catalogue services offered. It must be structured in a way that shows current capacity as a

percentage of community need. The Council must work with agency staff to determine the most meaningful way to assess need. For example, if the goal is to have all school-age children enrolled in Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) also participate in after-school programs, the inventory should be able to estimate if the city has enough after-school capacity to meet that goal.

Like other data collection, this work should not reinvent the wheel. CPS and the OST providers already maintain an extensive inventory. Similar information exists for the array of early care supports for parents and young children. These disparate collections of information should be aggregated to show continuum of supports available from birth to young adulthood. These programs will also be mapped using GIS software to show service location by neighborhood. Organized in this way, an inventory will better show developmental areas that need more attention or age groups that are being underserved. Ultimately, the programs will be maintained in an online database accessible to guidance counselors, parents, young people and others seeking program information.

Objective 3b. Conduct outreach and education to increase public awareness of city policies, programs and investments in children and youth.

The Program Inventory, Children's Report and potential Children's Budget will be used as outreach and education tools to increase public awareness about city policies, programs and investments in children and youth. The Council will periodically host community forums to gain youth and adult feedback about how programs are working and what needs are still unmet.

Strategic Goal 4: Engage youth, parents, residents and community partners

Objective 4.a. Increase retention efforts for community representatives

In order to gain the value of diverse voices at the table, the Council must more intentionally recruit and retain its community representation. The Council will explore resident engagement strategies that include leadership training and increased opportunities to serve as community ambassadors for the Council.

Objective 4.b. Maintain strong youth participation through sustained support and active engagement of the Youth Involvement Subcommittee

The youth engagement strategy is already strong. However, in addition to welcoming the participation of young people in discussions of agenda items, the Council will invite the Youth Involvement Subcommittee to report at least twice a year on their own campaign efforts and solicit specific actions the full Council can take to support their work.

Objective 4.c. Leverage community resources through increased university and business partnerships

The city is fortunate to host Cambridge College, Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Lesley University. The Council will establish a partnership with one of these entities to support the research components of the Children's Report.

It will also identify new members of academia and the business community to replace its former representatives for those seats.

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Strategic Goal 5: Restructure Council meetings and subcommittees to maximize member expertise and increase focus on desired outcomes

Objective 5.a. Use meetings for collective problem-solving and policy innovation

Kids' Council meetings will be used to analyze data, assess program capacity and develop policy recommendations to share with the city council, the school committee and the city manager. Members will come together to identify opportunities for increased collaboration, problem-solve and troubleshoot barriers to coordination of current efforts.

Meeting topics will be organized around the five citywide outcomes for children and youth. Each meeting will focus on one outcome. And, members will examine one to three indicators defining that outcome to analyze current progress on that goal.

In order to determine the "story behind the baseline" discussion will draw on the diverse member expertise of administrators, advocates, community residents and youth. And, agency staff will also be invited to participate to provide the most up-to-date information about current programs, accomplishments and policy help needed.

Objective 5.b. Restructure Subcommittees around the desired outcome areas

Full Council meetings only represent part of the work. The substantive, detailed analysis of problems should happen in subcommittees that are restructured around the five outcomes. The Council will sunset the Center for Families, Agenda for Children and Inclusion Subcommittees.

The body will maintain support for each of these priority areas through the matching outcome-based subcommittee. For example, the focus of the inclusion plan is to increase access to out-of-school time opportunities for students with disabilities. Thus, issues discussed in that group and the members who currently engage in that work, should be included in a newly created subcommittee to support Outcome 4: Children and Youth are Engaged in Enriching Activities and Civic Life. The participation rate for students with disabilities will be a critical aspect of determining progress on a specific measure or indicator focused on access to out-of-school time. Agenda for Children Out-of-School Time Initiative staff and partners are experts in this analysis and they will be invited to help develop this analysis and Council recommendations.

Strategic Goal 6: Evaluate our progress

Objective 6.a. Institute annual self-evaluation

Tracking our progress is a critical part of the work ahead. We will establish an evaluation tool that is not cumbersome for staff and members, but allows timely feedback about our work.

STAFFING PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

To achieve the five Desired Outcomes for Cambridge children, youth and families, we will need to implement the Strategic Plan's Policy and Program Core Strategies and Management Goals. Organizational capacity to realize those strategies and goals can be accomplished with the following staffing plan.

Staffing for the Five Desired Outcomes Subcommittees

Building on existing capacity and promoting interagency coordination on common goals, each subcommittee will be supported by a team consisting of the executive director of the Kids' Council and an agency partner staff. Working with the Kids' Council Executive Director, the identified agency partner staff members will provide expertise and guidance pertinent to the outcome focus of the specific subcommittee that she/ he is facilitating.

Staffing for Research and Data Collection and Analysis

Maximizing local university resources, we will establish a partnership with the Harvard Kennedy School of Government to conduct research, develop a system for data collection and analysis, and provide guidance on the development of the biennial report on the status of children, youth and families in Cambridge.

Consultant for Implementation Start-up and Transition (August 2009 - January 2010)

To ensure the successful start of the implementation phase of the Strategic Plan, a one time request of new funds will be necessary to secure a qualified consultant to assist and work with the executive director of the Kids' Council to lay the foundation for the implementation structure and plan. Scope of services projected for approximately 150 hours.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Jul '09	Oct '09	Jan '10	Apr '10	Jul '10	Oct '10	Jan '11	Apr '11	Jul '11	Oct '11	Jan '12	April '12
1. Promote Common Goals												
Determine indicators for 5 outcome areas												
Monitor and highlight progress on citywide outcomes												
2. Make policy recommendations												
Collect and analyze data on new indicators												
Hold bi-monthly full Council meetings												
Hold bi-monthly subcommittee meetings												
Develop production & distribution plan												
Develop & implement marketing plan												
Vote on final report												
Publish report												
3. Share Information												
Establish framework to compile program inventory												
Conduct outreach and education activities												
4. Engage Youth and Community												
Establish and maintain University Partnership for research and data support												
Maintain support for Youth Involvement Subcommmitte efforts												
Continue active youth participation in council, subcommittee meetings and activities												
5. Restructure Council Organization												
Recruit subcommittee chairs & members												
Set schedule for Council and subcommittee meetings												
6. Build staff capacity												
Identify consultant												
Identify subcommittee staffing teams from departments												
7. Evaluate Progress												
Develop self-assessment tool												
Conduct self-assessment												
Host strategic planning retreat												

CONCLUSION

Since the Kids' Council's inception in 1991, one thing hasn't changed - young people still need caring adults to support their development into successful adults. Though, the demographics of the city have shifted slightly, a bevy of new youth services entities has arisen and the economy has taken unexpected turns, Cambridge still needs a group of people to hold a clear vision for young people of all ages across the city. The Kids' Council is poised to be the children and families policy beacon through the implementation of four core program strategies: 1) promoting common outcomes for kids, 2) making data-driven policy and resource recommendations, 3) sharing information about programs and policies, and 4) fully engaging youth, adult residents and community partners every step of the way. Simultaneously, members and staff will confront political and operational dynamics to increase the Council's efficiency. And, five years from now, every Kids' Council member and the community will know they were a powerful force for change in the city and tangibly improved the wellbeing of children, youth and their families

KIDS' COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP (MARCH 2009)

Name & Title	Membership/Representation
E. Denise Simmons Mayor of Cambridge	Elected Official/ Chair
Tina Alu Associate Director, Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee, Inc.	Specific Area Rep.
Billy Andre Resident and 4th Year Student, Boston University	Community-at-large
Betty Bardige Chair, Mailman Foundation Overseer, Cambridge Community Foundation	Philanthropic Rep.
Donna Cabral Director of Head Start, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc.	Early Childhood Community
Andrea Collymore Resident and Parent	Community-at-large
Mary DeCourcey Resident and Parent	Community-at-large
Louis DePasquale Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs	City Manager Designee
Susan Flannery Director of the Cambridge Public Library	Appointed Official
Samuel Gebru 12th Grade Student, CRLS	Youth Rep.
Robert C. Haas Commissioner, Cambridge Police Department	Appointed Official
Robert Healy City Manager	Appointed Official
Dennis D. Keefe Commissioner of Public Health & CEO of Cambridge Health Alliance	Appointed Official
Craig Kelley City Councilor	Pending

Andrea Kramer Resident and Parent	Community-at-large
Benjamin Likis 12th Grade Student, CRLS	Youth Rep.
Marc McGovern Committee Rep. School Committee Member	Elected Official/ School
Neal Michaels Director, Family Based Services Massachusetts Department of Social Services	State Agency Rep.
Kenneth Reeves City Councilor	Elected Official / Co-chair
Bridget Rodriquez Mayor's Education Liaison	Associate Member
Samuel Seidel City Councilor	Pending
Ellen Semonoff Assistant City Manager Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs	Appointed Official
Humbi Song 12th Grade Student, CRLS	Youth Rep.
Steven Swanger Director of Resident Services, Cambridge Housing Authority	Specific Area
Carolyn Turk Interim Superintendent Cambridge Public Schools	Appointed Official
Mary C. Wong Executive Director, Cambridge Kids' Council	Staff