

Attachment 3

Excerpt from the City of Alexandria, Meeting Minutes of Saturday, May 17, 2014 of the Comments from the Public Hearing on the Alexandria Children and Youth Master Plan and Written Comments

(A copy of the City Manager's report dated May 9, 2014, is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 5; 05/17/14, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

The following persons participated in the public hearing for this item:

- (1) Timothy Peterson, 202 Russell Road, Chair of the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan and recognized all those present in support of the plan.
- (2) Mary Beth Testa, 3212 Holly Hill Drive, Falls Church, Virginia, representing Voices for Virginia's Children, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (3) Glenn Hopkins, 1224 Princess Street, representing Hopkins House, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (4) Mary Rood, 418 South Washington Street, representing the Campagna Center, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (5) Gwen Mullen, 213 Wilkes Street, 213 Wilkes Street, Executive Director of the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (6) Susan Newell, 101 West Linden Street, representing the Alexandria Social Services Advisory Board, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (7) Tammy Mann, 418 South Washington Street, representing the Campagna Center, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (8) Dr. Basim Khan, 2 East Glebe Road, Medical Director of Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (9) Pat Harris, 1715 Dogwood Circle, a tutor for the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (10) Ellen Kelly Holland, 215 Gibbon Street, a tutor for the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.
- (11) Khareem Almo, 3802 Brighton Court, a tutor for the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium and parent, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.

(12) Allen Lomax, 5021 Seminary Road, #730, representing the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.

(13) Masharia Holman, 3307 Coryell Lane, representing the Alexandria Community Services Board, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.

(14) State Delegate Rob Krupicka, 409 East Alexandria Avenue, spoke in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilmember Lovain, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried 6-0, City Council closed the public hearing. The vote was as follows: In favor, Vice Mayor Silberberg, Councilman Chapman, Councilmember Lovain, Councilwoman Pepper, Councilman Smedberg and Councilman Wilson; Opposed, none.

WHEREUPON, upon motion by Councilmember Lovain, seconded by Councilman Chapman and carried 6-0, scheduled the final passage of the Alexandria Children and Youth Master Plan from the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission for Wednesday, June 11, 2014. The vote was as follows: In favor, Vice Mayor Silberberg, Councilman Chapman, Councilmember Lovain, Councilwoman Pepper, Councilman Smedberg and Councilman Wilson; Opposed, none.

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5-17-14
submitted by
Pat Harris

Docket Item 14-2811

Pat Harris
1715 Dogwood Drive
Alexandria, VA, 22302
703-379-2352

Speaking as an individual without compensation in support of the Children and Youth Master Plan.

Interested as an ATC reading readiness tutor for kindergartners at Patrick Henry Elementary School.

Key Points:

The students at Patrick Henry are a prime example of racial, cultural, and economic diversity.

In the past two years, I have worked with ten students -- eight different ethnic groups with all the differences you would expect in family situation, English mastery, food likes, holiday celebrations, and favorite cartoon characters.

They do have one thing in common: this is their very first exposure to any type of educational program.

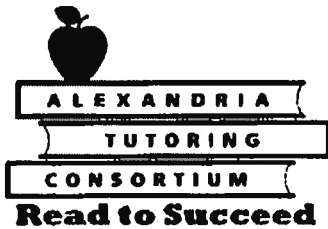
This is not because the adults in their lives don't care -- they all want desperately for their children to succeed. In my experience, it is because they were unaware of the importance and availability of pre-school programs or had been frustrated or even turned away when they had tried to find programs.

We need the coordination and outreach described in the Plan to find these families and their children as early as we can. We need the focus on awareness and on access.

We cannot wait for them to find us. We have to find them by coordinating with the organizations represented here today. With flyers in rental management offices, rec centers, grocery stores. Posters on the sides of busses. Maybe airplanes towing banners.

If we can find them early and get them prepared, the pay-off will be huge. We need to give it our best shot.

I'll end with a bit of good news and a word from my sponsor. Every one of those 10 unpredictable, frustrating, wonderful children passed the end-of-year assessment with scores between 95 and 100 and marched triumphantly into 1st grade. And the plug, of course, is for the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium. For now, it is the lifeboat and it needs your support.



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5-17-14
submitted by
Gwen Mullen

Vision: Every Child in Alexandria Can Read and Succeed

Mission: To provide the foundation for future learning success by helping to ensure children in the Alexandria City Public Schools can read at or above grade level by the end of third grade

Remarks supporting the Children and Youth Master Plan by Gwen Mullen, ED, Alexandria Tutoring Consortium; member of Children Youth and Families Collaborative Commission

ATC's tutoring program is based on the research driven and proven Book Buddies program out of UVA's Curry School of Education. This means ATC staff members with Masters Degrees in reading related subjects are writing individualized lesson plans and providing materials for ATC recruited volunteers to use with Alexandria City Public Schools kindergartners and first graders who have been selected by their teachers to be tutored twice a week in literacy skills. ATC's mission is to help ensure all students can read at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Three years ago, 25% of ACPS 3rd graders were not proficient in reading on Virginia's state wide test. Each of the last two years the number was 24 %. Unfortunately, research demonstrates that if you can't learn to read by 3rd grade, you'll have a hard time reading to learn in 4th grade and beyond because 50% of the material is incomprehensible. According to the 2010 Casey Foundation "Kids Count" report, those 260 plus ACPS third graders each of the last three years are on the drop out track!

I support the Children, Youth Master Plan because I believe if we can raise awareness and inform parents of school age children and members of the community about the Plans goals and strategies for reaching them, and engage them in actively supporting the City and Schools as they implement the Plan, together, we will begin to move the needle on third grade reading. This is important because research shows that reading on grade level by the end of third grade is a reliable indicator of who will graduate from high school prepared for further education work and life.

What is it about the Plan that makes me confident that implementing it can make a difference? The Plan's vision holds a clue – "All of Alexandria's children and youth succeeding today and tomorrow." It was the young people who urged the Commission to make this Plan about succeeding today, not just in the future.

Using Goal 2 - Every child will be academically successful and career-ready - as an example of how success today is supported by the Plan, the action steps begin by putting books in every Mother and child's hands from the time they are born and continues by saying barriers that exist today that inhibit high expectations and achievement for all children must be identified and eliminated now. One of the barriers some children we tutor need help overcoming is that they have a "fixed" instead of a "growth mind set" – one tutor told the story about the child she tutored who thought her intelligence and what she could accomplish was already set in stone for life and was so relieved to find out that with continued hard work and tutoring she could learn to read and master first grade skills ... and she did. During one of their last tutoring sessions she proudly announced she was being promoted to second grade!

Chronic absenteeism is another barrier to learning success - some of the kindergartners and first graders we tutor were absent 10 to 18 days during the third quarter!

The bottom line is that the Children Youth Master Plan will motivate us to shine a light on the barriers that must be eliminated and the gaps in services that need to be filled for children and families to thrive. The Plan is a living document that outlines goals, strategies and actions that can be taken so Alexandria's children and youth can grow up 1) physically safe and healthy, 2) academically successful and career ready and 3) socially connected, emotionally secure, and culturally competent.

I support City Council adopting this Plan. It has the potential for being transformational for Alexandria's children, youth and their families.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 27, 2014

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR & MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
THE HONORABLE CHAIR & MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE
COMMISSION

FROM: COUNCILMAN JUSTIN M. WILSON

SUBJECT: YOUTH MASTER PLAN

Tomorrow the City Council and School Board will be meeting jointly to discuss, among other things, the proposed Youth Master Plan. The Plan, approved by the Children, Youth & Families Collaborative Commission, is the result of years of work by hundreds in our community. It presents a comprehensive roadmap for how we can ensure the success of our youth.

This process, and the consideration by the Council and the Board is long overdue and I am excited that we have reached this point.

As both bodies consider this document for adoption, I have some suggestions that I hope we can consider for inclusion in the approved Plan.

First, I have suggestions that apply to the Plan as a whole:

- 1) Even the best plan that the City can devise will be unsuccessful without ensuring an organizational structure and strategy to deliver upon the vision. While the language in Goal 5 touches on this important issue, I believe the adopted Plan should be even more specific. The delivery mechanism for services to our youth must be streamlined and coordinated with clear governance throughout if it is to be successful.
- 2) At least 15%¹ of the youth enrolled in ACPS reside in housing that is supported by or affiliated with the City. This gives us a unique opportunity to not only shape their success within the P-12, before-school, after-school or out-of-school environments, but nearly 24/7. It is important to include those service delivery opportunities in the Plan we adopt.

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- 3) The Alexandria Court Service Unit handles hundreds of Alexandria youth² in pre and post-dispositional settings each year. Implementing, expanding and supporting strategies designed to ensure successful re-entry of court-involved youth should be included in the adopted Plan. Maintaining and expanding existing detention diversion alternatives should be a goal.
- 4) There is no explicit reference to the need to improve the involvement of fathers in the lives of youth in our City—both physically and financially (in non-custodial situations). We have organizations with successful fatherhood initiatives. It would be helpful to support and replicate those efforts.

I have also identified specific suggestions referencing sections of the Proposed Plan:

- 1) Strategy 1.1: These services are currently provided by an array of organizations. Is there not opportunity for consolidation and better coordination? The Plan should specifically call for such.
- 2) Strategy 1.1: This section should include implicit reference to APCS School Nutrition Services, and the need to improve the health and appeal of the food provided.
- 3) Strategy 1.2: This section should include reference to the need to expand play spaces, and specifically reference the recently adopted Play Space Policy.
- 4) Action Step 1.2.1: This section should be changed so that it does not reference geography alone, but targeting populations. It should also include low-resourced families as a targeted population.
- 5) Strategy 1.2.2: This section should be modified to include the language “for low-resourced youth” after “free or low-cost.”
- 6) Strategy 2.1.1: This section should be modified to include the word “universal” prior to “access.”
- 7) Strategy 2.2.5: The language “examine the assessment practices” seems to pre-judge the cause of disproportionate representation. More appropriately, we should begin with the language “Identify the causes.”
- 8) Strategy 2.2.6: The language in this strategy seems prone to misinterpretation. It should probably be clarified. At the least, we should “Expand,” instead of “Establish,” given that I’m quite sure these mechanisms exist today.
- 9) Strategy 2.4: Action Steps 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 can be combined and consolidated within Strategy 2.1. The combined strategy should be refined to include the City piloting such a data system within our P-12 continuum. Action Step 2.4.3 should be consolidated within Strategy 2.1 as well, with “advocate” replaced with “explore.”
- 10) Action Step 5.2.4: The goal of strengthening the Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission is a good one, but I believe this language should go further, in explicating calling for shrinking and focusing the Commission.

Cc: Rashad Young, City Manager; Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager; Jackie Henderson, Clerk of the City Council; Dr. Alvin Crawley, Superintendent of Schools

² <http://www.djj.virginia.gov/pdf/AboutDJJ/DRG/Alexandria%20CSU.pdf>