



**CITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**



Department of
Human Service Programs

Afterschool Update



May 1, 2024

Human Services Committee

Executive Summary

- Recognizing the importance of afterschool care to Cambridge families, we wanted to share an update on the progress—and challenges—from this year and our vision for Fall 2024 and beyond.
- This past year, the City made significant investment in expanding access to afterschool care, helping to grow capacity both at DHSP programs and at community programs:
 - In FY24, the City invested ~\$500k in DHSP afterschool programs, growing capacity by 207 seats and ultimately resulting in an >80% offer rate for the 2023-24 lottery.
 - In addition, the City leveraged ~\$500k in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to create 65 seats for children from low-income families in community programs, who expanded capacity by 22% overall.
- While we're pleased with the overall results from the 2023-24 school year, we continue to grapple with operating challenges, such as:
 - The staffing capacity to serve all special needs students receiving offers to our afterschool programs
 - The operational complexity in guaranteeing transportation to from any school to any programs
- Additionally, there are several exciting changes coming in the 2024-25 school year that have implications for afterschool planning and operations, including:
 - Expanded school day
 - Universal pre-k through the Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP)
- Looking ahead to next year, our primary focus is stabilizing the program to adapt to these changes and to serve more special needs students.
- We are also pursuing targeted expansion in North Cambridge and a broader expansion study with our partners at the Agenda for Children to study gaps in the current ecosystem and make recommendations for long-term scalability.



Last Spring, we committed to expanding capacity by 170 seats, and we exceeded that goal for the 2023-24 school year.

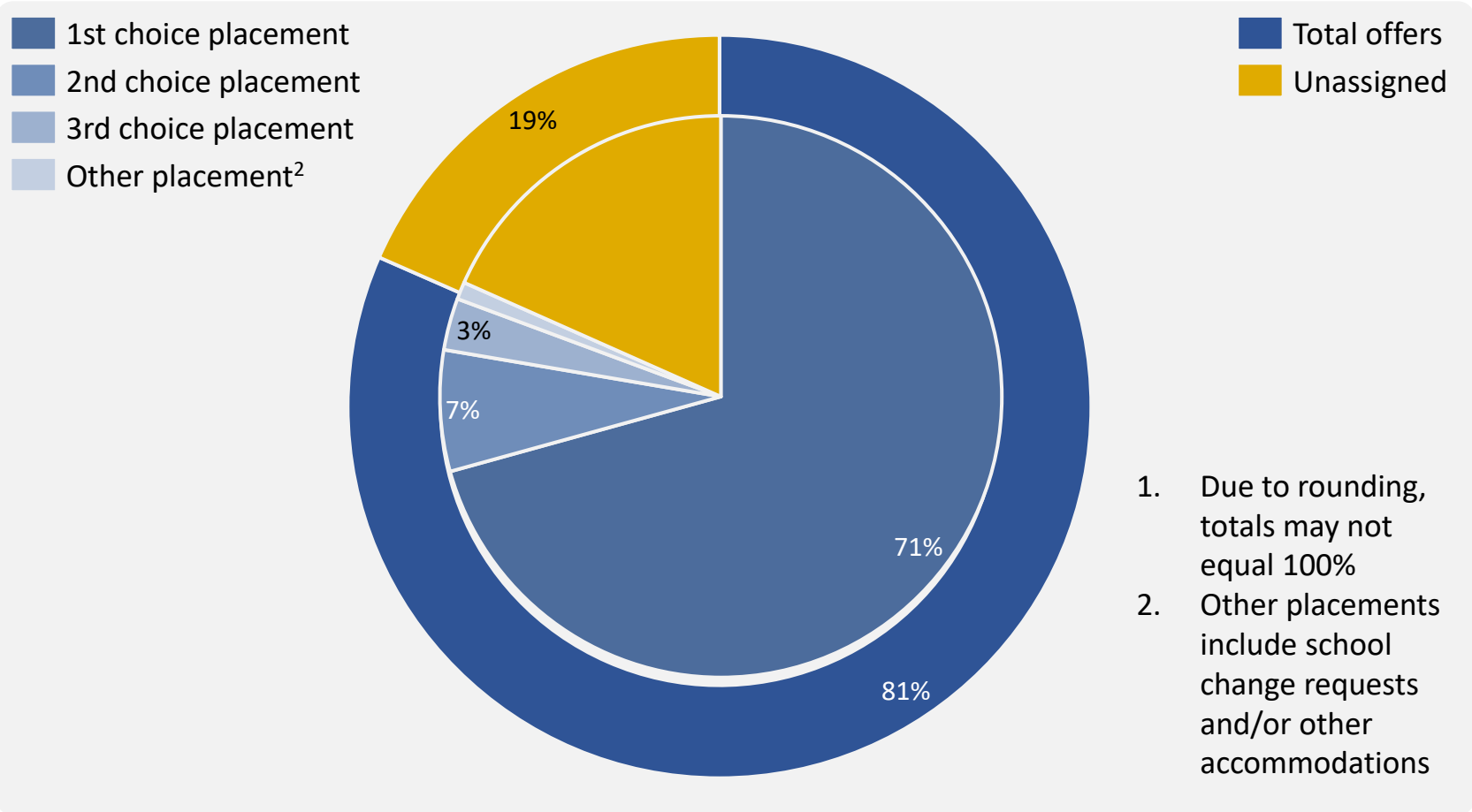
Program	Daily Seat Capacity	Net Change	Description	
Childcare Afterschool	170	0 seats +0%	No change	
King Open Extended Day	130	97	227 97 seats +75%	Increase includes 30 seats rolled over from the Community Schools program
Youth Centers	295	60	355 60 seats +20%	In the Spring, we committed to adding 40 seats for fourth and fifth graders across all sites
Community Schools	702	80	752 30 50 seats +7%	In the Spring, we committed to adding two classrooms (40 seats each); rolled over 30 seats to KEOD
DHSP Total	1,297	207 +16%	1,504	Exceeded the 170-seat target from Spring 2023

In addition, the City funded 65 seats for low-income children at community-based programs, and these organizations are continuing to fill those seats as they meet their hiring needs.



We are pleased to show that >80% of applicants received an offer through the lottery, with ~70% of applicants receiving their first choice.

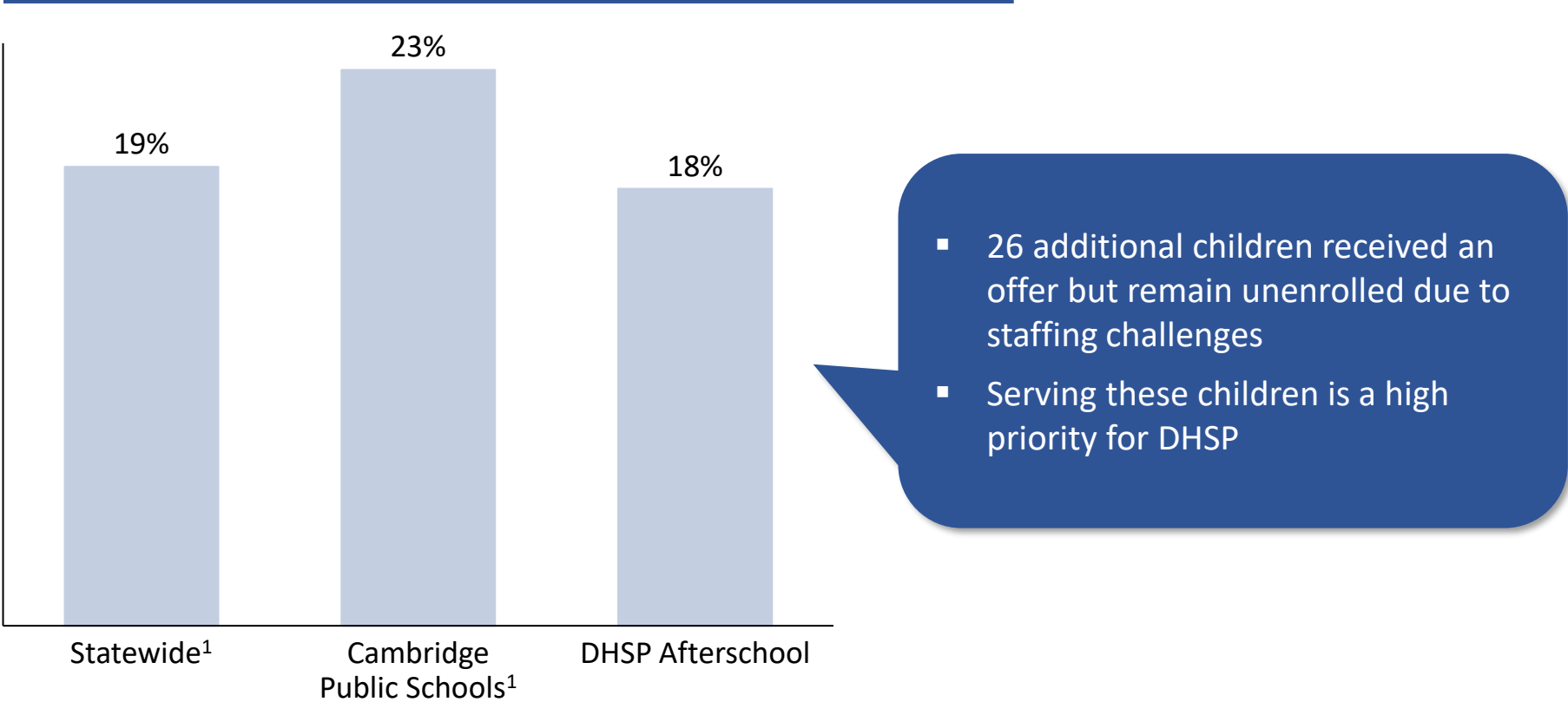
2023-24 Lottery Offers by Choice, as a Percent of Total Applicants (updated January 8, 2024)¹



DHSP aims to serve a similar mix of students with special needs as the Cambridge Public Schools, but we've had to hold enrollment for some students.

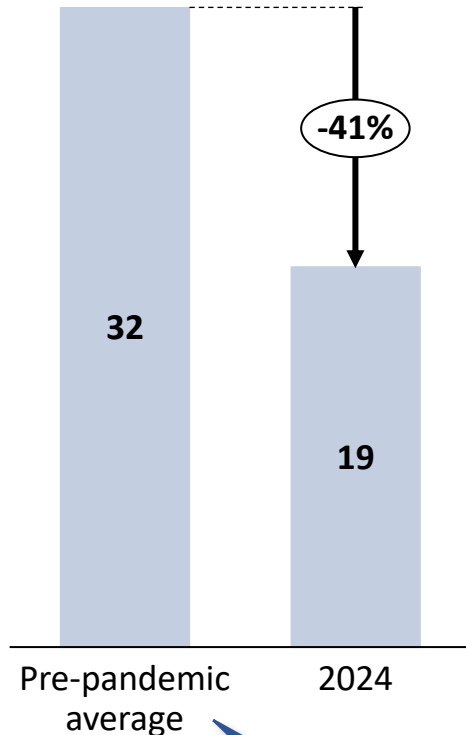
2023-24 Special Needs Enrollment at DHSP Afterschool Programs

Share of total enrollment



... Because we've seen a reduction in staff specialized to help us accommodate these students' needs.

Inclusion Facilitators Pre- and Post-Pandemic



There are two types of staff dedicated to supporting students with disabilities

- **One-on-one:** Some staff provide direct one on one support for specific students
- **Additional capacity:** Some staff provide additional capacity (above 2.5 per classroom target) so students with disabilities can participate

From 2017-2020, the number of inclusion staff ranged from 28 to 36

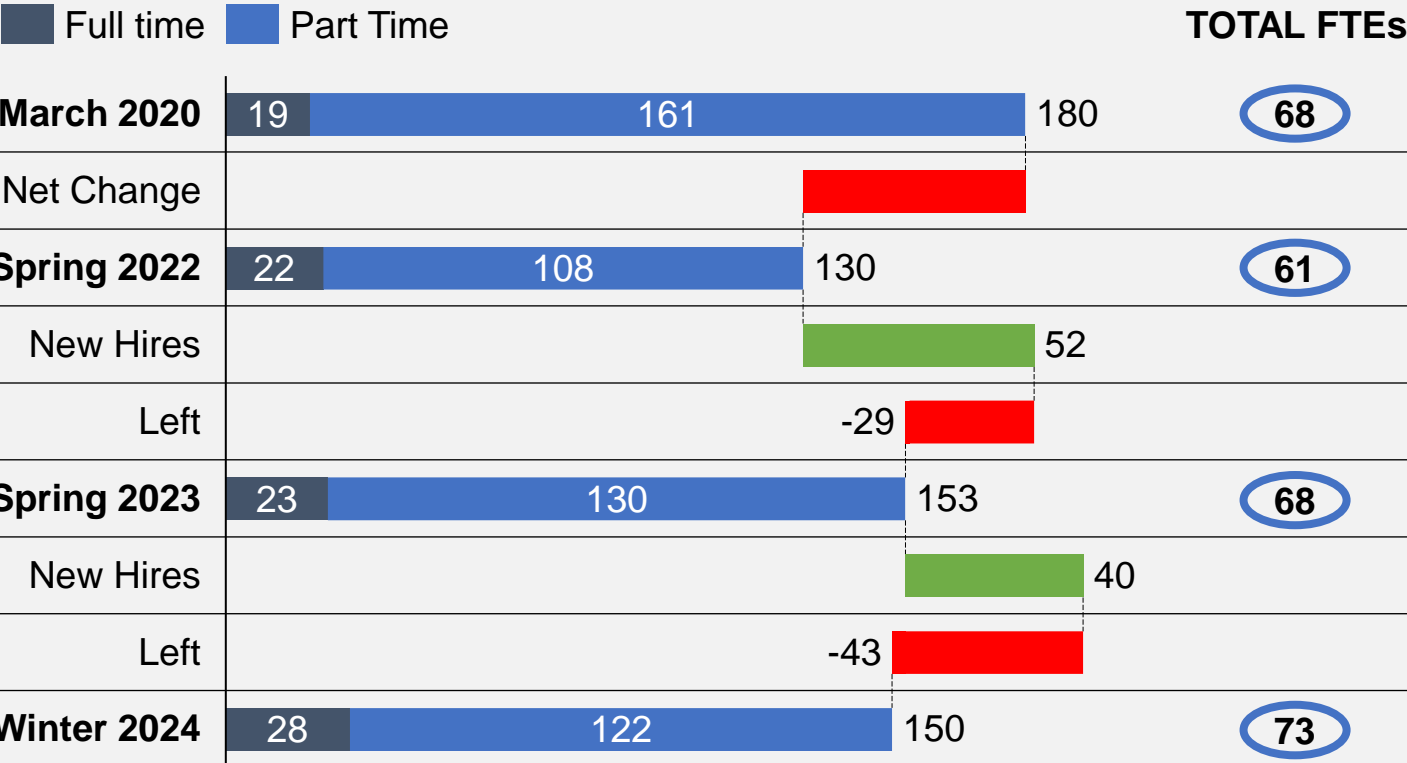


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... And although we've had some success reducing staff turnover by converting part-time roles to full-time, there's still work to be done.

DHSP Community School Staffing Changes Over Time¹

Number of employees (n)



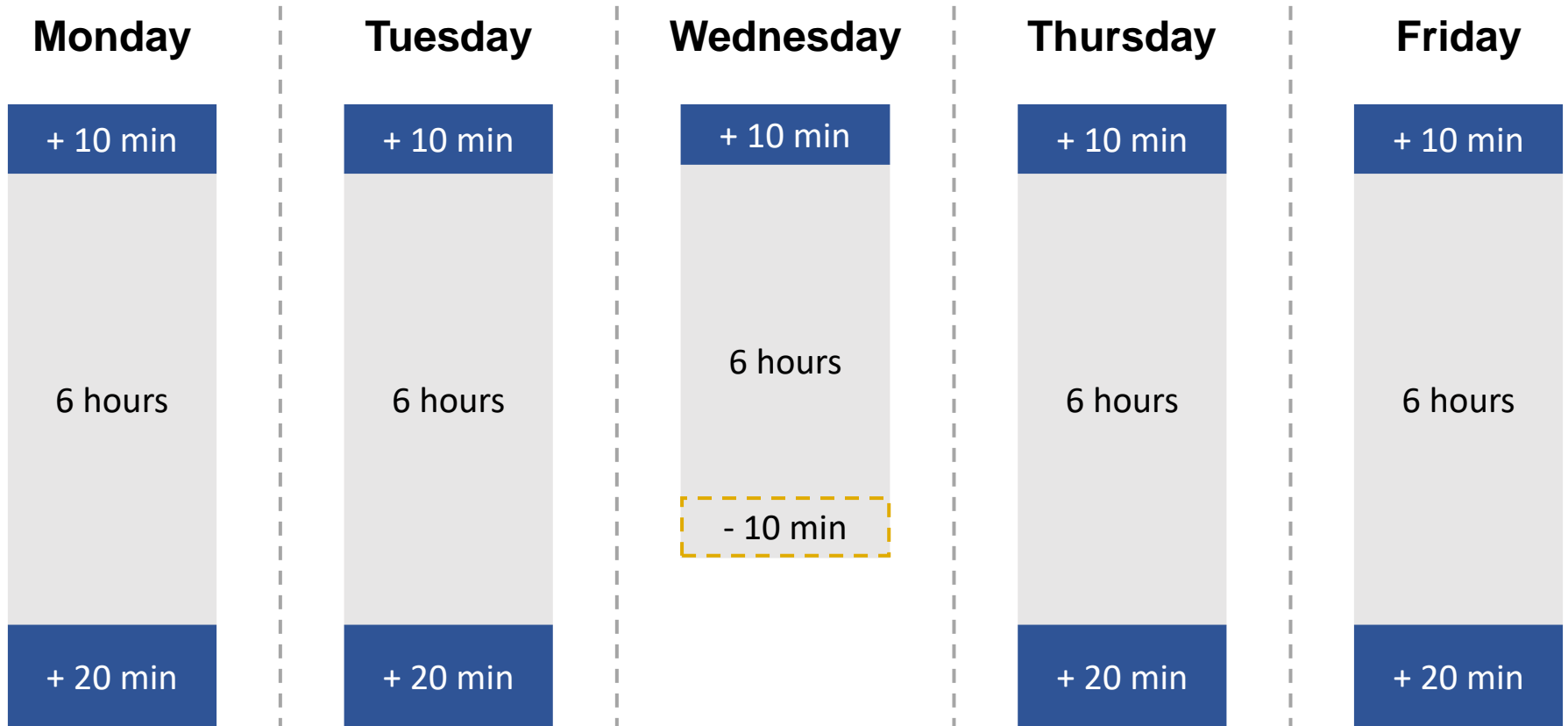
Because different sites end the school day at different times, only a subset of all school and program pairs are viable for transportation.

		Early Start				Middle Start			Late Start		Extended	
		Haggerty	Kennedy-Longfellow	Tobin	Cambridgeport	Graham and Parks	Morse	Amigos	Peabody	MLK Jr.	Fletcher-Maynard	
To...												
From...												
Early Start M/T/Th/F: 2:15 W: 1:45	Haggerty	Same			+30 min			+ 1 hr.		+ 90 min*		
	Kennedy-Longfellow	Same			+30 min			+ 1 hr.		+ 90 min*		
	Tobin	Same			+30 min			+ 1 hr.		+ 90 min*		
Middle Start M/T/Th/F: 2:45 W: 2:15	Cambridgeport	- 30 min			Same			+ 30 min		+1 hr.*		
	Graham and Parks	- 30 min			Same			+ 30 min		+1 hr.*		
	Morse	- 30 min			Same			+ 30 min		+1 hr.*		
Late Start M/T/Th/F: 3:15 W: 2:45	Amigos	- 1 hr.			- 30 min			Same		+ 30 min*		
	Peabody	- 1 hr.			- 30 min			Same		+ 30 min*		
	Baldwin	- 1 hr.			- 30 min			Same		+ 30 min*		
Extended Day M/T/Th/F: 3:45 W: 1:45	MLK Jr.	- 90 min*			- 1 hr.*			- 30 min*		Same		
	Fletcher-Maynard	- 90 min*			- 1 hr.*			- 30 min*		Same		

*Only applicable M/T/Th/F (i.e., not Wednesdays)



The Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) will launch an expanded school day for the 2024-25 school year.



As a result, afterschool programs will start later and run shorter



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... And the Cambridge Preschool Program (CPP) rollout will free up seats in DHSP afterschool programs but has implications for some families.

- 1** DHSP cannot offer afterschool for Junior Kindergarten, freeing up ~100 seats for other grades in high demand, like Kindergarten
- 2** ... But families expecting afterschool for Junior Kindergarten-aged children face a tradeoff between extended day care and automatic matriculation to Kindergarten at their preschool site

CPP program setting:	Automatic matriculation to Kindergarten?	Pre-school extended day available?
DHSP programs	No	Yes
CPS programs	Yes	No
Community-based programs	No	Most



Accordingly, we're focused on programmatic stability and operational improvements in the near-term.



Timing

- Launched the 2024-25 afterschool lottery on April 20, and will continue tweaking the lottery timeline based on feedback



Hiring

- Stabilizing staffing model by converting part-time roles, with a focus on hiring inclusion specialists to meet the needs of special needs students
- Exploring new strategies for hiring, such as temp agencies



Caregiver Feedback

- Continuing work with the Caregivers Council to incorporate wide range of caregiver feedback into afterschool planning

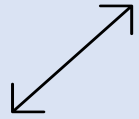


Outreach

- Enhancing outreach strategies through partnership with the Community Engagement Team (CET) and focus on translation
- Continuing to produce regular data updates on the lottery



... And we're exploring targeted expansion in conjunction with our long-range expansion planning.



Targeted expansion

- Exploring a targeted expansion in North Cambridge
- Expanding services to Kindergarteners by reallocating ~100 formerly Junior Kindergarten seats



Long-range planning

Issued RFP for an analysis of models for expanding access to high quality, affordable Out-of-School Time (OST) to children aged 5-13

- Deliverables include a gaps and needs analysis, financial scenario analysis, shared vision for the future of OST, and an action plan
- WithInsight, a social sector consulting firm, was selected with the winning bid



Thank you!



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