City of Cambridge
Richard C. Rossi • City Manager

Executive Department
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November 16, 2015

To the Honorable, the City Council:

It is with great pleasure that I am transmitting to you the Report from the Cambridge Early Childhood Task Force. Under the leadership of myself and the Superintendent of Schools, a dedicated group of task force members has developed a set of recommendations to the City and the Schools to build an early childhood system. The Task Force did its work with a powerful vision:

> All children in Cambridge receive high quality early education and care from birth through third grade. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, socially, emotionally and continue to do so through third grade and beyond.

The Task Force was made up of city and school department representatives, parents, early childhood and health experts from community based organizations and family childcare settings. With support from national experts in the field, we reviewed the research to identify best practices nationally and locally. We engaged in a needs assessment process, surveying local providers and doing focus groups with parents, principals, teachers, early childhood providers and others. What emerged from the research and the needs assessment confirmed the availability of many strong programs and services within Cambridge but also confirmed the significant challenges families and providers face without a coherent system that links families, early childhood providers, and the schools.

The assessment of needs for birth through grade three services in Cambridge made clear:

- Accessing information for families and providers is often challenging
- Maintaining and improving quality across all programs is vital
- Aligning and coordinating services between family support services, family childcare, community based pre-schools, city run pre-schools and the schools is critical
- Addressing the gaps in service, especially related to social emotional development, is necessary
- Finding high quality affordable early childhood programs and services is difficult

The Task Force recognized that it would be a multi-year ongoing effort to build an effective early childhood system that would improve the outcomes for Cambridge's children. The first step in this process is to create an effective Birth through Third Grade governance structure tasked with turning the recommendations of this report into a full-fledged strategic plan. The governance structure will include the full range of stakeholders in the Cambridge's early education and care community and it will be charged with overseeing the implementation of the plan. Critical to that effort is the creation of a new position of Early Childhood Director reporting jointly to the School Department and the City to help develop the system. We are also recommending the creation of the position of an early childhood quality specialist to support the professional development and quality activities across the system. The

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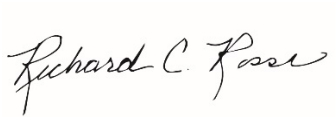
recommendations will provide the opportunity to advance the many initiatives and collaborations that have existed over the years and to incorporate them into a coherent system.

The Task Force did not recommend immediate large scale expansion of slots for three and four year olds for a number of reasons. First, the research shows that we need to begin serving children and families much earlier than age three and hence our effort to focus building the system with families and children from birth. Second, to ensure the greatest benefit of expanded access, it is critical that access be coupled with high quality programming and we need to develop the system to ensure that quality. Third, we do not currently have space for significantly more three and four olds in city, community or school programs. We will continue to explore opportunities for expanding access to new spaces. In the meantime, the recommendations call for developing a pilot to expand access for low income three and four year olds as well as expansion of scholarship assistance within existing high quality programs.

The recommendations come with significant initial costs and we anticipate that the costs of developing a high quality system will continue to grow for a number of years as our pilot program is evaluated and expanded. I will be returning to the City Council later this fall requesting an appropriation for approximately $200,000 in funds to begin implementation on January 1 so that we can establish the governance structure and hire the two new positions. We will be developing more accurate information about the proposed budget for year 1 of the plan, which is fiscal 2017, but I anticipate that the costs will be around 1.3 million dollars. Those costs would grow by at least a million dollars for year 2, fiscal 2018.

We are aware that building a coherent system is more time consuming and less flashy than just adding more slots or more dollars to an existing system. But we have an opportunity to be leaders nationally and regionally by building a system that coherently knits together our existing resources and thoughtfully brings in new resources to meet the needs of our youngest residents. I look forward to the City Council and School Committee Roundtable on November 16 where the Superintendent of Schools and I will be presenting the work of the task force to you and to the School Committee.

Very truly yours,



Richard C. Rossi
City Manager

Starting Early: Addressing the Achievement and Opportunity Gaps in Cambridge

Recommendations of the Cambridge Early Childhood Task Force

November 2015

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Executive Summary

To ensure a good start in life, all children need access to high quality and affordable early education and care, physical and mental health, and family support.

Programs and services that address these areas are essential, yet they are only as strong as the infrastructure that supports them. To be effective, programs must be organized within a cohesive system that coordinates and aligns a broad array of services. In addition, these services must be responsive and accessible to all families who need them and seamlessly integrated within an early childhood system.

In February 2014, Cambridge City Manager Richard Rossi appointed an Early Childhood Task Force and charged the group with developing a set of recommendations to (a) improve early education and care throughout the community, and (b) ensure that all children receive high quality early education and care beginning with prenatal care and extending through third grade. The members included the city manager, the superintendent of schools, parents, early childhood and health experts from community-based organizations and family childcare settings, and senior city and school district staff members (see Appendix 1). The Task Force's work spanned 15 months and included two phases:

1. Review of research to identify best practices nationally, followed by a needs assessment to identify strengths and areas of need across Cambridge's early childhood programs and services;

2. Development of recommendations, including overarching goals and specific objectives and strategies, to guide Cambridge's efforts as it builds a coherent system of high quality early education and care.

An assessment of needs for birth through third grade services in Cambridge indicated that families and service providers want better information regarding available services, and that the community's services are not coordinated and aligned in ways that lead to maximum impact for young children and their families. The Task Force's needs assessment revealed these fundamental concerns:

- **Access to Information.** It is challenging for families in Cambridge to find appropriate services and for early childhood service providers to keep abreast of the full range of available services.

- **Maintaining and Improving Quality.** Quality is not consistent throughout the community's early childhood services and providers. Organizations r eport challenges in maintaining quality programs and qualified staff given financial pressures.

- **Aligning and Coordinating Services.** Better coordination and alignment between family childcare, community-based preschools and family support services, the Department of Human Services, and the Cambridge Public Schools emerged as a key theme of the Task Force's assessment of needs.

- **Addressing Critical Gaps.** Families, providers, and local experts identified several gaps in critical areas, including additional supports for social-emotional skill development, mental health, family engagement, families in crisis, dual language learners, and children with disabilities.

- **Affordability and Access.** For many Cambridge families, finding high quality, affordable early childhood services is difficult and presents considerable financial hardships. Making high quality home visiting, infant—toddler care, and preschool more affordable for Cambridge families is a clear priority for families, early childhood providers, and the Task Force.

The Task Force crafted the following vision and guiding principles as a framework for developing goals and recommendations to improve early education and care throughout the community:

Vision

All children in Cambridge receive high quality early education and care from birth through third grade. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally and continue to do so through third grade and beyond.

Guiding Principles

Whole child: Consider all areas of a child's growth, development, and learning – including cognitive, social and emotional, language and communication, and physical development and well-being.

Age range: Consider children's needs and well-being from birth through third grade.

All, some and few: Ensure a continuum of services that provides programs that serve *all* children and families, targeted programs that serve *some* children, parents and families who may need extra support, and specialized programs for the *few* for whom significant levels of support are needed, including families in crisis.

Build on strengths: Build on the existing strengths of the rich set of services and programs already in place in Cambridge as well as the strengths of children, parents, families, caregivers, and early education and care professionals.

Equity and preparation gap: Address the lack of equity of opportunity that many children and families face because of race, family income, and the preparation gap that stems from a variety of risk factors.

Cultural competence: Ensure that programs, services, and supports for children and families are relevant to and respectful of their culture and language.

Families as partners and parent choice: Value parents as partners in care and learning and parent choice in selecting settings and services for their children.

Photo © Nicole Sullivan

Five Goals to Guide Improvement Efforts

The need for an easily accessed, coherent system of affordable high quality early education and care that begins with prenatal care and extends through third grade emerged as a core finding of the Task Force. Based on its review of research and best practices and needs assessment, the Task Force developed a set of recommendations to guide improvements to early childhood services in Cambridge. The recommendations are organized around five goals:

Goal 1: Increase Access to and Affordability of Early Education and Care Services

Goal 2: Continuously Improve Program Quality for Birth through Third Grade Programs and Services

Goal 3: Build Partnerships to Promote Strong Family Engagement and Support

Goal 4: Coordinate with Healthcare Providers to Ensure Access to Quality Healthcare Services

Goal 5: Develop an Effective Birth through Third Grade Governance and Leadership Structure

Each goal is further elaborated with a small number of focused objectives and concrete strategies. These goals, objectives, and strategies are intended to provide the foundation for a more comprehensive strategic plan that includes a budget and targets and benchmarks to drive progress-monitoring and ensure accountability.

Next Steps

Implementing this ambitious plan to improve outcomes for all Cambridge children will require an ongoing, multi-year city-wide effort. The Task Force recommends the establishment of a new birth through third grade governance structure (outlined in Goal 5) and creation of the positions of Early Childhood Director and Early Childhood Program Quality Specialist to support the successful development of a system of affordable high quality early education and care in Cambridge.

A critical first task of the new governance structure will be to develop the recomendations in this document into a full-fledged strategic plan. The Task Force also recommends the development of a pilot project (outlined in Goal 1, Objective 3) in collaboration with community-based programs to begin learning about how best to expand high quality, affordable preschool for three- and four-year olds. Implementation of proposed strategies will begin within the first two years of the strategic plan, with year one beginning on July 1, 2016.

Starting Early: Addressing the Achievement and Opportunity Gaps in Cambridge

Introduction

"The future of any society depends on its ability to foster education, health and well-being of the next generation. Today's children will become tomorrow's citizens, workers and parents. When we invest wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship. When we fail to provide children with what they need to build a strong foundation for healthy and productive lives, we put our future prosperity and security at risk." [1]

High quality early childhood programs are among the most effective supports available for reducing achievement gaps and bridging the gap between the opportunities available to children in low-income families and their more affluent peers. The care that children experience during these formative years impacts their health, education, quality of life, and civic engagement as adults. Parents and families are children's first and most influential teachers and caregivers. Early education programs—such as home visiting, infant and toddler care, early intervention, and preschool—support families both through direct care of children and through their support of parents and other caregivers.

Not only are high quality early childhood programs the most effective supports available for reducing and bridging gaps, but they also are a good investment. According to the Center for the Developing Child at Harvard University:

". . . economists have also shown that high-quality early childhood programs bring impressive returns on investment to the public. Three of the most rigorous long-term studies found a range of returns between $4 and $9 for every dollar invested in early learning programs for low-income children. Program participants followed into adulthood benefited from increased earnings while the public saw returns in the form of reduced special education, welfare, and crime costs, and increased tax revenues from program participants later in life." [2]

High quality early childhood programs are among the most effective supports available for reducing achievement gaps and bridging the gap between the opportunities available to children in low-income families and their more affluent peers.

Also critical to addressing the needs of low-income children in poverty are programs and services that provide consistent high quality early education and care for *multiple years*. Research has found especially impressive positive benefits for children when programs begin in infancy and continue through preschool[3] and when programs begin in preschool[4] and continue through third grade.

These findings, and others, have provided powerful impetus in states as well as communities across the nation to improve the entire continuum of early care and learning for young children beginning with prenatal care and extending through third grade. Fueled by research findings and the examples of innovative communities, these birth through third grade efforts have gained much momentum and are receiving support from the federal government, state governments (including Massachusetts), and foundations.

Child Outcomes Associated with High Quality Early Education[5]

- Stronger social-emotional and self-regulation skills; stronger ability to focus and stay on task
- Stronger early literacy and math skills
- Reductions in referrals to special education
- Reductions in grade-level retention
- Increased high school graduation rates
- Increased college attendance rates
- Increased home ownership and earnings
- Decreased likelihood of involvement in the juvenile justice system

Nationally, three communities have led the way in demonstrating the effectiveness of concerted, coordinated efforts to improve the prenatal through third grade continuum:

- **Montgomery County, MD** has improved results for all students while significantly reducing gaps between affluent and low-income students. The County developed a comprehensive early learning plan with seven actionable goals, formed a close partnership between the public schools, community-based organizations and families, and established comprehensive early learning centers for the lowest-income families. Teachers implemented new curricula and formative assessments in preschool and kindergarten, and the school district supported teachers with professional development and time to work together. The community has achieved **remarkable rates of kindergarten readiness (90%), third grade reading proficiency (88%), and high school graduation (90%)**.

- In **Union City, NJ**, one of the lowest-income communities in the state, the public schools collaborated with community-based preschools to implement a common curriculum and common program of coaching support. Schools and preschool centers have developed close relationships with children's families. Teachers in all the early grades (preschool—third grade) meet regularly to work on curriculum, monitor student progress, and plan lessons. Union City **outperforms New Jersey state averages** in reading and math in one of the highest performing states in the country and **graduates 90% of its students**.

- **The "Cradle to Career" Strive Partnership in Greater Cincinnati** is a regional collaboration supported by community leaders and a broad cross-section of community partners. The partnership established a common vision, a clear set of goals and success indicators, and then supported its members to work together to continuously improve their programs and services. The Strive Partnership has seen kindergarten readiness improve **13 points to 75%**, 4th grade reading for Cincinnati Public School students improve **21 points to 76%**, and **91% of all student outcome indicators improve** for its affected student population.

The Cambridge Early Childhood Task Force

In February 2014, Cambridge City Manager Richard Rossi appointed an Early Childhood Task Force and charged the group with developing a set of recommendations to improve early education and care throughout the community and ensure that all children receive high quality early education and care beginning with prenatal care and extending through third grade. The members included the city manager, the superintendent of schools, parents, early childhood and health experts from community-based organizations and family childcare settings, and senior city and school district staff members (See Appendix 1).

The Task Force began its work by reviewing the latest research on early childhood development and national models of effective practice. In order to better understand strengths and weakness of existing programs and services in Cambridge, the group then designed and conducted a needs assessment that included a survey of early education and care providers, a survey of other early childhood service providers, and 11 focus groups. Sixty-eight center-based and family childcare providers responded to the early education and care survey; ten organizations representing 41 programs responded to the other early childhood services survey. Focus groups were conducted for a broad range of stakeholders, including parents, teachers, community-based preschools, family childcare providers, family liaisons, principals, literacy ambassadors, and the 0-8 Council. Based on its research review and information collected through the needs assessment, the Task Force determined a set of overarching priorities to guide the development of recommendations:

1. **Start Early**. The research is clear: children need high quality care and learning experiences that begin with prenatal care, continue with infant and toddler care and preschool, and extend through third grade and beyond. Starting early is critical to addressing achievement gaps and improving outcomes for all children.

2. **Quality Is Essential**. To improve outcomes for children, services must be of high quality. Expanding access without ensuring quality is ineffective and short-sighted.

3. **Build a Coherent Mixed-Delivery System**. Community services, including family childcare, community-based preschools, community-based family support services, the Cambridge Human Services Department (DHSP), and the Cambridge Public Schools, that are coordinated and aligned will lead to maximum impact for young children and their families.

Charge

The Early Childhood Task Force is charged with developing a set of recommendations to improve early education and care throughout the community, and ensure that all children receive high quality early education and care beginning with prenatal care and extending through third grade. The goal is that all children will enter school ready to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally and continue to thrive through third grade and beyond. The following priorities will guide the recommendations:

- Develop a highly-effective system of high quality education and care that will meet the needs of children and families
- Ensure equitable access to early childhood information and high quality services
- Provide levels of service commensurate with the needs of children and families and that in particular address the needs of low-income families
- Emphasize the whole 0-8 continuum starting with prenatal care
- Emphasize positive social-emotional development, mental health, and special needs
- Engage and support families in their parenting and "first teacher" roles in ways that are culturally-responsive and celebrate diversity
- Build and support a high quality workforce capable of meeting the needs of children and families in a sustainable way.

Why Cambridge Needs a Coherent Birth through Third Grade System of Early Education and Care

The need for an easily accessed, coherent system of affordable high quality early education and care that begins with prenatal care and extends through third grade emerged as a core finding of the Task Force. Cambridge is fortunate to be served by many city, school and community-based early childhood services and programs. Many are of excellent quality and work together to provide the best possible services for children and their families. As in most cities, however, Cambridge's overall system of early learning and care is fragmented and underdeveloped. Over the years there have been many initiatives and collaborations among our early childhood community. The recommendations presented in this report will provide the opportunity to advance the work already begun and build a fully developed integrated system.

The Task Force's extensive assessment of needs through surveys and focus groups revealed these fundamental concerns:

- **Access to Information.** It is challenging for families in Cambridge to find appropriate services and for early childhood service providers to keep abreast of the full range of available services.

  "It takes a while to get plugged in and know about everything that exists. You have to be aggressive to find out what exists." —Cambridge Parent

- **Maintaining and Improving Quality.** Quality is not consistent throughout the community's early childhood service providers. Organizations report challenges in maintaining quality programs and qualified staff given financial pressures.

  "Quality varies from program to program." —Cambridge Family Childcare Provider

- **Aligning and Coordinating Services.** Children and families benefit when services are coordinated. Common standards and approaches, joint professional development, smooth transitions across programs, and coordinated care all contribute to improved quality. Better coordination and alignment between family childcare, community-based preschools, community-based family support services, the Department of Human Services, and the Cambridge Public Schools emerged as a key theme of the Task Force's assessment of needs.

  "We have the entities but they are not linked together. Cambridge should make a commitment that education begins prenatally – before birth. That would create value for preschool as it would be part of a continuum of services." —Cambridge Preschool Director

  "We need to learn more about what early childhood providers do, and they need to learn more about what we do." —Cambridge Public School Elementary School Principal

- **Addressing Critical Gaps.** Families, providers, and local experts identified several gaps in critical areas, including the need for additional supports for social-emotional skill development, mental health, family engagement, families in crisis, dual language learners, and children with disabilities.

  "It appears as though many of the children are coming to us needing greater support than we can sometimes accommodate."—Cambridge Preschool Teacher

  "It's challenging for families to navigate the systems if their child has a special need or they are new to the Cambridge community."—Cambridge Preschool Teacher

- **Affordability and Access.** For many Cambridge families, finding high quality, affordable early childhood services is difficult and presents considerable financial hardships. Making high quality home visiting, infant—toddler care, and preschool more affordable for Cambridge families is a clear priority for families, early childhood providers, and the Task Force.

  "Childcare is a huge problem for families." —Cambridge Agenda for Children Literacy Ambassador

  "Waiting lists and costs are barriers." —Community Engagement Team Outreach Worker

  "Voucher pay is not enough – this is a big issue and not sure how to fix it without money." —Cambridge Family Childcare Provider

Recommendations of the Cambridge Early Childhood Task Force

The Task Force crafted the following vision and guiding principles as a framework for developing goals and recommendations:

Vision

All children in Cambridge receive high quality early education and care from birth through third grade. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, socially and emotionally, and continue to do so through third grade and beyond.

Guiding Principles

Whole child: Consider all areas of a child's growth, development, and learning – including cognitive, social and emotional, language and communication, and physical development and well-being.

Age range: Consider children's needs and well-being from birth through third grade.

All, some and few: Ensure a continuum of services that provides programs that serve *all* children and families, targeted programs that serve *some* children, parents and families who may need extra support, and specialized programs for the *few* for whom significant levels of support are needed, including families in crisis.

Build on strengths: Build on the existing strengths of the rich set of services and programs already in place in Cambridge as well as the strengths of children, parents, families, caregivers, and early education and care professionals.

Equity and preparation gap: Address the lack of equity of opportunity that many children and families face because of race, family income, and the preparation gap that stems from a variety of risk factors.

Cultural competence: Ensure that programs, services, and supports for children and families are relevant to and respectful of their culture and language.

Families as partners and parent choice: Value parents as partners in care and learning and parent choice in selecting settings and services for their children.

Five Goals to Guide Improvement Efforts

Creating a coherent system of affordable high quality early learning and care that begins with prenatal care and extends through third grade will require an ongoing, multi-year city-wide effort and a focused plan. Based on its review of research and best practices and extensive assessment of needs throughout the community, the Task Force developed a set of recommendations to guide improvements to early childhood services in Cambridge. The recommendations are organized around five goals:

Goal 1: Increase Access to and Affordability of Early Education and Care Services

Goal 2: Continuously Improve Program Quality for Birth through Third Grade Program and Services

Goal 3: Build Partnerships to Promote Strong Family Engagement and Support

Goal 4: Coordinate with Healthcare Providers to Ensure Access to Quality Healthcare Services

Goal 5: Develop an Effective Birth through Third Grade Governance and Leadership Structure

Each goal is further elaborated with a small number of focused objectives and concrete strategies. These goals, objectives, and strategies are intended to provide the foundation for a more comprehensive strategic plan that includes a budget and targets and benchmarks to drive progress-monitoring and ensure accountability. A critical first task of the new governance structure (described in Goal 5) will be to complete the strategic plan. The proposed strategies are to be completed within the first two years of the strategic plan. It is anticipated that Year I will begin on July 1, 2016.

Goal 1: Increase Access to and Affordability of Early Learning and Care Services

Expand access to high quality, culturally competent, affordable care and education programs staffed by practitioners who are adequately trained and compensated.

RATIONALE

Research has shown that the early years in a child's life—when the human brain is forming—represent a critically important window of opportunity to develop a child's full potential and shape key academic, social, and cognitive skills that determine a child's success in school and in life. Expanding access to high quality early learning opportunities is among the smartest investments that we can make. To yield the greatest benefit, the concept of access must be coupled with an early learning system that is comprehensive and with programs that are high quality. A comprehensive early learning system includes prenatal services, infant and toddler care, preschool programs, extends to third grade, and provides services for families, including evidence-based home visiting services.

*__FindItCambridge.org__ is a website developed by the City of Cambridge Kids' Council. The website will provide information about services, resources and activities available for children and families.

Objective 1.1: Expand Access to Home Visiting

Work with Cambridge's mixed delivery system to expand access to home visiting.

STRATEGIES:

- Determine who is currently being served by home visiting services in Cambridge and assess gaps in services.
- Improve alignment and continuity of home visiting services.
- Support ongoing efforts to improve the quality and availability of home visiting programs.

Objective 1.2: Expand Access to Early Childhood Services and Quality Education from Birth to Age Three

Work with Cambridge's mixed delivery system to expand access to early childhood services and education birth to age three.

STRATEGIES:

- Improve stability and financing for Baby University and other Center for Families programs.
- Investigate cost-sharing opportunities for community-based early education and care programs.

Objective 1.3: Expand Access to Early Childhood Services and Quality Education for Three- and Four-Year-Olds

Work with Cambridge's mixed delivery system to expand access to early childhood services and education for three- and four-year-olds.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase scholarship subsidies for low-income families.
- Ask the School Committee to study the feasibility of separating junior kindergarten and kindergarten classes in all cases.
- Design and implement a pilot project in collaboration with community-based programs to begin learning about how best to expand high quality affordable preschool. (See Appendix 2)
- Investigate cost-sharing opportunities for community-based early education and care programs.

Objective 1.4: Expand Access to Early Childhood Information

Expand access to information for identifying high quality early childhood education and care programs and family support services.

STRATEGIES:

- Support the *Kids' Council's FindItCambridge.org initiative by providing staff resource to gather and maintain information on early childhood providers and programs to ensure a robust birth through third grade section within FindItCambridge.org.
- Train community organizations in use of FindItCambridge.org.
- Develop communication plan to promote FinditCambridge.org.
- Review and revise Department of Human Services Programs (DHSP) waitlist for preschool programs.

Goal 2: Continuously Improve Program Quality for Birth Through Third Grade Services

Ensure that the services provided to young children and their families are of high quality, are continuously improving, and are coordinated in order to promote healthy early development and learning.

RATIONALE

Research is clear that children who attend high quality early education and care programs are more likely to be ready for school and life. Qualified practitioners are essential to ensuring the quality of these programs. Effective practitioners create stimulating early learning environments that promote social, intellectual, emotional, and physical development. These practitioners engage in reflective practice, regular child assessment, and adopt curricula that make a difference in children's growth and development.

Research also shows that leadership is second only to teaching as an influence on learning, and that the quality and practice of leadership is linked to improved student outcomes and educational equity. Program and system directors must have a strong sense of pedagogical competence.

Objective 2.1: Build Capacity to Improve City-wide Program Quality

Build the capacity to improve quality in early childhood and family support services for children birth through third grade and their families.

STRATEGY:

- Create the positions of Early Childhood Director and Early Childhood Program Quality Specialist. Recruit and hire individuals with extensive experience in standards, curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning, and professional development to lead the implementation of the program quality goal.

Objective 2.2: Develop City-wide Quality Improvement Plan

Develop a multi-year city-wide quality improvement plan that will guide improvement efforts across city, school district, and community-based services.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a city-wide plan that addresses the following components of a quality improvement system for all family- and center-based childcare programs, DHSP, and Cambridge Public Schools Preschool programs: standards, curriculum, formative assessment, instructional practices, learning environments, transitions, and leadership.

- Develop and implement a city-wide professional development plan, continuing the initiative launched by the 2014-2015 grant-funded Birth through Third Grade Alignment Leadership Team.

Objective 2.3: Support Pilot Project and Lessons Learned

Support the pilot project and document lessons learned that can inform, enhance and sustain quality and access in early education. (See Objective 1.3 and Appendix 2)

STRATEGY:

- Provide input on issues of quality and learn from the Pilot to inform the broader quality initiatives.

Objective 2.4: Improve Transitions, Collaboration and Coordination

Improve transitions, collaboration, and coordination across family- and center-based childcare programs, Department of Human Services and Cambridge Public Schools Preschool programs.

STRATEGY:

- Develop and implement a city-wide transition plan to ensure a smooth transition for all rising kindergarteners.

Objective 2.5: Promote Access to Information for Families

Promote sharing information with families on available services as a dimension of quality.

STRATEGY:

- Ensure that professional development for early childhood practitioners includes training in using the online (FindItCambridge.org) and face-to-face resources on accessing information about services.

Goal 3: Build Partnerships to Promote Strong Family Engagement and Support

Promote early and healthy development by forming reciprocal, strength-based partnerships between families and the programs that serve their children.

RATIONALE

Meaningful engagement of families in their children's early learning supports school readiness and later academic success. Positive family-program connections have been linked to greater academic motivation, grade promotion, and socio-emotional skills across all young children. Family engagement occurs when there is an ongoing, reciprocal partnership between families and their children's education and care programs. Achieving a strong family-program partnership requires a culture that supports and honors relationships, commitment from program leadership, a vision shared by staff and families, opportunities to develop the skills needed to engage in reciprocal relationships, and practices and policies that support meaningful family engagement.

Objective 3.1: Promote Best Practices in Family Engagement

Create an ongoing, comprehensive system for promoting family engagement by ensuring that leadership and practitioners receive necessary training and supports.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a community-wide understanding of family engagement building off of work already done by the city, the school district, and community partners.
- Promote shared understanding of the value of family engagement.
- Organize regular opportunities for families to provide input and guidance.
- Provide opportunities for representatives of different early childhood services to review materials, share best practices, and discuss implications.
- Work with the DHSP Community Engagement Team to use culturally-competent strategies to engage parents.

Objective 3.2: Encourage Family Participation and Advocacy

Encourage and validate family participation in decision-making related to their children's education. Support families to act as advocates for their children and participate in the design, delivery, and evaluation of services for their children.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a public education campaign that engages parents and families, especially families of children with disabilities, in advocating for their children's best interests. Promote parent as first teacher through resources and materials.
- Include parents and families on the Birth through Third Grade Governance Board.

Objective 3.3: Increase Opportunities for Family Support and Learning

Increase opportunities for families to engage in parenting education activities and increase availability of high quality materials and resources.

STRATEGIES:

- Assess the state of parenting education programs and activities, and determine how services are tiered across the all, some, and few categories.
- Gather and/or create high quality materials on early learning for families.

Objective 3.4: Develop a Comprehensive Approach for Family Access to Information

Develop a comprehensive approach to sharing information regarding available services for young children and their families with both families and the organizations that serve them.

STRATEGIES:

- Support the Kid's Council's initiative FindItCambridge.org by identifying high quality early childhood and family supports services.
- Share information on available services; for example, through a listserv and periodic peer exchange meetings.
- Align the work of the Cambridge's Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant (CFCE) with the Early Childhood Task Force recommendations.

Goal 4: Coordinate with Healthcare Providers to Ensure Access to Quality Healthcare Services

Improve access to quality health care, including mental health care, through partnerships, education, and advocacy.

RATIONALE

There are several ongoing initiatives in Cambridge that support the healthy development of children and families. A major goal of these initiatives is to improve the health of all Cambridge residents through the development of health policies and programs that will eliminate health disparities in the delivery of health prevention and health care services. Our approach is to work in collaboration with community partners to ensure that this goal is achieved.

*Cambridge Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), written by the Cambridge Public Health Department, is part of a city-wide effort to have a nationally accredited health department. CHIP aims to make tangible progress in four priority health-related areas in Cambridge over the next five years.

Objective 4.1: Ensure On-going Collaboration on Improving Health Outcomes

Ensure ongoing collaboration across agencies on improving access to quality health care for young children and their families.

STRATEGY:

- Establish a committee focused on the health of young children and their families—for example, a joint sub-committee with the Cambridge Health Alliance and the Cambridge Department of Public Health guided by the Cambridge Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)*.

Objective 4.2: Ensure Access to Quality Mental and Behavioral Health Services

Ensure access to quality mental and behavioral health services for young children and their families.

STRATEGY:

- Provide support to the Cambridge Health Alliance and the Department of Public Health on the CHIP plan Goal #1: "Support and enhance the mental, behavioral, and emotional health of all, and reduce the impact of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs." Provide support for these objectives in particular:

  1. CHIP 1.1: By 2020, increase the number of residents who have access to mental/behavioral health and substance abuse services in Cambridge; and

  2. CHIP 1.2: Increase the awareness and understanding of mental/behavioral health and mental illness in Cambridge by 2020.

Objective 4.3: Improve Birth and Home Visiting Services

Improve prenatal, infant-toddler, and maternal health through quality prenatal and home visiting services.

STRATEGY:

- Determine who is currently being served by prenatal and home visiting services in Cambridge and assess gaps in service provision (See Objective 1.1).

Objective 4.4: Improve Nutrition and Active Living

Improve the health and nutrition of young children and their families.

STRATEGY:

- Promote health and nutrition by coordinating with the CHIP Healthy Eating and Active Living Priority Area.

Objective 4.5: Ensure Access to Information on Healthy Development

Ensure access to information regarding healthy physical, mental, social, and emotional development of young children and their families.

STRATEGY:

- Expand access to information on early childhood education and care, including prenatal and home visiting services on FindItCambridge.org. (See Objective 1.4).

Goal 5: Develop an Effective Birth Through Third Grade Governance & Leadership Structure

Develop a shared governance infrastructure that formalizes cross-sector collaboration and decision-making roles, strengthens leadership capacity to advance the work, and develops a Birth through Third Grade Strategic Plan that outlines priorities, guides funding decisions, and oversees implementation of the plan.

Objective 5.1: Develop Shared Governance and Leadership

Develop a governance and leadership infrastructure that will provide leadership, management, and oversight of Cambridge's birth through third grade plans and strategies.

STRATEGIES:

- Create a city-wide Birth through Third Grade Governance Board that represents the full range of stakeholders in Cambridge's early education and care community and that oversees the implementation of Cambridge's birth through third grade plans and strategies.
- Create a position of an Early Childhood Director to help develop and implement Cambridge's Strategic Plan and support the governing body in overseeing the plan.
- Establish three committees of the Governance Board aligned to the goals of these recommendations: (1) Access, Affordability and Quality; (2) Family Engagement; and (3) Health. These committees will be charged with collaborating with the Director and the Governance Board to develop the recommendations of this document into a full-fledged strategic plan and with implementing the plan.

Objective 5.2: Develop a Strategic Plan and Plan Management

Using the recommendations of the Early Childhood Task Force as a foundation, develop a realistic strategic plan and budget that guides the creation of an effective early education and care system. Monitor implementation of the plan on a regular basis. Use data and evidence of change to adjust the plan in order to meet its short- and long-term benchmarks and to inform policy and practices.

STRATEGIES:

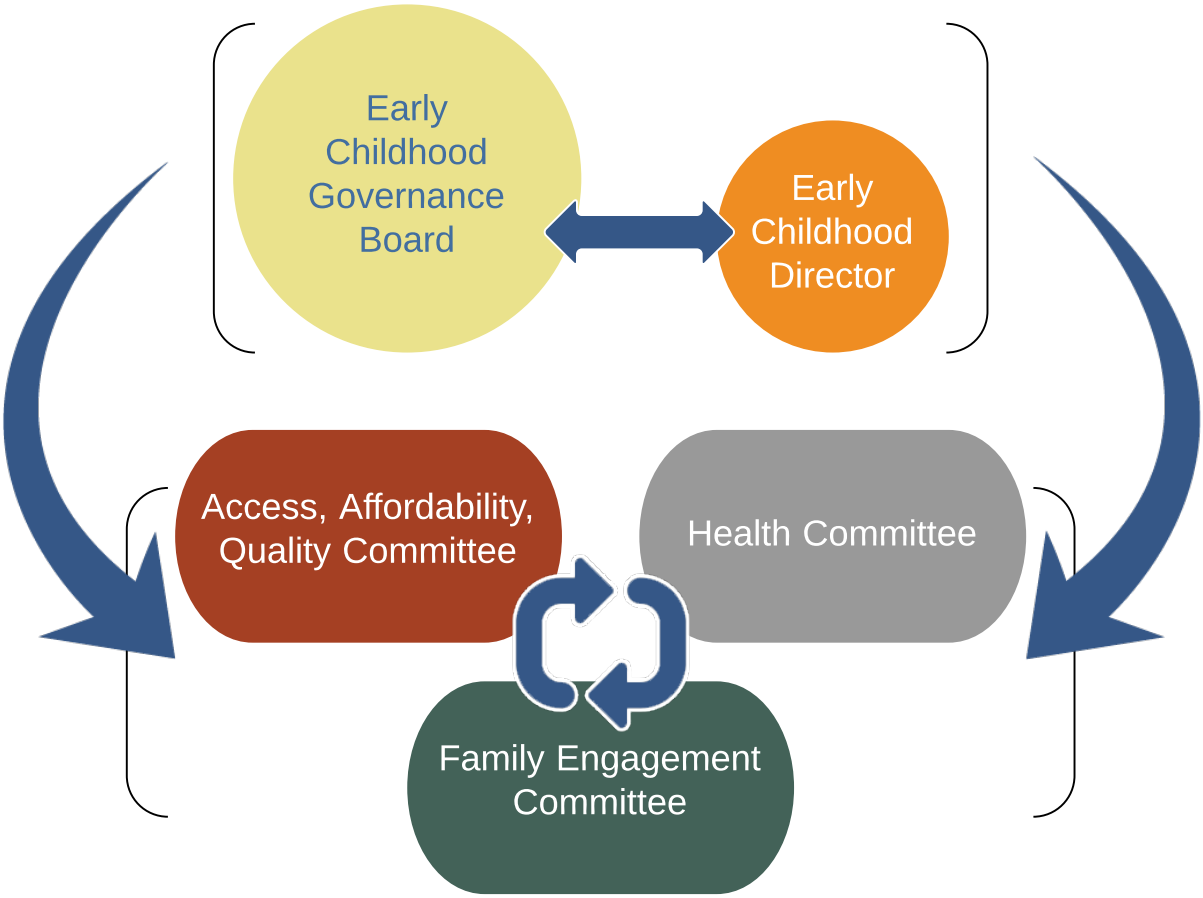
- The Governance Board and the Director will work with the three committees to develop each committee's respective sections of the strategic plan with associated budgets, targeted outcomes, and interim benchmarks.
- The Director will support the committees in the successful implementation of their respective plans, share progress updates with the Governance Board, and coordinate and integrate the work of the committees.

RATIONALE

A formal shared governance structure is needed to lead this aligned system. An early education and care "system" is a way for organizations and people to work together in a coordinated way toward a common goal for children. No one entity can do this job alone. The early education and care system is comprised of the policies, programs, and services for young children, as well as the adults who care for and teach them. It brings together the independent systems of: prenatal care; early education and care birth to third grade; health and nutrition; social-emotional development and mental health; parent and community partnerships; parenting education and resources; and professional development for professionals, families, and others.

The hallmark of good governance is the extent to which constituency groups have the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. The dialogue is open and mutually responsive as city leaders and members of the early childhood community reach insight on useful ways of comprehending and acting on the needs of children and families.

Shared Governance Infrastructure



Objective 5.3: Ensure Accountability through Evaluation, Data Systems and Reporting

Ensure that a data system is in place to collect information and track outcomes. The system should meet Cambridge's needs for accurate, timely information to support planning, decision making, and periodic reporting to communicate progress.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a comprehensive evaluation to assess the major components of the Strategic Plan.
- Propose an appropriate data system to the Governance Board to assess the data needs and benchmarks for success.

Objective 5.4: Strengthen Public Awareness and Practitioner Understanding

Strengthen awareness and commitment of city leaders, the public, and the early childhood community through public education campaigns that use effective, strategic, and evidence-based messages to deepen understanding and support for the Strategic Plan.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a communication plan that:
  - Raises public awareness of the importance of quality early childhood education and care, the birth through third grade continuum, and the work of the Early Childhood Task Force.
  - Identifies target audiences and strategies to communicate the priorities of the Strategic Plan recommendations.

Summary of Goals and Objectives

Vision: All children in Cambridge receive high quality early education and care from before birth through third grade. As a result, all children enter school ready to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally and continue to thrive through third grade and beyond.

Guiding Principals		
Whole Child	Build On Strengths	Cultural Competence
Age Range	Equity and Preparation Gap	Families as Partners & Parent Choice
	All, Some, Few	

Goals				
GOAL 1	**GOAL 2**	**GOAL 3**	**GOAL 4**	**GOAL 5**
Increase Access to and Affordability of Early Learning and Care Services	Continuously Improve Program Quality for Birth through Third Grade Services	Build Partnerships to Promote Strong Family Engagement and Support	Coordinate with Healthcare Providers to Ensure Access to Quality Healthcare Services	Develop an Effective Birth through Third Grade Governance and Leadership Structure
Objectives				
1.1 Home Visiting **1.2** Early Childhood Service and Education from Birth to Age 3 **1.3** Early Childhood Services and Quality Education for 3- and 4-Year Olds **1.4** Early Childhood Information	**2.1** City-wide Program Quality Capacity **2.2** City-wide Quality Improvement Plan **2.3** Pilot Project Lessons Learned **2.4** Transitions, Collaboration and Coordination **2.5** Provider Access to Information for Families	**3.1** Best Practices in Family Engagement **3.2** Family Participation and Advocacy **3.3** Family Support and Learning **3.4** Family Access to Information	**4.1** Collaboration on Improving Health Outcomes **4.2** Access to Quality Mental and Behavioral Health Services **4.3** Birth and Home Visiting Services **4.4** Nutrition and Active Living **4.5** Access to Information on Healthy Development	**5.1** Shared Governance and Leadership **5.2** Strategic Plan and Plan Management **5.3** Accountability: Evaluation, Data Systems and Reporting **5.4** Public Awareness and Practitioner Understanding

End Notes

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Appendix 1

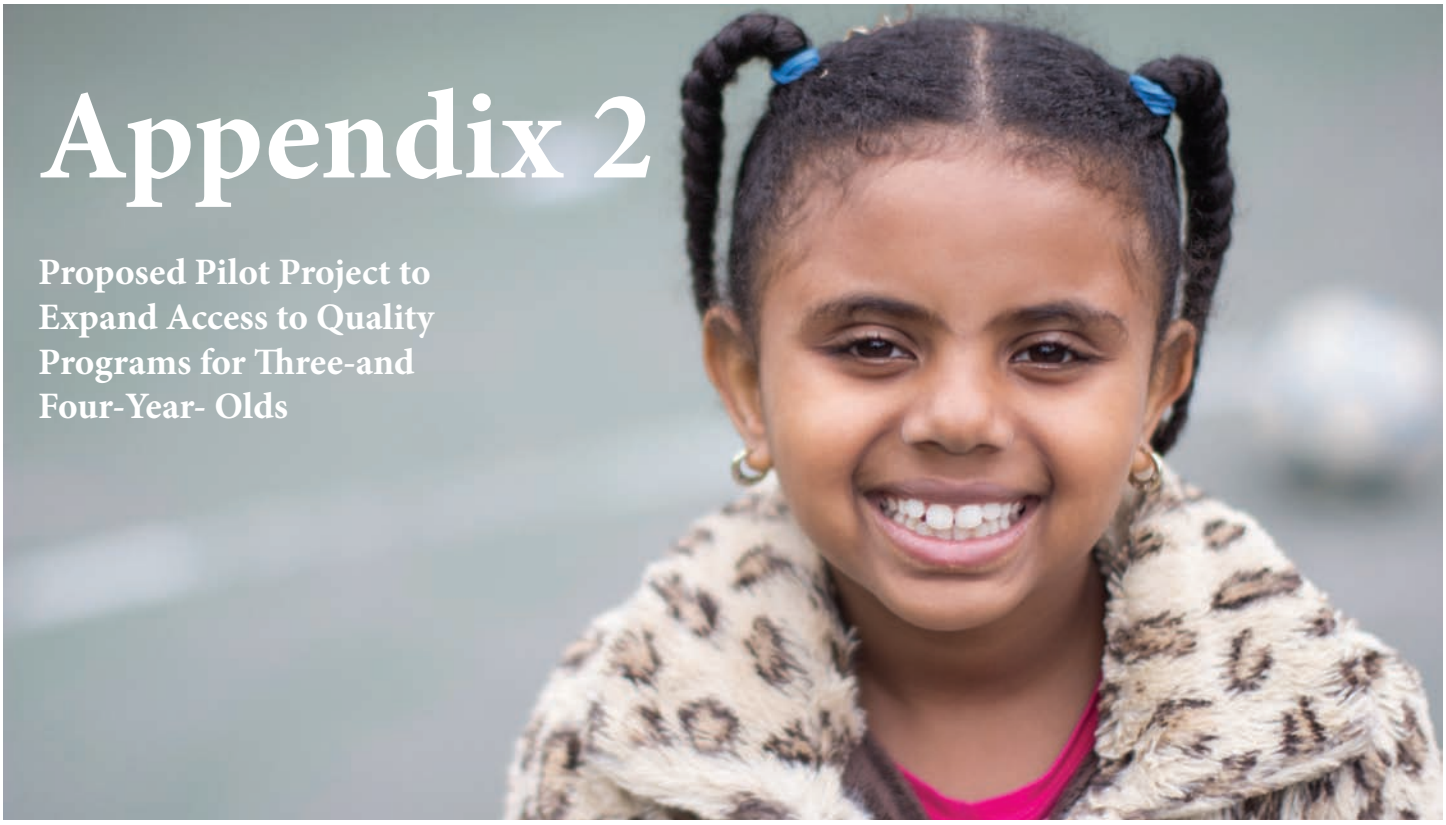
Members of the Early Childhood Task Force

Khadija Barre	Family Childcare Provider
Donna Cabral	Executive Director, Cambridge Somerville Head Start
Tina Christodouleas	Parent
Louis Depasquale	Assistant City Manager, City of Cambridge Finance Department
Katy Donovan	Director, Peabody Terrace Child Care
Fouzia Elhajli	Family Childcare Provider
Lei-Anne Ellis	Division Head, City of Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs
Bob Ettinger	Superintendent Intern, Cambridge Public Schools
Jeana Franconi	Budget Director, City of Cambridge
Mary Frawley	Family Liaison, Tobin School, Cambridge Public Schools
Mary Grassi	Coordinator, Title 1 and Home Based Programs, Cambridge Public Schools
Greg Hagan	Chief of Pediatrics, Cambridge Health Alliance
Robin Harris	Principal, Fletcher Maynard Academy, Cambridge Public Schools
Kathryn Jones	Coordinator, Birth through Third Grade Alignment Grant, Cambridge Public Schools
Maryann MacDonald	Assistant Superintendent-Elementary Education, Cambridge Public Schools
Lisa C. Peterson	Deputy City Manager, City of Cambridge
Megan Postal	Coordinator, Early Years Project, Cambridge Somerville Early Intervention, Riverside Community Care
Zuleka Queen-Postell	Parent and Liaison to Special Education Parent Advisory Council, Cambridge Public Schools
Richard C. Rossi	City Manager, City of Cambridge
Ellen Semonoff	Assistant City Manager, City of Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs
Claire Spinner	Chief Financial Officer, Cambridge Public Schools
Nan Stone	Board Member, Cambridge Community Foundation
Nancy Tauber	Executive Director, Cambridge Kids' Council
Carolyn Turk	Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Cambridge Public Schools
Jessie Wenning	Teacher/Staff Developer, Cambridge Public Schools
Jeffrey Young	Superintendent, Cambridge Public Schools

The Task Force was supported in its work by consultants with Early Childhood Associates, Inc. under the direction of Linda Warren, and David Jacobson of Education Development Center (formerly with Cambridge Education, Inc.).

Appendix 2

Proposed Pilot Project to Expand Access to Quality Programs for Three-and Four-Year- Olds



One approach to expand access to high quality programs for three- and –four-year- olds is the proposed Pilot Project in Objective 1.3. The Task Force recommends that the Pilot have a multifaceted approach based on research and informed by models that have proven successful in other cities and states across the country. Elements of the Pilot, which should be tailored to the needs of Cambridge, could include:

- Select two to four center-based programs as Pilot sites. They should meet quality criteria (to be determined), be willing to make space available to three- and four-year-olds on a sliding scale basis, and commit to participating in an evaluation of the model.
- Adopt a common child assessment and a quality rating scale to inform individual program practices and support children's learning and development as well as to build common metrics across center-based providers.
- Provide each Pilot site's leaders and program staff with professional development that integrates training, coaching, and Communities of Practice. The focus of the professional development will be to increase capacity to:
  - Use evidence-based practice in the design of high quality environments, effective interactions, instructional practices;
  - Plan and implement instructional activities tied to core competencies or early learning standards and where children apply concepts and skills in a variety of contexts;
  - Foster children's emotional well-being;
  - Engage families.
- Extend training and technical assistance to non-Pilot center-based programs on using evidenced practice approaches in the design of high quality environments, effective interactions and instructional practices so as to improve quality across the system.

Appendix 3

Glossary of Terms

0-8 Council, comprised of public and private providers and parents, promotes the healthy development of Cambridge families and their children, prenatal to age 8. The Council was introduced in the 1970s as the Early Childhood Education Committee appointed by the Superintendent and broadened its scope in 2001 as the 0-8 Council.

Agenda for Children Literacy Initiative, a free program based at the Cambridge Public Health Department, works with parents and caregivers to support the development of children's language and literacy skills so that new kindergartners will enter school ready to learn how to read and write. Staff and Literacy Ambassadors offer parent maternity ward and home visits, workshops on oral language development (Let's Talk . . . it makes a difference!), reading with young children, and storytelling. In addition, it collaborates with the Cambridge Public Library to send all newborns a "Born to Read" bag and with the Center for Families to facilitate playgroups and Story Walks. Elements of its award winning program have been replicated in various communities across the country.

Agenda for Children Out of School Time (OST) Initiative aims to ensure the highest quality OST opportunities and experiences for all Cambridge children, youth and families. The Agenda for Children convenes, catalyzes and supports Cambridge's youth serving community to collectively develop and implement common purpose and goals, share data and ways to hold each other accountable, with a shared vision of equitable opportunities for youth and collaborative access to resources and supports. The Initiative is a Cambridge Department of Human Services program.

Baby University is a free program dedicated to ensuring that: 1) low-income parents have access to the knowledge, resources and support needed to foster the healthy development of their children and 2) children in Cambridge enter Kindergarten ready to learn. Parents complete a 14-week Core Program before joining the Alumni Association, which supports the family until the youngest child transitions into Kindergarten.

Birth through Third Grade Alignment Leadership Team, an initiative funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, is charged with aligning curricula, instructional practices, assessments, transitions, and professional development across all sectors that serve children before and after they enter elementary school in Cambridge. The team is comprised of 30 members, including early childhood educators, mental health providers and representatives from the Cambridge Department of Public Health, Somerville-Cambridge Head Start, the Cambridge Public Schools and the Department of Human Service Programs.

Cambridge Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), written by the Cambridge Public Health Department, is part of a city-wide effort to have a nationally accredited health department. CHIP aims to make tangible progress in four priority health-related areas in Cambridge over the next five years.

Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs (DHSP) provides services for adults and seniors, families, children and youth ages 2.9 to 18. It also provides fuel assistance, summer food programs, recreation and overseas the Commission for Persons with Disabilities. DHSP purchases services for residents who need extra support: homeless, mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, legal assistance, and specialized services for newcomers and linguistic minorities. The department provides high quality full day full year preschool, after-school programs that offer project-based learning curriculum linked to CPS learning strands, enrichment programs, summer camps, parenting education and support to residents. Baby University and the Center for Families provide parenting education and support.

Center for Families (CFF), funded by city and state grants, was created by the Kids' Council in the early 1990s. CFF offers Cambridge families with children birth to age 8 an array of parent education and support programming facilitated by multi-lingual staff, including parenting education workshops, parent-child activities, support groups and fathers' groups, information and referrals to community services and support services for families when needed.

Community Engagement Team (CET) is a multi-agency City-funded collaborative that reaches out to underserved Cambridge families and connects them to community events and resources, develops community leaders, trains outreach workers, and supports agencies in working with a diverse community. CET offers parent workshops in multiple languages.

Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant (CFCE) is a Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care competitive grant whose goal is to build and strengthen local infrastructure of supports and services for families with young children, especially those experiencing multiple risk factors. Grant priorities include: community-based information, transition supports birth to age 8, family education and literacy, and early and out-of- school educator training.

Educator Provider Support (EPS) Grants have been awarded to regional professional development partnerships across the Commonwealth. Each EPS partnership is responsible for providing professional development support services and opportunities to early education and care and out of school-time educators and providers (programs) in its region. The EPS grant focuses on three core areas of the professional development system: educator and provider planning, coaching and mentoring, and competency development. EPS grant and PD services also include career and academic advising, CEUs and college courses.

FindItCambridge.org (www.finditcambridge.org) is an initiative of the City of Cambridge's Kids' Council in partnership with Code for Boston. The goal of the website is to make it easier for parents and other caring adults to find the broad array of activities, services, and resources that are available for children, youth and families in Cambridge. Find It Cambridge is currently being developed, and the official launch is scheduled for 2016.

Junior Kindergarten is a Cambridge Public Schools program enrolling children who turn 4.5 years old by September 1. Students who enroll in the Junior Kindergarten program will enroll in kindergarten the following year. Children must be five (5) years old by September 1 to be eligible for kindergarten.

Kids' Council, officially known as the Coordinating Council for Children, Youth and Families, was created in 1991. It is chaired by the Mayor, and its members include residents, elected officials, department heads within the City, community and non-profit leaders, business, early childhood, philanthropic, university, state agency and youth representatives. The Kids' Council is dedicated to developing policy and program recommendations aimed at improving the quality of life for children, youth and families in the city of Cambridge. Currently, the Kids' Council is developing recommendations to make it easier for families and providers to access the many resources available in Cambridge

Mixed Delivery System includes the different types of providers who offer programs and services for families and young children; for example, the Department of Human Services, the Cambridge Public School, and community-based preschool educators in center-based and family childcare settings.

Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) is the rating system for early childhood programs first developed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) in spring 2008 as a method to communicate and improve the level of quality in early care & education and after-school settings. QRIS offers guidance to professionals in early education and care and out of school time settings on a path towards quality, recognizing that higher expectations of programs must be matched with increased supports: better-articulated career ladder, financial incentives, and professional development.

Subsidized slots are awarded by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) to licensed childcare programs. With subsidized slots, a parent pays a portion of their childcare fees as determined by family size and household income. To qualify for full-time subsidized care, a family must meet certain income guidelines and have a "service need" (i.e. employment and/or attending school or an education/training program). Should the parent leave the childcare provider, the subsidized slot remains with the provider and goes to another family who meets the above mentioned guidelines. To access this financial assistance, parents must be placed on the Massachusetts Statewide Waiting List.

Vouchers from the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) are given to families through the regional Child Care Resource and Referral agency (CC&RR). With vouchers, parents pay a portion of childcare fees as determined by family size and household income. To qualify for a welfare to work voucher participants must currently be receiving Transitional Aid for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) and be referred by a DTA worker to the CC&RR for immediate access to child care. Should the parent leave the childcare provider, the voucher goes with the child to the next provider. To access this financial assistance, parents must register on the Massachusetts Statewide Waiting List.

Appendix 4

Summary of Goals, Objectives, and Strategies and Implementation Timeline

Goal	Strategy	IMPLEMENTATION BEGINS		
		PLANNING PERIOD JAN. - JUNE 2016	YEAR 1 FY 2017	YEAR 2 FY 2018
ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY				
1.1 Expand Access to Home Visiting	■ Conduct needs assessment of home visiting services ■ Improve alignment and continuity ■ Improve quality and availability		x x	 x
1.2 Expand Access to Birth to Age 3 Services	■ Improve financial support for Baby U and Center For Families ■ Investigate cost sharing for community based programs		x x	
1.3 Expand Access for 3 and 4-year-olds	■ Increase scholarship subsidies ■ Study feasibility of separating JK and Kindergarten classes ■ Pilot Project with community based programs to expand high quality, affordable pre-school		x x	 x
1.4 Expand Access to Early Childhood Information	■ Provide staff resource to FinditCambridge.org to maintain information on early childhood providers and programs ■ Train community organizations in FindItCambridge.org ■ Develop communication plan to promote FinditCambridge.org ■ Review and revise DHSP Preschool waitlist policy	 x	x x x	
PROGRAM QUALITY				
2.1 Build Capacity to Improve Program Quality	■ Create positions of Early Childhood Director and Specialist	x		
2.2 Develop Quality Improvement Plan	■ Develop city-wide plan to improve preschool program quality ■ Develop city-wide plan for professional development		x x	
2.3 Support Pilot Project	■ Provide Input on issues of program quality		x	
2.3 Improve Transitions, Collaboration, and Coordination	■ Develop/implement city-wide transition plan for all rising kindergarteners	x		
2.4 Promote Access to Information for Families	■ Train early childhood practitioners in use of FindItCambridge.org		x	

Goal	Strategy	PLANNING PERIOD JAN. - JUNE 2016	YEAR 1 FY 2017	YEAR 2 FY 2018
FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT				
3.1 Promote Best Practices in Family Engagements	■ Develop community wide understanding of family engagement ■ Convene providers to share best practices ■ Collaborate with DHSP Community Engagement Team to ensure use of culturally relevant strategies to engage parents		 x	x x
3.2 Encourage Family Participation and Advocacy	■ Develop public education campaign ■ Include families on Early Childhood Governance Board	 x		x
3.3 Increase Opportunities for Family Support and Learning	■ Conduct needs assessment of parenting education programs and ensure continuum of services to meet needs of *all, some few* ■ Ensure availability of high quality materials on early learning for families		x 	 x
3.4 Improve Family Access to Information	■ Support FinditCambridge.org (See Objective 1.4) ■ Share information on available services ■ Align work of Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant (CFCE) with Early Childhood Strategic Plan.		x x x	
QUALITY HEALTHCARE SERVICES				
4.1 Collaborate to Improve Health Outcomes	■ Establish committee to focus health of young children and families		x	
4.2 Ensure Access to Quality Mental and Behavioral Health Services	■ Support Cambridge Community Health Improvement (CHIP) Plan Goal 1		x	
4.3 Improve Birth and Home Visiting Services	■ Conduct needs assessment of home visiting services		x	
4.4 Improve Nutrition and Active Living	■ Support CHIP Healthy Eating and Active Living Priority Area			x
4.5 Ensure Access to Information	■ Expand access to information about prenatal care and home visiting on FindItCambridge.org (See Objective 1.4)		x	
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP				
5.1 Develop Shared Governance and Leadership	■ Create Early Childhood Governance Board ■ Create position of Early Childhood Director (See Objective 2.1) ■ Establish committee structure	x x x		
5.2 Develop and Manage Strategic Plan	■ Develop strategic plan with targeted outcomes ■ Ensure fidelity of implementation and monitoring of progress		x x	
5.3 Develop Evaluation, Data Systems, and Reporting	■ Develop evaluation plan ■ Determine data system to support plan implementation		x 	 x
5.4 Strengthen Public Awareness and Practitioner Understanding	■ Develop communication plan		x	

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