

Ms. Herold said that at the same time that the Human Services Department (DHS) was looking at the youth centers, in a process that involved parents, kids, staff, community (but not schools, although Joe Petner sat on the board), concurrently DHS was also looking at what a school-based afterschool program would look like with a different consultant working with DHS and school staff and administrations. By February/March, they had developed a model with which the Superintendent and Ms. Herold went to the City Manager to request authorization to try the model. By that time it was now April/May. The Harrington School was chosen based on school demographics and the community resources nearby new youth center, library, new health clinic. Ms. Herold said that they underestimated the time that would be needed to bring on board school personnel who had never even heard of the model, and went ahead to open a program the next fall.

Vice Mayor Maher agreed with the description. The administration wasn't hired until just before school started. At the School Committee, the discussion was that this program would be a continuation of the school day, with regular teacher involvement. He always thought that the Harrington was the right place for the program. He said that he agrees that this evaluation would be a good step.

Selvin Chambers said that there must be a better understanding of what a collaboration is to minimize struggle over protecting vested interests.

Jackie Neel said that the name "extended day" was very important to the school administration and their interpretation was a fuller extension of the school program. The name and emphasis has presented a barrier, although what has happened over the last couple of years at the Harrington School is quite extraordinary. Mentoring takes place with regular teachers during the school day - extended day teachers come into classrooms at 11:00 A.M. The school was given a name and a budget, and their mission and their vision was more school.

Susan Richards Scott said that there is a stereotype that teachers do it one way, afterschool programs do something different. The Harrington extended day does not yet have a cross-fertilization of techniques, with a chance for teachers to learn from afterschool providers about the project-based learning that can support academic goals.

Ms. Neel said that the cross-fertilization is happening during the school day and the first part of the extended day program. DHS has provided lots of training and support for project-based learning. More joint training of regular day teachers and afterschool teachers is needed.

Councillor Reeves observed that launching a model has a great deal to do with the culture in which it is launched.

Ms. Semonoff emphasized that more time could have helped enormously.

Vice Mayor Maher said that, to him, the goal of the program was never quite clear. Everyone heard the part that they were interested in and then there was the disappointment that no one got quite what they wanted.

Ms. Semonoff noted that the pedagogy issue of taking the exact program that isn't working during the school day and extending it three more hours when the kids are more tired.

Councillor Reeves said that there are many professionals who believe that it is a mistake to make afterschool like school. He asked what the literature is saying now.

Ms. Herold responded that, as Ms. Richards Scott noted, afterschool teaching is being recognized as a profession. Academics are starting to really look at the area of "out of school time." At the Harvard Education School, Professor Gil Noam is working on this, and he is a very good resource. She suggested the possibility of convening a group with Professor Noam and Mickey Seligson from the National Institute Out of School Time (NIOST), who together could bring a wealth of expertise to Cambridge.

Vice Mayor Maher asked Ms. Herold whether DHS is fixed on the Harrington model as an afterschool "program". He cited the Central Park East, started by Deborah Meier as a full day 9:00-5:00 program. That is his interest. Ms. Herold asked why he would not call that a kind of afterschool program. Vice Mayor Maher said that there are such systemic issues with the schools, for example, sharing classroom space, the culture, etc.

Susan Richard Scott said that 50% of the Community Arts Center students of which she was Director for many years, are Harrington School kids. Her experience is that the faith/trust of the parents of these kids is enormous. They put their children in the hands of the schools and trust them to educate them well. Vice Mayor Maher agreed.

Councillor Reeves said that obviously it is not the role of the City Council and DHS to redo the schools. But his vision was that afterschools could support the academics of the school day. He added that he believes that the study of minority boys at the Kennedy and Harrington Schools and post high school outcomes would be very interesting.

Councillor Reeves said that perhaps this committee could look at what programs in other places are succeeding. For example, the Central Park East is a 9:00-5:00 program. There is no fancy building, no sports and no theater. Each child spends an hour every day with an adult in a complicated discussion about his/her progress. Each child has a public service job. Portfolio assessment is utilized for every aspect of the curricula.

Councillor Decker said that this is similar to the Boston Evening Academy.

Vice Mayor Maher said that getting flex time into the teacher contract was a big victory for the concept of using afterschool time for academic improvement. But even

though the contract was changed, teacher flex time has not happened. Ms. Herold said that the original plan for the extended day involved flex time with art programs and physical education classes in the afternoon-afterschool time.

Councillor Decker suggested talking about how to move forward with the idea of the forum and also looking at how Cambridge is assessing and inventorying the existing programs. She emphasized her interest in the standards and the inventory of what happens from the standpoint of equity throughout the City.

Councillor Reeves said that all are aware of the need for outcomes. No one person has the answer. He is interested in what we can do to find the best answers. Councillor Reeves stated that it has become apparent that everyone brings their own questions. The extra dimension is that with regard to city resources, we are talking about the same group of kids. He asked Ms. Herold if she is planning to assess the Harrington School after school program and its outcomes.

Ms. Herold said that there is a line item in the budget for program assessment and evaluation. There is now an in-place and ongoing evaluation. The first year was mostly a process evaluation. In the second year the evaluators developed a baseline for evaluations of academic progress and improvement. She said that from the evaluation, they have learned so far that extended day kids are somewhat poorer and more needy than the overall Harrington School student population, which is already a needy population. Ms. Herold said that they also learned that the extended day students are doing somewhat better than the other Harrington School kids in terms of improvements in performance on standardized tests.

With regard to assessment of other afterschool programs, Ms. Herold said that in the seven classrooms of 24 (approx.) kids of afterschool programs, Ms. Neel has been working towards accreditation under a particular set of higher standards, with an assessment tool built in as part of the standards. Ms. Neel said that DHS is just at the beginning of this process with the afterschool programs. DHS has used the accreditation process with preschools. Ms. Neel said that there is also an annual evaluation with the parents for each afterschool program. In addition, Ms. Richards Scott has some grant funding to work on tracking academic outcomes in connection with afterschool programs.

Councillor Decker stated that she would like to see the assessment. She said that she is also worried about equity - the kids who cannot get into the Harrington School Program. Another issue important to her is also how do we make the afterschool programs better. In that area she is very concerned about having full time staff with benefits. She asked about the private programs for afterschool care.

Ms. Richards Scott said that she has been looking at all the out-of-school time resources in Cambridge for the last six months. There is a great deal going on. The inventory of supervised out-of-school activities done by Julie Kirrane has been a very good starting point. The standards already exist; there is no reason for Cambridge to create its own standards. Ms. Richards Scott said that part of her work is trying to make

everyone aware of the standards. With regard to the Harrington School extended day program, the model goes further into the cross communication needed to make kids succeed. It is very important to keep working on programs that make the links of school-afterschool.

Councillor Reeves described a program in Sacramento, very rich in resources - and very successful. He said that the answer to the question of whether Cambridge does evaluate its programs is - yes, somewhat. He would like to see some focus on the issue of which programs can provide the most value for the amount expended.

Ms. Richard Scott emphasized the importance of dialogue.

Ms. Semonoff noted the challenge of a coordinated effort with the schools. True "buy-in" by the schools is essential to making the school/afterschool links needed to improve academic performance, but with all that is going on with the schools, afterschool programs are not the top priority for the school department and principals. Moreover, with the emphasis on high stakes testing, principals are panicking about academic success and they do not necessarily agree that what happens in afterschool programs is related to academic improvement.

Ms. Semonoff said that she sees the academics as potential allies in this area. For example, Professor Gil Naom, Harvard School of Education, has run institutes for principals to explore the importance of afterschool to academic success. In addition, Mickey Seligson, who has done excellent work for the National Institute of Out-of-School Time, is also locally based at the Wellesley Center for women.

Ms. Semonoff then distributed a list of afterschool programs in each school. She noted that what is different about this list than what one would have seen ten years ago is the increased involvement of the School Department in offering afterschool programs. Principals are often more comfortable with having their own small programs.

Councillor Decker stated that there is a need to involve principals and members of the school committee to participate in this discussion.

Councillor Reeves said that this is beginning to sound like the Kids' Council. Ms. Herold and Ms. Semonoff agreed.

Ms. Semonoff pointed out that many other groups in addition to city agencies are involved in providing services. She also suggested looking at the Gardner School in Allston.

It was agreed that the next step for the Human Services Committee would be a planning meeting to take concrete steps for a forum on out-of-school time.

Councillor Reeves thanked the all those present for their participation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

For the Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth E. Reeves", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair
Human Services Committee

City of Cambridge

HUMAN SERVICES

In City Council June 25, 2001

COMMITTEE MEMBERS*Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair**Councillor Marjorie C. Decker**Vice Mayor David P. Maher*

The Human Services Committee held a public hearing on May 30, 2001, beginning at 3:20 P.M. in the Ackermann Room for the purpose of discussing extended day programs, afterschool programs, youth centers and other out of school time programs.

Present at the hearing were Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Vice Mayor Maher, Councillor Marjorie C. Decker and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, Ellen Semonoff, Deputy Director for the Department of Human Services (DHS), Jacqueline Neel, Director of Child Care Services, Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation, Selvin Chambers, Youth Center Director, Mary Wong, Director of the Kids' Council.

Councillor Reeves convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He said that last term, this committee focused on youth centers. This term the Human Services Committee is looking at after school/extended day programs. He noted his hopes for after school programs to lend support to academic efforts, for example, the youth center. He then posed the question of the future of the pilot program at Harrington should go and whether this committee could be useful in that discussion.

Ms. Semonoff stated that she believes that the next step is an assessment of the Harrington pilot extended day program on two levels. One is on the level of what the vision of the Harrington extended day program was, and whether the program matches that vision, and the second is whether the vision is the right vision.

Ms. Herold suggested that in terms of looking at what the vision of the Harrington pilot program was, she expects that an assessment may well find that there really was not a shared vision, among DHS, School administration, and others.

Ms. Herold noted the question of what distinguishes extended day from other public nonprofit enrolled afterschool programs.

Councillor Reeves reviewed his memory of the genesis of the vision. There was a consultant who looked at the youth centers, with an exploration of all the necessary connections, including the schools, and there was at the same time a desire for academic improvement.

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Committee Report #3

Committee Report from Councillor
Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the
Human Services Committee for a
meeting held on May 30, 2001 for
the purpose of discussing extended
day programs, afterschool
programs, youth centers and other
out of school time programs.

In City Council June 25, 2001

Report Accepted

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