

City of Alexandria
Council Strategic Planning Meeting
Goal #4 Meeting 1, November 11, 2009
Meeting Recap

Goal 4: *“Alexandria is a Community with Public Schools Amongst Northern Virginia’s Best and Where Our Recreational Programs Provide Youth the Opportunity to Succeed.”*

Meeting Purpose: To bring staff members from different City departments, agencies and non-profits together to participate in a structured planning exercise regarding Goal #4 of the City Council strategic plan.

Meeting Owners: Councilwoman Alicia Hughes and Councilman Rob Krupicka

Facilitator: Jim Spengler, RPCA Director

Attendees: Becky Griesse, Lisa Baker, Mike Mackey, Leslie Clark, Mike Gilmore, Suzanne Chis, Margaret Orlando, Ulysses James, Sherry Brown, Tom Gates, Mary Anne Weber, Helenmarie Corcoran, Ronald Frazier, Cathy David, Sharon Shackelford, Sheryl Gorsuch, Donald Hayes, Rose Dawson, Alisa Carrel, Robin DeShields, Jack Browand, Karen Hughes, Sharon Annear, Roberta New, Dennis McKinney, Debra Collins.

Meeting Format: This meeting used a structured planning format. Structured planning is a method to generate ideas in a limited time frame from a group of participants. All ideas are valued and accepted without criticism or comment from other participants. The group tries to build off earlier ideas presented to generate additional thoughts. The exercise needs to move quickly without interruption to maximize the value of time allotted to planning. There were three rounds of idea generation. The outputs were objectives, measures, and initiatives related to Goal #4 over the next 3 to 5 years. After each round participants voted for the top three ideas in the category.

Ideas generated:

Category 1- Objectives: The major objectives of the City regarding Goal #4 over the next 3 to 5 years. Responses were grouped by the participants to develop themes for the ideas.

***Support the emotional, physical and academic needs of families (8 votes).**

- Strengthen and support Alexandria families.
- Strengthen parent/child connection.
- Strengthen families to care for children.
- Employment opportunities (1 vote).
- Reduce poverty (1 vote).

***Children Safety (8 votes).**

- Children know who to call for help
- All children are water safe
- Children are safe
- Keep all children safe

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***Provide academics, the arts and athletics for Alexandrians at every age (7 votes).**

- Increase student use/participation in recreation, sports and arts activities.
- Provide equitable access to the arts.

***Develop educational and recreational programs for out of school time (6 votes).**

***Improve school readiness (5 votes).**

- Quality preschool for all.

Single idea suggestions for objectives receiving no votes:

- Educate for the future
- Create community schools
- Eliminate low birth weight
- Reduce summer learning loss
- Reduce underage drinking
- All inclusive services
- Establish kids first core principle
- Reduce generational gang involvement
- Provide adult educational opportunities
- Reduce juvenile delinquency rate
- Match every child up with a caring adult volunteer
- Have no child grow up in a shelter
- Enhance alternative educational opportunities
- Provide prevention and intervention for families
- Increase access to health care
- Align City Schools and non-profit service in a 0-20 strategy
- Improve school attendance rate
- Provide alternatives to higher education – vocational, technical training
- Increase access to safe and affordable child care

Category 2 – Initiatives: Most important initiatives for the Goal 4 objectives to implement the objectives. Responses were grouped by the participants to develop themes for the ideas.

- Create city-wide study to determine how many children have unmet needs due to disabilities (1 vote)
 - Treat 90% SED kids in the community (2 votes)
 - Emotional disorders treated in community (1 vote)
- **Create mentor programs (4 votes)**

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- Evaluation of existing services (2 votes)
- Create community schools
- Combining of child welfare and child mental health programs (1 vote)
 - **City-wide parent education program (5 votes)**
 - Parent leadership institute
 - Mentoring programs for parents
- Cross sector work groups (1 vote)
 - **Develop comprehensive youth master plan (8 votes)**
 - Provide programs that offer the arts, athletics, and fitness opportunities (3 votes)
 - Celebrate youth achievement
- Identify a revenue stream for youth services and programs including scholarships (3 votes)
 - Business/city initiative (1 vote)
- **Improve communication (4 votes)**
 - Single point of entry for all youth services (1 vote)
 - Generate training and retraining for public and private staff
 - Enhance a one phone # child hotline as a resource
 - Compile a directory of existing programs
 - Collaborative marketing campaigns
- **Coordinate school time and out of school time programs (4 votes)**
- Support the Center for Alexandria Children (3 votes)
 - Reduce underage substance abuse (3 votes)
 - All 4th grade students pass a learn to swim program (1 vote)
- Adopt and implement State definition of school readiness
 - Create early childhood center on ACPS properties (2 votes)
- Focus on services for children in licensed homes (3 votes)
- Improve quality of all early childhood opportunities
 - Increase scholarship opportunities
- Expand Virginia preschool initiative (1 vote)

Category 3 – Measures: Most important performance measures for Goal #4 objectives/initiatives. Responses were grouped by the participants to develop themes for the ideas.

- Number of parents in a mentor program matched to a peer (2 votes)
- # of families out of poverty - #employed (2 votes)
- Increase graduation rate (3 votes)
- Decrease child abuse and neglect (3 votes)
- **Risk behavior survey (5 votes)**
- **Increase program participation – science/evidence based programs (5 votes)**
- **% of children participating in after school programs (5 votes)**

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- **Reading achievement (4 votes)**
- # of childcare facilities with a QRS rating (2 votes)
- Quality preschool participation rates (3 votes)

Ideas organized by objective, initiative and measure

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- Quality preschool for all.
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