



## Kids' Council Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2015

5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

344 Broadway, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room

### Summary

#### *Summary of Conversation Topics*

- Shared understanding of the work of the Youth Council
- Shared understanding of the Find It! Cambridge Program

#### *Next Steps*

The group identified the following next steps (or commitments) during the meeting:

What	Who	By When
Keep Kids' Council up-to-date on Find It! Cambridge progress	Nancy Tauber	Ongoing



## **Kids' Council Meeting Minutes**

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5:15 pm – 7:15 pm

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### **Detailed Notes**

#### ***Present:***

*Mayor Maher, Neal Michaels, Tina Alu, Griffin Andres, Charlotte Avant, Lace Campbell, Jessica Daniels, Skeyler Delva, Louis DePasquale, Makayla Durant, Mary Gashaw, Dewayne Greene, Claude Jacob, Kathleen Kelly, Barbara Kibler, Lori Likis, Alanna Mallon, Kester Messan, Linda Mindaye, Matt Nelson, Jackson Otto-Moore, Rihana Oumer, Mike Payack, Olivia Scott, Jwahir Sundai, Nancy Tauber, Kabir Uddin, Jeffrey Young*

***Co-Chairs:*** Mayor Maher and Neal Michaels

***Executive Director:*** Nancy Tauber

***Content Manager:*** Mike Payack

#### ***Desired Outcomes:***

- Shared understanding of the work of the Youth Council
- Shared understanding of the Find It! Cambridge Project

#### ***Socialize, Network, and Eat:***

**5:15 pm – 5:40 pm**

#### ***Call to Order:***

**5:40 pm – 6:02 pm**

- Mayor Maher called the meeting to order
  - Welcome & Introductions
    - Round of introductions
    - Claude Jacob announced upcoming CHA partner events: Boyz 2 Men Leadership Brunch on May 29; 22<sup>nd</sup> Hoops n Health Basketball Tournament and Health Fair on June 20; Let's Move! Let's Eat! Let's Read! Events scheduled June 29 through August 14
    - Alanna Mallon described the Summer Book Bike program
      - Program added a second book bike operating in North Cambridge this year



- Community at large
  - State agency
  - University
  - Business
  - Parent
- Agenda Overview
  - Find It Cambridge Update
  - Youth Council Presentation
- Adoption of Minutes (April 16, 2015 meeting)
  - Mary Gashaw moved to adopt April 16, 2015 meeting minutes
  - Alanna Mallon seconded motion
    - Minutes adopted
- Announcements
  - Ballin' in the Bridge will take place on June 5 at 4 pm outside of Area 4 Youth Center
    - Basketball game/community event
    - Encouraging community members to attend and play
    - Youth vs City Officials
  - 2015 Kids' Council Meeting Schedule:
    - Thursday September 17, 2015
    - Thursday October 15, 2015
    - Thursday November 19, 2015
    - Thursday January 21, 2016
    - Thursday March 17, 2016
    - Thursday May 19, 2016
    - Thursday June 16, 2016
  - KC agreed to postpone June meeting until a future date over the summer

### ***Find It! Cambridge Update:***

**6:02 pm – 6:07 pm**

- Nancy Tauber provided an update
- Leo Burd won bid
  - He has a team that will design website
- Applied for Night Foundation Grant
- Leo, Khari Milner, Nancy met with Google to ask how they might help
- KC gathering subcommittee to evaluate website and promote website
- If we meet over summer, we will have partially finished product to look at

### ***Cambridge Youth Council Update:***

**6:07 pm – 7:23 pm**

- Introduction (Kabir Uddin)
- CYC Goal For The Year (Dewayne Greene)

- To find new ways to make sure youth voices in Cambridge are heard and use that information to better the lives of youth in Cambridge
- CYC events overview (Griffin Andres)
  - CYC had presence at many community events
    - CRLS Health Day
    - MLK Day of Service
    - Black Lives Matter Conference
    - Good Men Gang event
  - Mentoring Subcommittee-Mentoring Program
    - Youth 2 Youth Mentoring Program
      - First Workshop: Ice Breakers
      - Second Workshop: Mapping your academic career
      - Third Workshop: Peer Pressure
      - Fourth Workshop: Extracurricular activities
      - Fifth workshop: Building communication skills with teachers
  - (1st Event) Race and Police- Makayla Durant
    - In response to police brutality and walk out at CRLS
    - Create safe space for students and CPD to talk
    - Privilege walk
    - Facilitated group discussions
    - Recommendations: CPD and youth should interact more and talks should happen not just after brutality
  - (2nd Event) Race and Media- Mary Gashaw and Skyeler Delva
    - Goal to raise awareness of how race is portrayed in media
    - Expose racism within images and video
    - Four corners activity
    - Photo Campaign
    - Event was successful in creating a space for students to talk about these difficult issues
    - Strive for this discussion to move forward in all of our workshops
    - Recommendation: Continue this campaign (I2M)
  - (3rd Event) Race and Education- Kester Messan and Rihanna Oumer
    - Goal to raise awareness about race in education
    - Action steps: change name of “college prep” or “CP” classes
    - Knowing the difference between CP and honors and empowering students
    - Learned there needs to be more conversation about race at CRLS (even though CRLS is progressive)
    - Need to discuss class structures at CRLS and middle schools and how they can better benefit students
    - Recommendations: posse group for 8<sup>th</sup> graders at CRLS

- More control to 8<sup>th</sup> graders for which classes they take freshman year (instead of teachers choosing)
    - More workshops like this (and extend invitation to teachers and KC members)
- Mini-Workshop
  - Kabir Uddin introduced a mini-workshop similar to the ones the CYC has done in their workshops. The KC will first play “four corners” and then will have small-group discussions within each table and a share-out regarding the general recommendations established for this year
  - Jwahir Sundai explains how four corners works and encourages 1 sharing out per group at the end of each statement
  - In Four Corners, CYC members asked KC members to consider the following four statements:
    - It’s worse to be called a racist than it is to be a victim of racism
    - I have had a mentor who has positively inspired me
    - I understand the difference between CP and honors classes
    - The CP and honors system at CRLS is effective
- CYC recommendations were discussed in small break out groups
  - CYC Recommendation: Increased Kids’ Council and Youth Council Collaboration
    - What we can do:
      - Find a better way to have direct communication
      - At Kids’ Council meetings, get to know more what youth council is doing
      - Have one or two Kids’ Council members come to CYC meetings every month
      - Collaborate with student school committee members and youth council
      - Invite each other to events and attend
      - Create a purpose for the collaboration
        - Include mission, membership, and research
      - Joint workshops (ex: work with Department of Public Health)
      - Keep fostering relationships and networking opportunities between the CYC and KC
    - Benefits:
      - Both councils will pick relevant/fresh topics and discussions
      - KC would benefit from hearing from youth and vice versa
      - Interact more
      - Get to know each other more
      - Mentoring opportunities for CYC

- Challenges:
      - Youth not being engaged
      - KC members not being engaged
      - Youth don't feel connected to KC
      - CYC can be cliquy
  - CYC Recommendation: Teachers should have less influence over which courses incoming 9th graders should take
    - What can we do:
      - High school seniors should meet with 8th graders and 8th grade teachers because it will give them a different perspective and better understanding of high school and course selection.
      - More dialogue with school administration, teachers and families
      - Create a committee that works on this
      - Emily Singer wants to help
      - 8th grade teachers should be more aware of the impact they have on students when they are assigning classes.
      - Need information translated
    - Benefits:
      - Students can have a good high school start and it will continue throughout high school
      - Students will be more aware of the high school and the opportunities
    - Challenges:
      - Not every parent wants to override a decision made by a teacher
      - Not every parent knows that they have the option to override a decision made by a teacher
  - CYC Recommendation: High school students should be helping incoming 9th graders more with their transition to high school
    - What can we do:
      - Explore needs for a mentoring program – and expand
      - Learn how 8th grade teachers make course recommendations and revise where needed
      - Discuss this issue with Upper School administration
      - KC should be aware of or present when these conversations happen
      - KC should support the work of the CYC – mentoring, workshops, etc.
      - CYC should partner with other groups like Breakthrough, Work Force, STARS, etc.

- Use CET Outreach Workers to help reach out to immigrant communities
  - Benefits:
    - Youth and adults are more informed
    - Empowering children and changing the track of their lives
    - Changing power from teachers to students
  - Challenges:
    - Figuring out mentoring program structure and expansion
    - Changing attitudes
    - Negotiating the change
- CYC Recommendation: Posse
  - What can we do:
    - Talk to Damon Smith and get his feedback/advice
    - Push faculty to institute this
    - Get support behind it
    - Go directly to teachers, advisors and share its importance
    - Ask Middle School Network (Out of School Time educators) and school day teachers to suggest youth who would benefit from the Posse
  - Benefits:
    - Support system, structure for new students
    - Family to connect with and bond
    - Having relationships empowers youth to participate in class
    - Take this structure and institute in their own way – more empowerment
  - Challenges:
    - Reaching out to staff
    - Parental issues
    - Location
    - Transportation – bus
    - Kids not ready
    - Keeping kids in the program
- CYC Recommendation: I am Too campaign
  - What we can do:
    - Have KC participate
    - Social media, cpsd.us, Find It portal
    - Have adults and youth do it
  - Benefits:
    - Youth will be taken more seriously



- Long lasting
  - It will change the perception of how people see stereotypes
  - Have a photographer to show progress
  - Contagious
  - Viral
  - Showing differences
  - Breaking down barriers
- Challenges:
  - Being as inclusive as possible
  - Intersectionality
  - How people may see you – your role in society – adult/teenager
- Recap and Thank you
  - Kabir thanked the members of the Kids’ Council for their attention to the CYC presentation and communicated the hope that they Kids’ Council will take the CYC’s recommendations under consideration
  - Kabir thanked Lace Campbell and Matt Nelson for supporting CYC endeavors
- Mayor Maher thanked CYC members for their outstanding work over the past year
- Nancy thanked Lace for her great leadership of the CYC
- Lace thanked Nancy for her guidance and support

***Next Steps:***

**7:23 pm – 7:26 pm**

- Nancy will be in touch with KC members regarding Find It! progress
- Claude Jacob moves to adjourn meeting
  - Mary Gashaw seconds motion

***Meeting Adjourned:***

**7:26 pm**

## ***Attachment A: CYC Summary Document***

The Y2Y mentoring program!

Dewayne - The Y2Y Mentoring Program's goal was to help middle school students' transition to high school smoothly, and assist them with any challenges they might face, both academically and socially. We planned to do this, by offering workshops once every two weeks that would address certain aspects of the high school experience we thought they should prepare for.

Griffin - Workshops: Our workshops had the students learn about different aspect of high school life. We provided food for them, and different activities (icebreakers, high school tour, etc.). Our goal for the workshops were to get them excited and ready for high school! I think we did a good job, having them prepared for Rindge. We started with a workshop meant to establish trust within the group and facilitating connectivity within the group

Olivia - Our second Workshop focused on walking the mentees through a process of mapping their academic and personal goals during their high school career. We shared the course catalogue and went over classes of interest as well as classes that they may never have thought of.

Naia - We felt it was important to acquaint them with the social challenges they may face at the high and so we focused our third workshop on exploring issues of peer pressure. We all shared tools about how to trust oneself and remain comfortable within different social settings.

Margaux - We were aware of how full of opportunity the CRLS community is and we wanted to make sure the mentees knew how to get the most out of the wide range of extracurricular activities. In our fourth workshop we explored what activities the mentees might be interested in, and shared how to get involved.

Jack - During the fifth workshop we engaged in role play activities build communication skills with teachers. We first instructed them in good ways to interact with teachers constructively. We then used improvisation to practice what they learned in different scenarios.

Olivia - We spent time in our 6th workshop sharing personal tips about the high school. We talked about everything from where to eat lunch to which bathroom NOT to use.

What we learned: Dewayne

We learned that mentees felt that their middle school teachers had too much influence in the high course selection process. They sometimes felt disempowered and pushed away from exploring their full potential.

Through our conversations we became much more in tune with issues they faced both in and out of school such as bullying, and anxiety about high school academics.

We learned that 8th graders were very appreciative of having a chance to ask questions of and create relationships with current high school students.

Jwhair - Future recommendations:

To help close the opportunity to learn gap by working closely with students instead of teachers to ascertain what classes each student is capable of taking. Thereby, reducing the teacher prejudices that are holding students back

Explore the possibility of piloting an 8th grade “Posse Program” at one of the middle schools. This would encompass having a group of students meet on a regular basis in middle school to explore topics of importance to them and provide academic support to each other. This group could entire the high school together and be in the same homeroom.

Continuing to engage in the high school community by inviting 8th graders to our community conversations next year and giving them special time with us for specific Q&A that relates to them.

### **Race and Police Workshop (L+M)**

**Goal:** Responding to the many incidents of police brutality, specifically in Ferguson and our school’s walk out we wanted to facilitate a structured conversation to raise awareness about issues pertaining to race and the police. We hoped to create an understanding and break down any barriers between youth and police to foster a positive relationship between youth and the police in Cambridge.

**How:** We mainly used a discussion style for this event. We made sure to have a mix of police officers, city officials, and students at each table. We chose to start off the workshop with a privilege walk so everyone in the room could visually see where they stood, and how it corresponded with others in the room. Our goal for the privilege walk in the beginning was to show students that they might have more in common with some of the police officers than they originally thought, and vice versa. Afterwards, we facilitated group discussions, and we had guiding questions on each table, but allowed groups to take it in their own direction. Afterwards each group shared out their takeaways. Then we wrapped up the workshop with another privilege walk to highlight the commonalities within the groups.

**Learned:** We learned both the police and students seemed to share many of the same views about the relationship between police and youth mainly in other states. Students acknowledge that police officers make efforts to interact with students in Cambridge, but more efforts can still be made. We didn’t expect such a large turnout, so for our next workshops that’s something we were able to plan more for.

**Recommendations:** Police officers should interact more in high schools and the youth centers. Also, these talks shouldn't just occur in the aftermath of police brutality, but interactions between officials and students such be much more common. If there is a stronger relationship built between police officers and students, then when they see each other in the community it will be a much more pleasant experience for all. Expand the conversations: talk to other police (Transit police, security officers, etc) because we interact with them as well. Host more events (even having the police take the lead).

### **Race in Media Reflection**

**Goal:** Through raising awareness about how race is portrayed in the media we will

- validate people's personal experiences
- give people tools and skills to combat the messages in the media

**How:** We achieved this goal through the videos and multiple discussions we had. We confirmed that we are not what the media says we are but instead, we are much more and that we are human. The images and videos that we showed are straight from the media and exposed the racism. We were able to think more critically as a result and understand these messages. At the end of the workshop, we took pictures of each person and how they defied the stereotypes of the media which we plan to post these around the school. To spark discussion, we had small group discussions about race in media to give people the chance to share thoughts on a personal level. We then opened it to the group in a whole discussion and a four corners activity asking people where they stand on certain issues.

**What we learned:** We learned that the structure we had in this event was successful in creating a safe environment to talk about difficult topics. Also, the upsetting stereotypical ads we showed during the event were taken very seriously despite their "funny" intentions. That there were some white students who didn't feel comfortable with participating in the photo campaign because of the different personalities they can embody because of how expansive white culture is.

**Recommendations:** We should make an "I Too Am CRLS" campaign that goes beyond stereotypes and shows that we are all unique and human. This campaign has been successful in Harvard and many other universities across the world.

### **Race and Education Presentation**

**Goal:** Through raising awareness about race in education, we will jump start a series of discussions that will result in action steps

- Changing how much of an impact teachers have on what classes students take

- Changing name of CP
- Knowing the difference between the classes
- Empowerment of youth voices when making decisions about their education

**What we did:**

- Gallery walk where people wrote how societal portrays people in terms of the education system
- World cafe (tables with specific topics) discussing the following themes....
  - A. OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN GAP (ACHIEVEMENT GAP)
  - B. SELF-SEGREGATION
  - C. DIVERSE CLASSROOMS
  - D. TRACKING (EDUCATION)
- Showed videos that commented on the education system and how the issue of racial prejudice has impacted it

**What we learned:**

- The need for more conversation about race at CRLS
- The need to reform some of the class structures at CRLS/middle schools to benefit students more
  - Tracking (Cp vs. HN)
  - 8th grade teacher class recommendations

**Recommendations:**

- 8th grade teachers should not have complete control over the classes that 8th grades take in high school
  - Students should be more educated about the high school and the types of classes that are available
- 8th graders create a support group to travel through the high school together.
- Creation of a group of high school students that visit the middle schools and provide insight into the high school experience
  - One visit to the high school is not enough

**Next year:**

- Have more workshops continuing the conversation of race and education
  - Extending the invitation to teachers