



Kids' Council Meeting Notes
Thursday, March 21, 2013
5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
344 Broadway, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Desired Outcomes

- An awareness of the work of the Youth Involvement Subcommittee
- An agreement by Kids' Council members to encourage the necessary people to complete the *Kids' Council & CET Outreach and Family Engagement Survey* and attend the *Promising Practices for Family Engagement Networking Event* on May 23rd
- A shared understanding of the work of the Networking Event Planning Team
- A shared understanding of the City-wide Family Engagement Policy and ideas for next steps for the Kids' Council

5:15 Socialize, Network & Eat

5:28 Call to Order

- Welcome & Introductions
- Agenda Overview
- Adoption of Minutes (February 28, 2013 meeting)

5:34 Announcements

- National Public Health Week – April 1 – 7.
 - Roadmaps to Health Celebration – April 4th 4:00 – 6:00pm
- Cambridge Walk/Run – Sunday April 7th:
- Cambridge designated pilot city for STEM inclusion
 - March 28th STEM Roundtable Event
- Jeff Young and Lori Likis' Update on Family Engagement and CPS
Karen Mapp will hold two more workshops with family liaisons and one workshop with principals and family liaisons. The focus in this work is to explore what it means to link family engagement to student learning and achievement, and identify strategies to support this work. Karen Mapp has also provided the Superintendent with preliminary recommendations for next steps for the district. These include working on a district vision and family engagement policy, and establishing a district-level action team to support the work of schools. A focus throughout this work is involving all stakeholder groups and engaging those families not typically engaged. Work of the KC is timely. KC focusing on the whole child and family all day all year

6:05 City Wide Family Engagement Policy Presentation: Heather Weiss and Elena Lopez (Harvard Family Research Project)

Key Questions

1. Why should a city consider a FE policy?

2. What should be the key ingredients?
3. What are the necessary steps to make sure the policy is more than words on a piece of paper?

SOCIAL CONTRACT

Learning is anywhere in time: afterschool, family, faith based institutions, early childhood, cyberspace

Complimentary Learning – schools, OST, city, non-profits, universities, businesses, and families are CONNECTED

Cross context

Shared responsibility

Need to figure out how are kids are going to get the skills they need

In order to close the achievement gap, we have to look at the whole context and connect all learning places

Cambridge is a city of learning and this work gives new meaning to a city of learning.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We need to figure out what FE is

Reframe FE – across time from birth to high school and beyond

Karen Mapp is not only working with CPS, she is also working on FE in larger contexts (state and federal level) to make it a priority and build a broader conception.

Policy – ALL need to create strong leaning opportunities across time and space

FE is one of the strongest predictors of child's development and success; therefore, it is our shared responsibility to have a social contract that provides parents with the knowledge and skills to give their children what they need.

Start with early literacy and motivation

Parents need to be able to access out-of school time

Advocates are needed for child, family, and schools

CHILDREN AND YOUTH VOICE

Need the youth voice

Refer to YIS suggestions for KC and work regarding FE because their suggestions are aligned with the broader definition of FE

Youth can help with barriers (language, information, etc...) and help families navigate the system

Q&A

We must address race and socio-economic issues.

We need to be honest about the socio-economic and race issues.

We need to be more trusting and build trust with schools and the government process.

We can't cure the achievement gap until equity issues are addressed.

School takes up only a portion of the day. School and OST need to share resources.

Need high quality schools and OST programs.

Create the opportunities and scaffolding for all families.

Library use (*Giving Our Children a Fighting Chance: Poverty, Literacy and the Development of Information Capital*)

Translation and Transition Issues

- Many hurdles to navigate the system if there are language barriers
- Cultural factors add extra challenges
- Need a well-engineered system - especially during times of transition
- Families need practical tools to navigate the system
- Providers need to communicate across agencies
- There are attitudes that “school” people have about “non-school” people and vice versa; there are attitudes that “city” people have about “non city” people and vice versa; there are families who have attitudes about providers and vice versa, etc... How do we overcome these issues?

Cambridge needs to take this on.

We need to be careful about making assumptions.

Middle class families... Low income families... Immigrant families...

There are all different parenting styles.

Comments from Groups

Concerns

Policy can have a negative connotation. It is mandate that this HAS to happen. We should look at all the issues that get in the way. Policy alone won't help.

Positives

Implementation will help.

Need positive language to unify families.

It will help if we all speak the same language regarding FE.

KC can develop that common language and make sure resources are available.

Strengthen the words in our policy- equitable, shared responsibility- strong words.

Policy should be the link – OST, Agenda for Children, Schools, etc... and their relationships with families.

Implementation

Provide professional development for all agencies to make it happen

Policy needs to direct services and resources as needed

Look at models from other cities (Syracuse, Omaha)

Create ways of sharing data in real time in meaningful ways

Continue linking out-of-school time and in-school time

Research tells us that if we want children to be successful we need them to be successful in all domains – not just school/academics.

Conversation is needed. One place that this conversation is happening is Baby U.

Open lines of communication are necessary so that we are engaging with, not dictating to, parents and agencies.

Youth Voice

Children and youth are key in helping build buy-in and overcoming complex barriers

Involve young people in discussion

RESOURCES

Giving Our Children a Fighting Chance: Poverty, Literacy and the Development of Information Capital by Susan Neuman and Donna Celano
Strive Network (strivenetwork.org)
Massachusetts Family, Schools, and Community Partnership Fundamentals
(<http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>)

7:01 Updates

- *Kids' Council & CET Outreach and Family Engagement Survey Update*
 - 72 People have taken survey so far
 - **Please continue to encourage people to take the Survey**
- *Promising Practices for Family Engagement in Cambridge Networking Event Update*
 - Save the date: May 23rd
 - **Please encourage people to attend the Networking Event**
- Youth Involvement Subcommittee Update

7:10 Evaluation

Pluses

Heather did a wonderful job; small group work; superintendent Young and Lori here and part of conversation; packet of information to follow up on reading; hearing from YIS – who are actually looking/doing at the transition in a significant way; everyone was engaged.

Deltas:

YIS updates in the beginning of the meeting

Next steps:

At next meeting to have suggestions for steps forward – so not starting from scratch; document the process – other cities could learn from this group

**Next meeting is Thursday, May 16, 2013 at 344 Broadway
2nd floor conference room at 5:15 p.m.**

Thank you for stimulating and productive meeting!

7:15 Adjourn