

with. Principal McKeigue commended Carol Hill of the Community School program as someone who is at the school year-round and knows the community; he is concerned about losing her. With more demands on the school building, he is also concerned about several issues including security, custodians' issues since the building is used throughout the day, all week and all year, and upkeep on an old building like the King.

Principal Petner of the Haggerty School addressed school-specific issues and the broader issue of how to think about the connection between school and after-school activities. Regarding the second issue, he pointed out that, often as parents choose a school, OST programs are important and frame their relation to the school. Principal Petner really cares about the OST program and believes it promotes a school. He urges the committee to look at the kinds of programs families want, and noted that this is a sensitive issue given the accreditation process going on. For the youngest kids, the question is what is developmentally appropriate; he suggests that it would be useful for the committee to discuss this. According to Principal Petner, there are common agendas on out-of-school time, including the concerns about the achievement gap and literacy that are shared by schools and the Agenda for Children. He believes that the interested providers should be supporting each other to develop the habit of literacy. Another concern close to his heart is the inclusion of special needs kids in after-school activities; given the mandate to provide the least restrictive environment for disabled kids, this is especially important. According to Principal Petner, there is a promising pilot at the Fitzgerald School for these kids, which has gained positive feedback; he would like to build on this success.

Regarding summer programs, Principal Petner noted that the Haggerty School runs the Adventures in Reading camp in conjunction with the Strawberry Hill camp, thereby pooling their funds to provide programs throughout the day. Rather than competing for resources, the two groups manage to create more and better programs through collaboration.

Principal Petner also identified issues that are endemic to the schools, particularly the issues around sharing space. At his school, there is a Space Planning Committee which includes himself, Roz Shoy, Eileen Keegan, custodians and various user groups who meet to discuss space needs. This has been a useful structure to address issues.

Finally, he commented on the lack of a youth center facility for West Cambridge. For the seven years he has been a principal, this has been discussed but there has been no promise of a facility. He does not understand why this hasn't been done--- the city needs to focus on this.

Principal Stuart of the Cambridgeport School noted that in her thirty-plus years in the school system, one great feature has been the relation between the school and the community school, which is powerful. She has watched the partnership grow, with joint planning and collaboration in programs. Citing the Odyssey of the Mind program as an example of the partnership, she noted that community school leaders are now paid in a way to encourage their continuity. As big issues, she emphasized the importance of

managing the transitions between school and other time. Especially because the world is so fluid, continuity is important in the promise, the delivery and the expectation that kids will follow through in programs. Principal Stuart sees the OST connection to school in three areas: learning, enrichment and citizenship. She believes that opportunities in areas such as internships and work-study go untapped now, especially for middle-school kids. On the other hand, schools have been successful in making literacy a habit by using resources such as libraries and cultural organizations. Principal Stuart thinks that schools have to be careful to consider the whole child, rather than just focus on interventions, as important as they are. One example of this larger perspective is the athlete-scholar connection, even though sports programs can be a headache. Schools should go beyond care to enrichment and teaching, which can be a problem, since we don't pay people well enough to do focused teaching.

Principal McKeigue of the King School brought up the cost and availability of transport as a major issue for schools as they try to construct activities between 3 and 6 P.M. If there is only one bus, the 3 to 6 P.M. slot is filled up early on.

Principal Stuart pointed to focused academic enrichment, e.g., the science club, as a wonderful model, which serves a spectrum of ages. The key to its success has been using the universities for mentors and local teenagers as activity leaders.

Principal Bridget Rodriguez of the Morse School considers the transportation issue enormous, particularly when it comes to the achievement gap, since kids cannot get around town. Schools do not have enough resources for after school, particularly for Grades 6 through 8; they also need a more easily accessible clearinghouse for information for families. She stated that there is also an issue with sharing space after school and during the summer, and that this produces tensions in the schools.

Principal Robin Harris of the Fletcher/Maynard Academy added that collaboration with the community school programs is a successful model for using limited funds during vacation and the summer. Regarding the space issue, her school building is booked now until 6 P.M. and she wants to be able to access it until 10 P.M., to encourage kids and parents in the neighborhood to participate; Principal Harris sees a need for some structured school programs at night to fill the 6 to 9 P.M. void when kids hang around in the streets. Another interest of hers is how to relate to after-school agencies on staff development and curriculum goals in order to focus collaborative efforts. At Fletcher/Maynard, transport is not an issue.

Principal Timothy Groves of the King Open School stated that the King Open has a very strong community school program, with connections to the community and the school. For five years, the school's gymnastics program has been an important opportunity and model for middle school kids to be mentors. The collaboration between schools and quality after-school programs is very important and it doesn't have to be academic; at the same time, Principal Groves is looking forward to more collaboration on an academic component in the after-school program. According to Mr. Groves, the program that Khari Milner (from the 21st Century Fund) used as a Harvard student with

Grades 5 to 7 is a model for teaching and Principal Groves is struggling to provide more services like this.

Interim Superintendent of Schools Carolyn Turk agreed with Principal Groves on the issues of connection: not every activity needs to be academic but in this new day, programs need a connection with the school, in order to make the programs part of the school. Schools are using their buildings differently now than they did five or ten years ago. According to Superintendent Turk, schools no longer close at the end of the school day, and they need to provide opportunities beyond the school day for children; families also have needs that can be addressed in schools, e.g., the Parents as Partners Program, in which parents use current technology while their children work on academics. She stated that all of the OST programs: before-school, after-school, vacation and summer, address family needs. Superintendent Turk feels that one area that needs focus is programs for Grades 5 through 8; currently, there is a smattering of programs, while teenagers need a lot more opportunities.

Angel Cacciola, Director of the Peabody After-School Program and Carol Bundy, Board Member of the Peabody After-School Program, spoke about their school's program. Ms. Bundy described the program as a very small parent-run cooperative. The program offers a range of activities: reading, arts including drawing and photography and the creation of a CD by kids, and enrichment with a focus on poetry this year on a theme coordinated between the school and after-school program. With the different kinds of enrichment activities, kids often don't realize there is an academic component. Ms. Bundy asked how school consolidation and relocation will affect the Art Room in the Peabody School, which serves kids in Grades K through 4. Ms. Cacciola noted another important activity at Peabody, the homework program in which 12 to 15 kids work with one teacher and collaborate with their peers. Superintendent Turk remarked that the Peabody poetry project is a perfect example of the kind of connections she wants schools to develop.

Principal Petner of the Haggerty School suggested that, for schools on the issue of collaboration, staffing is the most critical part of the program. He asked how schools can be more supportive of professional development for after-school staff. Some examples of successful programs are the collaborative workshops and efforts like the City Sprouts group, which combines gardening with science. In his experience in Cambridge since 1974, he has observed that the work of child care, pre-school and after-school staff is not valued enough in terms of funding and salary, which needs to be remedied.

Principal Groves of the King Open School described the extended day program at his school as high-quality, providing important opportunities and models for staff; one of the teachers from this program has made the transition to classroom teaching.

Ms. Walser would like to see more after-school programs and wants the committee to consider policy recommendations for school and city council. She asked the principals for their thoughts on obvious topics to work on and recommend now as policy to achieve better OST services. If anyone has ideas after this meeting, Councillor

Simmons asked them to send them to the City Clerk. According to Ms. Walser, the School Committee vote last night made progress in balancing population with services; she sees equity in services as the goal for the schools. Whatever the school, Ms. Walser wants all schoolchildren to have a good shot at getting into a program.

Councillor Simmons stated that, based on this meeting, it would be a good idea for those present to talk as a total group more often. Considering the information to date, she is not sure that the answer is more OST programs. Instead, it may be a matter of better distribution and better information, or transportation may be the biggest problem. The CEOC survey gives a different picture of families' needs and opportunities. The group does not have the big picture yet of what's available in schools. What the city may have to do is reconfigure current programs, for example, in the community schools.

Principal Harris of the Fletcher/Maynard Academy asked how this committee interacts with the OST Advisory Group on the creation of policy. Councillor Simmons responded that there are voices from other groups including the advisory group, on this committee. The bottom line for the committee, according to Councillor Simmons, is to put forward policy recommendations for implementation by the schools or the city. The biggest job is to be better informed about programs at the schools. Superintendent Turk agreed that there are problems with the information structure about school programs—parents have to be savvy to find out what's available.

Ms. Semonoff stated that it is important to figure out how to hold onto current programs, even if we don't need more. The rub is that merging schools means that there will be more demands on fewer buildings; the issue is how to find space for the programs. Referring to Superintendent Turk's point about building bridges between school and after-school staff, Ms. Semonoff made special note of three efforts. She commended Principal Petner for spending more than 2 hours recently with about 40 Human Services staffers to work on OST integration of Individual Education Plans for special needs students. This was an enormous boost to the staff. She also pointed to Khari Milner's work with three principals and various programs to bridge school and after-school programs as very valuable. Finally, she described the experience of the Harrington School as a very useful learning opportunity for DHSP and the School Department with the extended day program.

Mr. Chambers expressed frustration with the discussion. Over four years, he has heard the issues about shared space and the need for dissemination of information. However, he does not see any deliberate effort to build a system for collaboration. The group needs buy-in up and down the school system. Otherwise, there is territorialism. According to Mr. Chambers, no information has changed over four years, what is needed is action.

Ms. MacDonald stated that, at a recent meeting, the principals did not know about open slots in school programs, which emphasizes the need for access and information. The group needs to develop a menu of options within an infrastructure and to assign a point person for oversight. The community school summer camp collaboration is a good

example of the use of limited resources enhanced through in-house resources. She encourages targeted assistance to schools, through programs such as Mr. Milner's 2-year project with 3 schools (Harrington, Fletcher-Maynard and King) to bring together school personnel to collaborate on community programs; these efforts move beyond the "skill, drill and kill" approach to provide targeted enrichment and assistance to schools.

Councillor Simmons pointed out the need for information sharing in addition to meetings, through means such as a manual or data list. Ms. Semonoff stated that the manual on OST programs will be available in a few months. It will be available on computer and as a paper directory and will include information on health and human services and school programs. Councillor Simmons noted that there has to be outreach to principals on this database. Principal Bridget Rodriguez of the Morse School added that the group needs to contact mental health agencies, because mental health issues can be a big barrier to participation for families.

Principal Petner of the Haggerty School noted that there is a trickle-down and trickle-up effect with initiatives like OST time programs. More concretely, he agreed that there has to be a structure to support the goal. For example, what at the building level makes sense in terms of programming? He recommends starting with a space planning team committee that includes all the users of the space, that holds quarterly meetings and that coordinates all the programming. In terms of a trickle-up effect, Mr. Petner believes that it is the responsibility of the program directors, principals and the custodians to focus on big picture needs and to take responsibility for the uses of the school building. The question is how to better coordinate programming.

Mr. Chambers addressed the issue of the trickle-down effect by raising the need for centralized structures. For example, transport is no small matter. It would help to have a citywide late bus system for all schools. Another area for development is the use of school volunteers for after-school activities. A third possible initiative is professional development activities for after-school staff. According to Mr. Chambers, it is necessary to get concrete about whose responsibility it is to make these initiatives happen and to spell out how they will work; otherwise, ideas will not be implemented in daily work.

Mr. Ryder agreed with the statements about the trickle-up effect. If schools are open from 6:30 to 10 P.M. without coordination, there is more stress on limited resources and this means less success. He pointed to the coordination at the Haggerty School as a standard for OST planning.

Councillor Simmons agreed with the need for a centralized source of information with a point person taking responsibility for updates, especially with fifteen schools being consolidated to thirteen.

Principal Harris of the Fletcher/Maynard Academy remarked on the hodgepodge of OST programs which vary in quality. She asked if Cambridge is meeting the national standards for OST activity. Councillor Simmons followed up by asking how the national standards apply.

According to Ms. Shoy, the community school staff have come a long way toward connecting with principals---years ago, this didn't happen. The group should give itself credit for progress. The turf boundaries are breaking down. Regarding professional development, time can be a problem even when there are opportunities. As for space in the schools, the problem remains of not enough space, and this is important because the environment affects participation.

Councillor Simmons thanked the principals for attending the meeting and for their work on the OST issue. She emphasized the differences in schools from several years ago; they are now more a part of the community. Regarding the two empty school buildings resulting from consolidation, Councillor Simmons stated that it is critical to be careful about how we fill empty space that may be needed by the community.

Ms. Richards Scott described the efforts of the Agenda for Children to foster opportunities for conversation and cooperation among the staff of OST programs across the city. At the meeting of the Agenda for Children yesterday, the issue was how to collaborate on quality improvements, so that all programs in the city have training and improvement activities. The effort is to support staff and identify the agenda for programs. According to Ms. Richards Scott, the group needs to think-tank issues and maybe bring them to the schools, in order to work more effectively together. The school system is facing a paradigm shift from thinking of resources for one program to pooling resources; this will take time. She described the work of Maryann MacDonald with school and after-school people to figure things out together as "phenomenal".

Ms. Neel emphasized that it is encouraging to talk about issues systematically rather than on the basis of individual sites. Councillor Simmons asked Superintendent Turk if someone from the schools is available to attend the Human Services meetings on OST issues.

Principal Stuart of the Cambridgeport School wants the group to think about the "trickle" effect in terms of what the needs are with diminished resources; schools may need to reorganize resources. She specifically raised the "trickle-out" effect. The work to create access is huge. Having a basic informational database will be great. The family liaison position is at risk; this is important because there are families that need summer programs but don't apply. Ms. Stuart asked how the school-based team could be expanded to create opportunities for both school and OST programs. The community liaison must be personalized, which takes a lot of time and effort. At the same time, a full-time liaison is a key member to connect the agencies with the schools. Councillor Simmons agreed that personal contact is key to success and that the community liaison should be full-time.

Ms. Cacciola referred back to the question about the standards for programs. She noted that official child care services are licensed by the state Office for Child Care Services, which sets the basic standards. Councillor Simmons asked if there are

standards for other OST programs, such as the Freelance Players; Ms. Cacciola responded that, as far as she knew, there are no official or required standards for these.

Mr. Milner noted that he has seen lots of after-school programs. A unique relationship is being built between schools and staff in Cambridge; making this change systemic is an important focus of the 21st Century grant, especially with school mergers, strains on building resources, and transient families. To implement the policy in schools, Mr. Milner emphasizes that it's important to have some wind behind the policy. There must be leaders in school and after-school programs to convey a consistent, strong message and to set expectations with the staff to create a system; this is part of the job.

Councillor Simmons expressed her appreciation to everyone who attended the meeting. She asked CEOC to send copies of their OST survey to the principals. She emphasized the need for the schools to work well and spend "smart" to enhance OST services; schools must be different because families are different, for example, in the CEOC survey, 236 families are headed by grandparents. She plans to continue the discussion at the next committee meeting, which will be in two to three weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Denise Simmons", written over the printed name.

Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair

City of Cambridge

HUMAN SERVICES**COMMITTEE MEMBERS***Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair**Councillor Marjorie C. Decker**Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio*

In City Council June 2, 2003

The Human Services Committee held a public roundtable meeting with Cambridge school principals on April 9, 2003, beginning at 3:35 P.M. in the Sullivan Chamber for the purpose of hearing their recommendations and concerns about out-of-school time (OST) programs.

Present at the meeting were Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair of the Committee, Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, City Clerk D. Margaret Drury, and Elaine McGrath, City Clerk's Office. The Cambridge school principals in attendance were: Timothy Groves, King Open School, Robin Harris, Fletcher/Maynard Academy, Joe McKeigue, King School, Joe Petner, Haggerty School, Bridget Rodriguez, Morse School, and Lynn Stuart, Cambridgeport School. Also present were Judy Bibbins, Department of Human Services Programs (DHSP), Community Schools, Carol Bundy, Board member, Peabody Afterschool Program, Angel Cacciola, Director, Peabody Afterschool Program, Eileen Keegan, Division Head of the Community Schools Division, Maryann MacDonald, Acting Executive Director of Student Achievement & Accountability, Khari Milner, 21st Century CCLC Partnership Grant, Jackie Neel, DHSP-Child Care, Paul Ryder, DHSP-Recreation, Susan Richards Scott, Agenda for Children, Ellen Semonoff, Deputy Director, DHSP, Roslyn Shoy, Program Director, Community Schools, Jo Sullivan, Cambridge Public Schools Curriculum Director, Carolyn Turk, Interim Superintendent of Schools, and Nancy Walser, School Committee member.

Councillor Simmons opened the meeting by welcoming the school principals and asking them for a brief overview of OST programs at their schools. She noted that this discussion followed a vote by the School Committee last night on consolidation of Cambridge schools, which may broaden the questions that people have about OST in the schools.

Principal McKeigue of the King School stated that the King School is very busy after school and listed a number of programs held at the school: pre-school, community school, after-school day care, gymnastics, two homework programs, sports, and Harvard University programs and clubs. The school building is overcrowded now, and according to Principal McKeigue, the school consolidation plan from yesterday's meeting will exacerbate the problem, if the Graham & Parks, and Longfellow Schools are closed. He pointed out that the school building also functions as a resource for the community, too, allowing groups to meet from 3 to 10 P.M.; this means that the school is extremely stressed now, with more classrooms being used, later hours, and various issues to struggle

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Committee Report #2

A communication was received from D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk, transmitting a report from Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Chair of the Human Services Committee, for a meeting held on April 9, 2003 for the purpose of hearing their recommendations and concerns about out-of-school time (OST) programs.

In City Council June 2, 2003

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.**