**3.31.22 UPDATED DRAFT:**

**—----- START —----**

**Date:** [Enter Date]

**To:** [Mayor Lungo - Koehn](https://www.medfordma.org/mayor2/)

mayor@medford-ma.gov

**From:**  [Your Name

Your Email or Address]

**RE: Expanding After-school for Working Families - Medford’s top priority**

*“ I have lived and owned a home in Medford for 12 years. This is the biggest issue that I have.” - Testimonial from March 2022 survey*

*“ I don't want to see our neighbors moving away because schools are not supporting them.” - Testimonial from March 2022 survey*

Dear Mayor Lungo - Koehn,

I am writing to request that you put expanding after-school for working families at the top of your priority list. There is an engaged and growing population willing to support whoever can contribute to solutions to solve this problem. Many families are currently taking on the burden of providing their own solutions or trying to solve this problem piecemeal - we believe the city can and should take the lead in solving this problem.

We would like to see you leverage city resources to:

* Substantially expand enrollment in the Medford Public Schools before- and after-school programs
* Locate city-owned facilities that can provide space for private non-profit after-school care
* Connect private for-profit providers with affordable, privately-owned space
* Forecast future growth of Medford child population and the associated demand on school resources
* Provide more transparency regarding the after-school lottery and waitlist size, and early outreach for parents of rising kindergartners highlighting available options (e.g. flyers at daycare, city/school website, etc.)
* Ensure equitable access to care across income levels and geographical regions

Medford continues to grow and after-school care lags demand - here are the numbers to prove it. In 2022 there are fewer students in Medford after-school care than in 2018, 2019, or 2020. While enrollment has declined, demand has increased substantially. In 2019 there were 50 families on the waitlist. Today there are 144 families on the waitlist and over 78% of new applicants did not get into the program (all values from public records received March 24, 2022 and March 12, 2021). For further data see the attached survey responses.

The lack of after-school care has enormous negative consequences for Medford.

* It puts an immense burden on working families that leads parents, mainly women, to leave the workforce or work part-time to care for their kids
* Children are being enrolled in private school simply to access after-school care, thus removing funding from the Medford school system
* Families are choosing not to live in Medford or considering moving away
* Families are finding individual private solutions – reducing resources that could be going to Medford, strengthening the social vibrancy of group child care, and the connections built through these programs. We point to our new library as a great example of how a community center can benefit the city.

To keep this letter brief, I have only scratched the surface of the angst and groundswell coming from your constituents. Attached you will find testimonials from over 70 families who have been impacted by Medford falling short in its obligation to serve its people.

We believe that finding a solution would be a major win for Medford. We believe that championing a solution would be a major political win for whoever is ready to lead the charge.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

[Your name] Parent and Voter *or* Supporter of Parents and Voter in Medford, MA

[YourAddress]

**ENCLOSURE**: [LINK TO TESTIMONIALS](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NyEYHnet2CCF-l6mVt03OFNA_p5tty_7/view?usp=sharing) (Also attached)

Example Testimonials

*“I want to support the Medford public school system. But because we did not get a spot in the aftercare lottery, we chose private school. I’m saddened not to be a part of the public school community.” Testimonial from March 2022 Survey*

*“We just moved to Medford and we’re shocked to hear from local friends about the limited options for after school at Brooks. Had we known this it may have affected our decision to move to West Medford with a plan to attend MPS vs communities with robust and easy access after school programs for their public schools.” Testimonial from March 2022 Survey“*

*I want my children to be raised in a thriving, multicultural, multiracial society. If only families with "afternoon nannies" or Au Pairs or stay at home parents can survive here, it's not a place that I want to raise my children.” - Testimonial from March 2022 Survey*

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**Optionally, you can CC any of these address to broaden the message to our city officials that we are asking for leadership at this time to solve this pivotal systematic issue**

CC: [Superintendent](https://www.mps02155.org/about-2/central-administration/): medouardvincent@medford.k12.ma.us

 [Assistant School Superintendent for Elementary](https://www.mps02155.org/about-2/central-administration/):sgalusi@medford.k12.ma.us

[Director of Family & Community Engagement:](https://www.mps02155.org/about-2/central-administration/) mfidlercarey@medford.k12.ma.us

[Office of Before & After School:](https://www.mps02155.org/about-2/central-administration/) before-afterschool@medford.k12.ma.us

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[School Committee](http://www.mps02155.org/about-2/central-administration/medford-school-committee/):

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