

Appendix B: Out-of-School-Time Programming

The Critical Role and Opportunity of Out-of-School-Time Programming

The Innovation Agenda provides CPS and the Cambridge community with a structure that creates unprecedented opportunities in the area of out-of-school-time programming for upper school students. CPS has engaged in extensive collaboration with community-based organizations serving youth over the past several years, with many positive results. However, even with all of the innovations and examples of progress, many of which will be described in this section, we still have a long way to go: many of our students are still falling through the cracks of our at-times disconnected systems of student learning and support.

Whether we will be able to create opportunities for all of our citizens in the future will depend on the degree to which we support the developmental needs of our children and youth. The middle grade years are a time when students need a unique set of supports and experiences to transition into young adulthood as strong-minded, critically thinking scholars and engaged community members. Thus, the future productivity and prosperity of today's youth depends to a very real extent on how successfully schools and community youth-serving programs can coordinate and maximize resources to meet the diverse needs of our youth throughout the whole day and whole year.

A High Quality Education is More than a Civil Right – it is the foundation needed to sustain and evolve our democracy, and the livelihood of all of its citizens.¹ We have also learned that even with policies that ensure equal access, equity for all students and families has not been the reality. As such, the stakes are too high for “education” to be the sole responsibility of just our schools. Instead city leaders, families, educators and child development practitioners should align to commit to a common vision and model of supporting shared students in a more strategic and seamless fashion, across the city and calendar year. This would allow for us to ensure that all children be better able to reach their potential as literate, creative, artistic, critically thinking, confident and participating young citizens of our city.

The Current Climate in Cambridge is Conducive to Change – and ready for the cross-system culture shifts the Innovation Agenda facilitates. For example, in 2009, Cambridge established a citywide goal “to ensure broad participation of Cambridge middle school youth in quality out-of-school time experiences that foster both their present and future learning and life success.” At that time, a strategic plan called

¹ Cortes Jr., Ernesto, “Quality Education as a Civil Right: Reflections,” in *Quality Education as Constitutional Amendment: Creating a Grassroots Movement to Transform Public Schools*, eds. Theresa Perry, Robert Moses, et al. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010), 93.

Shared Youth, Shared Strategies, was published and began to be implemented to support this goal through collaborative efforts between CPS, city agencies and community partners. As with other cities that have developed cross-system approaches to supporting students' developmental needs, CPS students have begun to benefit and show gains based on the collective efforts and shared strategies.

Research Conducted in other Cities is Encouraging – according to *Hours of Opportunity*, a 2010 research study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation which focused on similar undertakings in the cities of Boston, Chicago, District of Columbia, New York and Providence, coordinating the many different institutions involved in enrichment activities—including schools, nonprofits and municipal agencies like parks and libraries. These undertakings hold the promise of making out-of-school (OST)/extended day programs better and more accessible to the urban students who need them.² The study also determined that public and private educational and OST systems/programs are able to collaborate in more seamless ways to avoid duplication and fragmentation, and build the capacity to support all middle grade students to a city's fullest capacity.³

Through the Innovation Agenda, CPS will create an innovative, state-of the art, cross-system approach to supporting the in and out of school needs of upper school students that research tells us would work, and the likes of which Cambridge has never seen before.

Listening to Students' Voices

As we plan and develop OST programming for upper school students, it is critical that we work with and listen to our students, as they can teach us a great deal about their dynamic needs and struggles. Listening to and reflecting on what they are saying and feeling will help us to consider how to create more opportunities for, and resources to, support all students. We must make use of the research and data already available to us about students in Cambridge. Some results from the *City of Cambridge 2009 Middle School Student Health Survey* can help us to understand some of their on-going challenges:

- The percentage of students who reported being at home with no adult present for 2 or more hours per night (6th: 24%, 7th: 33%, 8th: 45%); and spending 2 or more hours per night watching TV or playing video games (6th grade: 49%, 7th grade: 51%, 8th grade: 61%).

² Bodilly, Susan J., and McCombs, Jennifer S., et al., *Hours of Opportunity: Volume I: Lessons From Five Cities Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer School, and Other Out-of-School-Time Programs*, (2010). Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-242-WF, 2005. As of January 10, 2011:

<http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1037.html>

³ Bodilly, *Hours of Opportunity: Volume I*

- One in five Cambridge middle grades students (21%) reported that they felt depressed (sad or hopeless most every day for two or more weeks in a row) during the 30 days prior to the survey. Fewer students (8%) reported that they stopped doing at least some of their usual activities at home, in school, or elsewhere because they felt sad or hopeless for two or more weeks in a row.
- More than a quarter of all middle schools described themselves as being overweight, 29% of females as well as 26% of males.
- Cambridge males (21%) were more likely than females (13%) to report witnessing violence in their neighborhood.
- Overall percent of students who reported witnessing violence in their neighborhood (6th grade: 13%; 7th grade: 15%; 8th grade: 22%).

Partnering Across Systems to Support Students' Achievement and Growth

Providing upper school students with structured opportunities to engage in quality enrichment activities can support students' academic performance in school. By partnering with schools and systems across our district, we can support more of our students' diverse needs both in and outside of our classrooms. Assessing and addressing students' diverse needs will be of utmost importance, and it is critical that those responsible for OST programming consult and work with school faculty, such as content coaches, learning specialists, health/fitness instructors and others.

Research shows that **when students have a healthy social-emotional foundation, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated, and to achieve academically.**⁴ The Innovation Agenda will allow for school, city, community and other youth development partners to more effectively support our students through methods that could build their resilience and reduce their likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors.

Quality communication across systems is also critical to the success of this OST model. Research suggests that strong communication and collaboration between schools and OST programs improves children's learning experiences and social/emotional growth.⁵ To foster this collaboration, CPS and the DHSP are currently piloting the use of YARDs (with parental consent) to facilitate communication and data sharing to promote the success of shared middle grade youth. We will explore the continued and expanded use of YARDs under the Innovation Agenda.

⁴ Wentzel, K.R. (1991) as quoted in A. Wigfield, J. Ecoler, & D. Rodriguez (1998). The development of children's motivation in school contexts. *Review of Research in Education*, 23, 73-118.

⁵ Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP). (2010). *Partnerships for Learning: Promising Practices in Integrating School and Out-of-School Time Program Supports*. Cambridge, MA: HFRP. Available from [http://hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/partnerships-for-](http://hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/partnerships-for-learning-promising-practices-in-integrating-school-and-out-of-school-time-program-supports)

[learning-promising-practices-in-integrating-school-and-out-of-school-time-program-supports](http://hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/partnerships-for-learning-promising-practices-in-integrating-school-and-out-of-school-time-program-supports)

Successful Partnering Models are Currently Showing Promise

A flourishing example of a CPS cross-system project that has impacted middle graders at the Kennedy-Longfellow is the *Green in the Middle* initiative. Through this project science teachers at the Kennedy-Longfellow School are partnering with Wheelock College, East End House Middle School Partnership Program (MSP), City Sprouts and Grow Native Cambridge to expand their students' understanding of biodiversity and ecosystems by taking a hands-on approach, and going out into the community to gain an in-depth understanding of the ecosystem in which they live through working with environmental experts.

We have also been successful in growing our summer enrichment and academic support initiatives, Rise Up and RAYSE (Reinforcing Academics for Youth through Summer Enrichment). The Innovation Agenda will allow us to more intentionally expand these programs, as well as include the Office of Workforce Development to explore summer internship placements for rising ninth graders.

The Innovation Agenda will support cross-system leaders working in unison with CPS to increase the range of enrichment opportunities, like *Green in the Middle*, *Rise Up* and RAYSE available to larger numbers of upper school students. Additionally, leaders and educators both in and out of school would be able to increase each students' "intensity of participation" (the number of days and hours per week or year that middle grade students engage in quality enrichment activities/programs), as well as increasing their "duration of participation" (the length of time students remain actively engaged in the enrichment activities/programs).

The Many Benefits of Quality Enrichment

Brain research tells us that when students explore and participate in cognitively demanding activities and clubs – such as media production, ballroom dancing, debate teams or engineering challenges – they are more likely to boost processing speed, strengthen synapses, and expand or create functional networks within their rapidly developing brains.⁶ As we look forward to the potential of the Innovation Agenda, there should be no lack of motivation to develop and implement programs, strategies, and in some cases interventions, that could extend, connect and/or complement the school day in order to support not just the academic, but also the social-emotional and overall development of all middle graders.

The Innovation Agenda's student support and mentoring programming, for example, provides opportunities for students to build meaningful relationships with a more diverse mix of interests, ideas, talents, cultural backgrounds, peer/affinity/gender groups, and so importantly, caring adults who would be able to connect and build

⁶ Begley, S., "Can You Build a Better Brain?". *Newsweek*, 3 January 2011: <http://www.newsweek.com/2011/01/03/can-you-build-a-better-brain.html#>

trusting relationships with them. Through collaboration with the OST staff, this program could involve both in-school and non-school partners.

Research has suggested that when middle school youth have substantial engagement and participation grounded in a developmental approach, it helps them avoid self-destructive behavior. Students could be exposed to specialists from different fields matching their interests and developmental needs, and structured initiatives could be set up so that students were able explore issues of personal and cultural importance, while learning from resources currently available in their communities through multiple models such as: service learning, internships, peer-teaching models, team-building, media literacy, co-op business models, project-based learning, identity and character introspection, civic engagement, realistic goal setting to enhance self-efficacy, career and college readiness and community assessment projects.

A more extensive range of enrichment experiences would be able to support a broader range of student learning styles. Students would benefit and build self-esteem from the increased personal attention from adults, positive peer groups and activities that could hold their interest and engagement.⁷ It would provide excellent opportunities for students to benefit from differentiated instruction approaches “out” of their classrooms, and students struggling to stay engaged in school could benefit from less traditional learning experiences.⁸

Other Benefits of the Innovation Agenda

Having significant numbers of upper school students evenly distributed across four upper school campuses that share the same school starting and ending times increases the district’s capacity to develop and coordinate a more diverse set of high quality enrichment activities specifically designed for 6th-8th graders. We know that students who are engaged beyond the in-school core subjects also demonstrate greater social and emotional competency, engage less in risk behaviors, and become more physically active, enhancing their present well-being which can foster future life success.⁹ The same bell schedule will allow more upper school students to participate in better-structured athletics, arts, clubs, internships, mentoring and many other programs – both within our district and possibly with other middle school programs across the public and private school Greater Boston landscape.

There is little doubt that the Innovation Agenda will lead to better use of non-school hours, which are often an untapped resource in supporting upper school students in

⁷ Vandell, et al. 1996; Garmezy, 1991; Rutter, 1987; Clark, 1987; Masten, et al. 1990; Comer, et al., 1984; Werner, 1993; Halpern, 1992; As reported in Miller, 2003.

⁸ American Youth Policy Forum. (2007). Strengthening afterschool for older youth through policy and practice: A policy brief. 10 January 2008. From: <http://www.aypf.org/programs/briefs/AfterschoolPolicyBrief2007.pdf>

⁹ City of Cambridge, *Blue Ribbon Commission Report on Middle Grade Youth*, (2009), 10.

their transition to the ninth grade. As a charter member of the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), CPS benefits from being part of a peer group of multiracial, suburban-urban school districts, and a network of administrators and researchers who are examining and implementing models and policies to support the achievement of all students. One strategy that multiple MSAN districts (including Madison, Wisconsin, Arlington, Virginia, and Evanston, Illinois) are using to increase the preparedness of their students for success in high school is to run summer transition programs for their rising ninth graders. Such a program would be a tremendous asset to Cambridge students. As part of the OST planning process, we will explore the possibility of designing such programming with our community partners—for ninth grade students and perhaps for students at other grade levels, depending on partner support and costs.

The Planning Phase

To prepare for the launch of programming in the out-of-school-time area, CPS will engage in a planning phase, conducting research as well as to gathering diverse input from educators, other district/school models, parents and the community at-large. This process would allow for there to be deliberate inclusion of many voices in order to effectively strategize about how to best design, implement and support an innovative OST program for upper school students. This process would also provide an opportunity to enhance relationships with universities, businesses, museums, arts institutions and others with which quality partnerships could be developed to support systematic approaches to serving the diverse needs of CPS middle graders.

The Innovation Agenda’s OST planning effort would build upon the extensive and persistent cross-system planning initiatives, committees and strategies that have been intensifying for the past three-plus years, and that have led to the development of two Blue Ribbon reports centered on Cambridge’s middle grade students and youth as well as the *Shared Youth, Shared Strategies* report commissioned by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. A list of potential planning partners for this work is included below.

Possible Planning Partners	Organizational Description	Potential Role
Cambridge Public Schools, including the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School and the CRLS Extension School	CPS has a long history of commitment to providing multiple opportunities for students to grow and succeed, and to that end has worked extensively with city and non-profit agencies to expand the opportunities for our shared students to gain the complex set of competencies required for success in the 21 st Century.	Khari Milner, Complementary Learning Partnership Director, and members of his team, will contribute to the planning process over the first year. Also, CPS curriculum and MIS Departments will play crucial roles.
Promethean, Inc.	Promethean (formally SynapticMash, Inc.) offers learning management	Promethean's LearningQube technology is the foundation

	<p>systems and programs based on its LearningQube platform that empowers schools with an environment for creative expression, curriculum management, data collection, as well as intelligent research results through virtual classrooms, assessments, gradebooks, and attendance record-keeping; and infrastructure services.</p>	<p>upon which the Cambridge Youth And Resource Development system (YARDs) is built. Promethean is an ongoing partner in our continued development of functionality within YARDs to support student centered learning across the city of Cambridge. Promethean's input and foresight in the technology area will be helpful to ensure that YARDs is positioned well to support the plans that are developed.</p>
<p>Cambridge Office of Workforce Development (OWD)</p>	<p>OWD is a division of the City's Department of Human Service Programs. OWD operates a number of programs to expose students to various careers and help prepare them for the world of work. OWD also coordinates the Reaching All Youth Committee, a group of school and community-based staff who work with teens. The group convenes monthly to share resources and increase collaboration across programs.</p>	<p>At the request of the high school principal, OWD is currently coordinating a working group to develop a series of foundation modules based on 21st Century Skills that will be required for all freshmen. The framework currently being developed will inform the planning process. A related effort is underway to identify the 21st Century Skills that young people develop through participation in out of school time programs. Both efforts support a vision of involvement of community-based staff in the delivery of content to high school students and, ultimately, to awarding graduation credit for skills acquired through participation in quality, community-based programs.</p>
<p>Cambridge Agenda for Children Out of School Time Initiative</p>	<p>The Agenda for Children (AFC) Out of School Time (OST) Initiative is responsible for the coordination of a professional development and quality improvement system internal to programs and in partnership with schools and families for the more than 40 city run and community based OST programs in the city. The AFC Initiative is governed by an interdepartmental leadership team representing all of the youth serving city departments. The AFC has been the recipient of Nellie Mae grants</p>	<p>The Agenda for Children's governance and key staff are responsible for overseeing continuation of the intensive partnership work occurring with the middle school grades that has begun this year. In concert with the growth of the plan into the high school years outlined in this grant application, the Agenda will maintain focus on the success of the full implementation of the <i>Shared Youth Shared Strategies</i></p>

	<p>supporting the development of a strategic plan and the implementation of that plan, <i>Shared Youth Shared Strategies</i>. The work is mobilizing the critical partnership between the school and OST communities towards deepening student centered support for all middle school youth to ensure each child's future success.</p>	<p>plan. It is our belief that shifting the culture of success at the middle grades is imperative to seeing success for young people in the high school years and beyond. We are additionally committed to beginning the process of addressing directly the transition from 8th grade to 9th grade to ensure success and sustainability of learning in the development of new routines in the middle grades.</p>
<p>Out of School Time (OST) Leaders Group</p>	<p>The OST Leaders Group is a coalition of the OST organizations who serve children K-8th grade. This eight year old group is convened by the AFC coordinator and has collaborated over time prioritizing and addressing shared concerns including; setting quality standards, advocating for the field, building a case through data collection, defining the evolving OST system, deepening the partnership with the schools and increasing service delivery to children most in need.</p>	<p>The OST Leaders Group will provide continued leadership in the city both to the OST community and in continuing the partnership development with the Cambridge Public Schools. The Leaders Group will be focused on the transitions from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school supporting the systems' future design development by continuing to take collective responsibility for on-going quality improvement and increasing youth participation and retention in programs during the middle and high school years.</p>
<p>City of Cambridge Department of Human Services Program</p>	<p>The Human Services Department provides educational, social, enrichment, and recreational services for residents from birth to senior citizens, providing services to more than 5000 residents including more than one/half of all families with children and youth enrolled in the Cambridge Public Schools.</p>	<p>The Department through its Youth Centers serves several hundred middle school students and over 500 teens and through its Mayor Summer Youth Employment Program provides employment to over 900 teens each summer. Through the planning process, we will deepen our partnerships with the schools to support student centered learning and enhance curriculum linkages and the sharing of student work. We will also leverage our relationships with families to link them to this planning process.</p>

<p>Middle School Network</p>	<p>The Middle School Network (MSN) is a collaborative of organizations that offer middle school-specific OST programs and services. An outgrowth of the <i>Shared Youth Shared Strategies</i> plan, MSN’s purpose is to promote greater participation, mobility and diversity of experience for Cambridge middle school youth in quality OST activities in order to foster present and future learning and life success. Data collection and sharing is key to MSN’s ability to track participation and assess impact. In addition to facilitating enhanced OST opportunities across the city, MSN also shares and builds on best practices for engagement with families and schools.</p>	<p>MSN is uniquely positioned to develop and share best practices for supporting middle school youth both in middle school and as they transition to high school. MSN is also a key conduit for sharing information across the network and with families and schools. As MSN develops its data-sharing capacity, it can share best practices with all partners.</p>
<p>Office of the Mayor</p>	<p>The City’s Mayor is the Chair of both the City Council and the School Committee, the two governing bodies for the City of Cambridge.</p>	<p>The Mayor also appoints special commissions. The former Mayor, Denise Simmons, appointed the Blue Ribbon Commission for Middle School Youth Services. The 30 member body participated in strategic planning in 2009, funded by Nellie Mae, resulting in the <i>Shared Youth Shared Strategies Plan</i>. The plan was adopted by both the City Council and School Committee. The current Mayor, David Maher, was a member of the Blue Ribbon Commission, as a City Councilor, and is carrying the work forward under his new leadership.</p>
<p>Wheelock College – Aspire Institute, and other college/university partners such as Lesley, MIT, Simmons, Tufts, Harvard (see one Harvard-affiliated project described below)...</p>	<p>Aspire Institute has a mission to advance knowledge and innovative solutions in response to social and education challenges. Their work focuses on mobilizing the expertise of Wheelock and community partners to promote effective social and education policy, practice and research in Massachusetts and across the country.</p> <p>Through strategic collaboration they:</p> <p>Innovate - developing new, evidence-based and sustainable program models</p> <p>Inform- crafting strategic plans and</p>	<p>Aspire Institute already has a successful history of working with Cambridge in a cross-system planning capacity. They were contracted to facilitate the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle Grade Youth, and then composed the <i>Shared Youth Shared Strategies</i> report that summarized the Commission’s findings and recommended next steps. We are currently implementing the first year of a multi-year plan based on these recommendations and Nellie Mae has awarded us a one-year grant</p>

	<p>policy reports for decision-makers</p> <p>Facilitate- convening community partners and experts to problem-solve</p> <p>Document - assessing what works at Wheelock and beyond to improve social and education outcomes</p>	<p>to leverage and invest in these efforts.</p>
Cambridge School Volunteers	<p>Cambridge School Volunteers is an independent, non-profit organization that recruits, trains, and supports more than 900 volunteers who provide 45,000 hours of service each year to children in the Cambridge Public Schools each year. The organization works closely with employees from many local companies and public service/government agencies, as well as staff and graduate students from MIT and Harvard University.</p>	<p>Cambridge School Volunteers will provide the perspective of how volunteers can be integrated into out-of-school time activities, as well as what role corporations and universities can play.</p>
East End House, Inc.	<p>Originally established in 1875, East End House is one of Greater Boston's earliest social service centers. The agency currently offers nationally accredited Child Care and School Age Programs; a Middle School Out of School Time Program; a division within the agency called Generating and Evaluating New Adventures in Science After School (GENASAS), dedicated to interactive science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curriculum; Middle School Mentoring Program; Youth Development Activities; an Emergency Food Program; community building activities; resources and referrals, an Infant Necessities Program; and Senior Programming.</p>	<p>East End House's Middle School Program is a year round collaboration with the Cambridge Public Schools and the Cambridge Department of Human Service Programs. The Middle School Program is focused on preparing youth academically and socially for high school and beyond. This includes STEM curriculum which is the focus of project-based classes that reinforce school day concepts and expose youth to careers in the field. All activities are student driven, and rigorously evaluated internally, through the use of evidence-based tools, and externally by outside researchers. East End House will offer the perspective of out of school time and how programming can strongly align and support school day learning. This alignment includes connecting curriculum to MA frameworks, and intensive, multi-layered communication with Middle School teachers and</p>

		staff.
Minority Student Achievement Network	The Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) is a national coalition of multiracial, suburban-urban school districts that have come together to study achievement gaps that exist in their districts. With strikingly similar and disturbing disaggregated achievement data, racial disparities on an array of achievement outcomes demonstrate wide gaps in performance between students of color and their white peers.	MSAN could provide examples of research that could inform some of the learning models that we seek to create, enhance and increase the engagement and success of under-achieving and/or disinterested students both in and out of school. Also, we could learn from other models being implemented in other MSAN districts that are focused on tackling similar issues as Cambridge including how to work across systems to help the important transition from 8 th to 9 th grade be successful for all students.
Members who served on the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle Grade Youth	Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Middle School Youth—comprised of school department staff, human service providers, elected officials and families—completed a strategic planning process over the winter and spring of 2009. This process began with a comprehensive environmental scan to develop a full picture of Cambridge middle school youth—e.g. demographic characteristics, unique learning and developmental challenges, and available city resources.	Continued and enhanced support in the three areas of focus outlined in the SYSS Report, and now being implemented in part with support from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation: 1. Community Awareness and Outreach—Strategies to improve information about OST programs for youth, families, and schools 2. Service Delivery and Coordination –Strategies to track enrollment, target services, and improve access across programs, schools and neighborhoods 3. Quality Improvement— Strategies to support OST programs in offering rich, developmentally appropriate and challenging learning and social experiences

The Innovation Agenda: Supporting Students' High Expectations for Themselves

Nationally, 88% of 8th graders expect to participate in some form of post-secondary education.¹⁰ Similarly, earlier this school year 142 CPS 6th-8th graders attending Middle School Partnership programs (King Open/Frisoli MSP, Kennedy-Longfellow/East End House MSP and Peabody/Gately MSP) anonymously self-reported that they “definitely will” (72%) or “probably will” (26%) graduate from high school and go to college.¹¹

It is our responsibility to empower our young people so that they can achieve their goals, and the Innovation Agenda’s OST Programming is a key strategy in meeting this commitment. As we move forward, developing programming in this area, let us be guided by the wisdom within this poem:

Five Basic Needs , Author Anonymous

I need to be seen.

I need to be heard.

I need to be respected.

I need to be safe.

I need to belong.

When all of my needs are met...then...

I am ready to learn.

¹⁰ VENEZIA, KIRST, ANTONIO, *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations*, Stanford University Bridge Project, 2005.

¹¹ National Institute on Out-of-School-Time, Wellesley College, *Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes – Youth Version*, Fall 2010.