

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
Application for Planning Grant from the Promise Neighborhoods Program
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.215P.
Absolute Priority 1: Proposal to Develop a Promise Neighborhood Plan

Planning for a Community that is Designed for all Children to Thrive

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II. ABSTRACT NARRATIVE *(Please also see ED Abstract Attachment Form in e-Application)*

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Boston's Promise Initiative (BPI)

Since 1984, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) has made tremendous strides as a model of engaging the community in the physical revitalization of our area, now the Promise Neighborhoods Program allows us to mobilize 26 years of effective social capital and resident leadership to fundamentally change the systems that impact the educational and developmental outcomes of our children. Dudley is home to 7,407 households (22,753 individuals). It is rich in cultures and languages with a diverse population of 38 % African Americans, 29% Latinos, 25% Cape Verdeans, and 7% Whites. Families with children under 18 years old represent almost half of Dudley households (twice the Boston average). 38% of children live below the Federal poverty line.

DSNI has an impressive history of carrying out complex data-informed initiatives. For example, we have used innovative tools such as 1) the creation of the largest urban land trust in the country, 2) redevelopment authorities such as eminent domain and 3) a master plan for re-zoning and land use decisions, to transform 1,300 vacant lots into an urban village.

Ten years ago, DSNI and five other community-based organizations joined together to form the Boston Parent Organizing Network, a group dedicated to organizing Boston's parents, students, families, and others to work for the improvement of public schools. For the first time, community based organizations linked their neighborhood successes to the challenge of underperforming schools and in improving the quality of education that Boston children were receiving. With the continued challenge of underperforming schools and the widening of the achievement gap, we have learned that working to strengthen schools alone will not create the impact needed for improved academic outcomes. Today, Boston has aligned all efforts to remove barriers to graduating from college and succeeding in life for students in its most distressed communities. Boston's Promise Initiative (BPI) provides an unprecedented platform for us to leverage the capacity we have built to date and coordinate the resources and policies that support evidence-based programs and practices to make a significant difference for students and our communities.

Our BPI partners include: 1) City of Boston; 2) Boston Public Schools; 3) Boston Police Department; 4) Commonwealth of Massachusetts; 5) Barr Foundation; 6) the Boston Foundation; 7) Boston School Committee; 8) University of Massachusetts Boston; 9) Roxbury Community College; 10) DotWell; 11) Black Ministerial Alliance; 12) Action for Boston Community Development; 13) Suffolk Construction/Red and Blue Foundation; 14) Boston After School and Beyond; 15) Thrive in Five; 16) Private Industry Council; 17) Project Hope; 18) Children's Services of Roxbury; 19) Orchard Gardens K-8 School; 20) Dearborn Middle School; 21) Museum of Science; 22) Boston Children's Museum; and 23) Artists for Humanity.

As a collaborative planning effort, members BPI will hold each other mutually accountable for the work. We will add locally developed community indicators to those required by the grant, and align with other data collection and analysis efforts across the City. This will provide ease of data integration and comparability during our scale-up efforts. BPI will focus on two schools within the Dudley neighborhood—the Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School (750 students) and the Dearborn Middle School (300 Students). Dearborn plans to restructure as a high school which allows us to focus on an academic pathway from grades K-12.

Boston is ready to join the country in an effort to coordinate high quality program that help our children success and communities transform.

II. PROJECT NARRATIVE

By the time President Obama was sworn in on January 20, 2009, his vision for the creation of high-quality projects that would transform neighborhoods was already well known. Understanding the new Administration's commitments to community and to place-based solutions, Boston's educational, philanthropic, political, business and faith leaders began to plan for what would eventually become the Promise Neighborhoods Request for Proposals. This preparation took many forms, including dialogue across neighborhoods and among leaders, the careful study and analysis of best practices locally and elsewhere (most notably, multiple visits to the Harlem Children's Zone by many philanthropic, faith-community, civic and nonprofit leaders), the development of newly organized communities of practice, and the identification of factors that compound to create Boston's most distressed neighborhoods. With the multiple efforts to prepare, Boston quickly found itself investing in new initiatives that makes it a strong applicant for supporting a place-based solution. The entire City has come together to support this application for a Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grant.

The new infrastructure, or scaffolding, upon which *Boston's Promise Initiative* (BPI) planning will build starts with the creation of the **Circle of Promise**, a geographic area in the heart of the City of Boston, identified by School Superintendent Carol Johnson and Mayor Thomas Menino as containing some of the city's most challenged schools and disadvantaged communities. At the center of the Circle is the Dudley Street Neighborhood. We are neighborhood that has valiantly waged a resident-led effort to revitalize our community. The Dudley Neighborhood has at the same time the needs and the capacity to be an ideal promise neighborhood. Like the Circle of Promise that surrounds it, Dudley has tremendous resources and assets which, when joined together, form the foundation for breaking the cycle of poverty and inequality. In the Boston Promise Initiative, Dudley

will establish the model for a place based solution that can be expanded throughout the rest of the Circle of Promise.

“One of the unique things about Boston is that we have so many programs serving a wide variety of needs, from after school programs to community health centers,” Mayor Menino said February 2010. The City’s initial inventory found over 140 community, government and nonprofit organizations within the Circle that operate mostly independently of one another, making it a challenge for families to navigate the system.

To help capitalize on the possibilities presented in the Circle of Promise, the City of Boston and the Boston Public Schools have come together with all of the city’s leading public charities and many of Boston’s foundations in a partnership called the Opportunity Agenda, with a community-wide goal of achieving greater opportunity and economic mobility for Boston’s young people and adults.

Together, the members of this historic public-private partnership are committed to strengthening the comprehensive education pipeline that spans early childhood care and education through post-secondary achievement—with the ultimate goal of making Boston a place where upward mobility occurs for large numbers of people now living in poverty. In June 2010, the Opportunity Agenda announced a major new public investment of over \$27 million from private and public sources, all directed at ensuring that Boston’s youth graduate from high school and are prepared for success in college and beyond.

Our region’s wealth of universities and colleges are also stepping forward (see our MOU for details) by improving outreach, admissions support, academic supports and other programming to ensure that students don’t just *enter* college, but also graduate with a certificate or a degree.

All of this is bolstered by a strong new Education Reform law that significantly enhances the degree of control that schools – especially those in trouble – have over their own resource allocation and decision making.

This proposal outlines a process by which residents and partners within the Dudley area of Roxbury and North Dorchester will harness this confluence of opportunities by planning and ultimately implementing place-based strategies as a first stage in delivering on the commitments of the City's Circle of Promise. In so doing, we will ensure that all of the area's 8,646 children achieve educational success. BPI will expand to the existing Circle of Promise, and as we expand, the Opportunity Agenda and numerous community based organizations will support our continued effort and scalability.

A. NEED FOR PROJECT

THIS SECTION ADDRESSES ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #1

Founded in 1984, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) is an innovative, high-performing, holistic community change collaborative in the Dudley area of Roxbury and North Dorchester (part of Boston, MA). Twenty-six years ago, Dudley residents came together to halt the devastation that resulted from policies and practices that included redlining, discriminatory federal mortgage products, urban renewal, arson, disinvestment, and neglect. At that time, half of the land in the center of the neighborhood (a 64-acre area) was vacant, filled with the rubble of burnt homes and the region's illegally dumped garbage. Residents led, and continue to lead, a dramatic revitalization process. As Dudley's community planning convener, DSNI approaches neighborhood transformation comprehensively, creating synergy among economic, social, human and physical development entities.

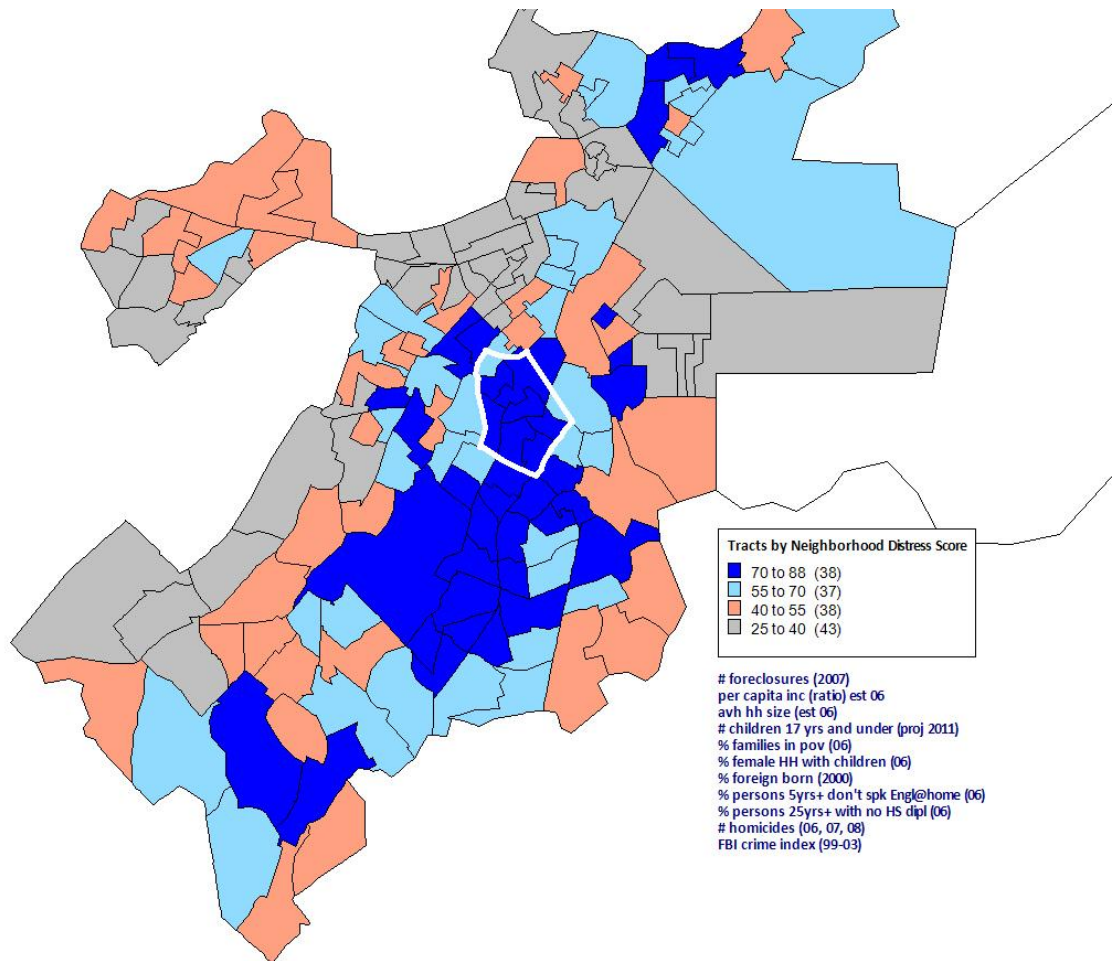
In spite of dramatic progress, the Dudley community is a prime candidate for an intense, integrated child-success oriented effort. Through the Boston Promise Initiative (BPI), DSNI will build on our considerable progress in engaging residents, institutional partners, the school district, and community-based organizations in a shared effort to create a vibrant urban village in which we brake the cycle of poverty and where neighborhood children excel in school. This will be no small challenge for Dudley or for the Circle of Promise as we scale-up.

In March 2010, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released its list of “Level 4” Schools, which are schools that have been designated by the state as significantly underperforming over several years. Twelve Boston Public Schools (BPS) are among the 35 schools statewide designated as "Level 4." This designation allows districts to utilize the new tools granted in the landmark education reform law that was passed in January 2010. These tools include the flexibility to change staffing and work conditions considerably. Boston will use the flexibilities that the new law allows to make significant changes in the 12 "Level 4" schools in the district. The district has undertaken extensive diagnostic and transformational work at these "Level 4" schools, known locally as *Turnaround Schools*, including recruiting new leaders and putting in place immediate supports for students that range from vacation and summer academies to Saturday schools. BPS is currently working in conjunction with DESE and local stakeholder groups to create turnaround plans for each of these schools. In order for students to make the necessary rapid progress, BPS will need the most effective teachers and staff who are committed to this turnaround effort and who are eager to help achieve these ambitious goals, as well as the strong, focused support of neighborhood stakeholders, and an evidence-based, highly accountable strategy for moving forward with families and children as partners.

1. Magnitude and Severity of the Problems to be Addressed

Considerable progress has been made. The physical destruction of the community has been reversed, many contaminated sites have been cleaned and a vibrant urban village is emerging. Nevertheless, Dudley remains one of the most distressed areas of Boston. In 2009, the Barr Foundation supported the development of a “distress index” for Boston to enable comparisons of data across the City. Dr. James Jennings, a professor at Tufts University, created the index and then analyzed the data (shown in legend) to create a representation of where distress is most severe. This

map shows Boston census tracts by their distress score based on these variables. Dudley (marked by a white boundary) ranks **very** high in terms of the neighborhood distress score.



a. Dudley Has High Rates of Poverty and Many Families in Need of Support

In this already high cost metropolitan area, the cost of living is rising faster than the US urban average. The Crittendon Women’s Union calculates that the minimum Boston Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard¹ for a family of four is \$62,095, yet the median household income in Dudley is below \$29,000. At 35.2%, the poverty rate for Dudley is almost twice that of Boston as a whole

¹ The Standard measures how much income is needed for a family of a certain composition in a given place to adequately meet their basic needs—*without public or private assistance*. The Standard makes it possible to determine if families’ incomes are enough to meet basic needs.

(18.7%). 38% of Dudley's children live below the Federal poverty line. 35% of children live in single parent homes.

The Boston area has been experiencing a four-decade long shift from a manufacturing to a knowledge economy. From 2000 through 2008, Greater Boston lost 33,400 jobs, with the majority of losses coming in the last half of 2008. Less than half of all persons in Dudley have full-time employment (49%) while 44% are not in the labor force and 7% are unemployed. Income inequality (especially along race and ethnic lines) is greater in Boston than the US as a whole and is rising faster than the US as a whole.

The Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development estimates that 45% of all jobs with projected growth through 2016 will require at least a Bachelor's Degree.² This trend, accompanied by the recession-caused reductions in Adult Education and English language programs, hits Dudley's populations especially hard. 35% of Dudley residents aged 25 and over lack a high school credential. 11% of residents have a bachelor's or higher degree.

Community peace and safety are important for healthy family and child development. According to the Boston Indicators Project, a majority of Boston's crime is concentrated in just a few neighborhoods that are home to most of the city's families with children, Roxbury and Dorchester among them. According to Boston Police Department data, feelings of safety vary by neighborhood and are lowest in the police district which includes Dudley (District B-2), with the percent of residents who feel "safe" or "very safe" at about 58%. Almost 90% of youth in this police district claim to have either witnessed violence or been a victim of violence in the past year. This same police district has the highest rates of nonfatal gunshot and stabbing injuries (twice the rate for Boston overall). Moreover, while black youth aged 0 -24 comprise only one-third of the population, blacks aged 0 – 24 account for nearly two-thirds of all recorded deaths (from any cause).

b. Low Rates of Educational Attainment and Persistent Challenges in School

² The Boston Indicators' Project, Indicators 2008,

The area’s high-school dropout rate for students aged 16–19 is the second highest among all Boston neighborhoods (10.3% annually). The dropout rate for English language learners is higher, and 41% of Dudley residents speak a language other than English at home. BPS students with disabilities are almost twice more likely to drop out of school than their peers.

There is a close correlation between parental educational attainment and children’s academic success. The challenges faced by Dudley adults are mirrored by the challenges of the very young students in our neighborhood. The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is a district wide measure of early literacy. Orchard Gardens (OG) Pilot School performs significantly below district averages. 62% of students in K-2 performed below benchmark, with more than one-third requiring intensive support and one-quarter requiring strategic support at the end of year early literacy assessment. In addition, the percentage of students requiring intensive support was 5 to 10 percentage points **higher** at the end of year assessment than it was at the beginning of the year. The percentage of students requiring intensive support at Orchard Gardens is 52% **higher** than the district average across Boston (16%).

c. Underperforming Neighborhood Schools Serving Very Low-Income Children

There are seven public schools in the proposed BPI area. Three of them have been identified by the Commonwealth as *persistently lowest-performing (or Level 4 schools)*. Two of the Level 4 schools – or “Turnaround Schools” will be the focus of BPI’s planning year. Also noted is the number of children who attended the school last year who also live in Dudley.

Challenge Indicators	OG K-8	Dearborn	Boston	State
Free /or reduced lunch	85.7%	94.1%	75.6%	33%
Special Education	23.5%	27.8%	19.6%	17%
Truancy	2.4%	2.1%	1.7%	2.1%
Suspension rate	12.7%	18.3%	5.8%	5.3%

First language not English	48.3%	56.8%	38.8%	15.6%
Performance Rating (English)	Very Low	Very Low	Moderate	
Performance Rating (Math)	Critically Low	Very Low	Low	
Students coming from Dudley* <i>Estimated for 2010-11</i>	43%	51%		

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education School/District Profiles (2009-2010) and Boston Public Schools Profiles of District Schools.

d. Multiple Health Risks in the Dudley Environment

Environmental and other conditions have resulted in poor health outcomes for Dudley families. Roxbury has the highest percentage of lead poisoning cases among all youth in the City. In a study that measured maximum lead concentrations of selected schools among several Boston neighborhoods, researchers found that 46% of schools in the top 37 with high lead concentrations came from one of the areas immediately adjacent to the Dudley area. During 2005 to 2007, the area surrounding Dudley had the highest infant mortality rate (IMR) among Boston neighborhoods, *more than 60% higher than the Boston overall rate.*

While asthma, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes are common chronic diseases that affect the lives of many Boston residents, differences do exist across neighborhoods and by race/ethnicity. Roxbury is the only neighborhood in Boston that is higher than average on all four disease indicators. Roxbury has 16% more deaths per 100,000 from heart disease, 60% more from diabetes; Roxbury also has 13% more deaths from breast and prostate cancer.

For combined years 2005-2007, the average asthma hospitalization rate for children under the age of five was highest among residents in and around our catchment area, where the rate was approximately 73% higher than the overall Boston rate. A 2001 study found that Dudley and adjacent areas accounted for 53% of all Boston Emergency Medical Services for asthma for that year. Asthma

is not only chronic but it is persistent: hospitalizations due to asthma continue to be problematic for our youth well into their teenage years but the same trend does not persist for youth in other neighborhoods.

2. The Geographic Area – Description

“Dudley” refers to a neighborhood which encompasses part of the Roxbury and North Dorchester areas of Boston, MA and spans about 1.3 square miles between Dudley Square, Grove Hall, and Upham’s Corner (home to 7,407 households and 22,753 individuals as of the 2000 Census). Census estimates indicate that the neighborhood is growing. Please see **Other: Attachment 1** for a map of Dudley within the City’s Circle of Promise. *Turnaround schools within the area are marked with large dots.*

Dudley residents are 38% African-American, 29% Latino, 25% Cape Verdean, and 7% white. Approximately 23% of Dudley residents are foreign born, with 41% speaking a language other than English at home. Dudley is a young neighborhood - over 38% of the population is 19 years and younger; and 27% are 14 and under, and there are approximately 2,787 ages 5 and under.

3. Specific Gaps and Weaknesses in Services, Infrastructure, and Opportunities

Opportunity	Specific Challenges in Dudley
<p><i>Birth to 5</i></p> <p>Ensure Dudley children have access to high quality, affordable early education programs.</p>	<p>Roxbury (which is a larger area that Dudley is a sub-neighborhood of) is home to both the largest overall percentage of children ages 0 to 5 across all Boston neighborhoods and the largest share of children ages 0 to 5 living in poverty. Research has shown that access to high quality early childhood education programs help children achieve better health, social, emotional, cognitive and physical outcomes. Yet as of 2000, child care slots were available for only 54% of children under 5 years of age living</p>

	<p>in the Dudley neighborhood. Further, only an estimated 15% of programs are accredited, leaving most of our community’s children without access to high quality early education.</p>
<p><i>K-8th Grade</i></p> <p>Support BPS turnaround efforts and ensure comprehensive student supports.</p>	<p>Black and Latino students (the overwhelming majority of Dudley children and youth) perform worse educationally than white and Asian students in Boston. For example, according to statewide assessments, only 25% of Boston’s Black and Latino third graders reached the critical benchmark of reading proficiency in 2009, while 55% of white students and 45% of Asian students did so.</p>
<p><i>High School Success</i></p> <p>Increase the high school graduation rate of Dudley youth.</p>	<p>Out of 19 neighborhoods, Roxbury had the second highest annual dropout rate in 2008-2009. Roxbury’s rate of 8.4% is significantly higher than the district average of 6.4%. BPS dropout rates vary by race and gender, with Latino males the least likely to graduate from high school (9.4% annual dropout rate in 2008-2009).</p>
<p><i>College & Career Success</i></p> <p>Increase college access and success for Dudley youth, particularly young men of color.</p>	<p>Just 35.5% of BPS 2000 graduates who enrolled in college finished within 7 years. Women were more likely to attend college than male graduates (68% vs. 60%) and they were more likely than males to attend four year colleges and persist to graduation. Just 56% of Latino BPS graduates attended college in their first seven years following graduation from high school, versus 60% of Black graduates, 72% of white graduates and nearly 81% of Asian graduates.</p>
<p><i>Family Support & Community Strengthening</i></p>	<p>Families with children under 18 years old represent almost half of the Dudley population. In 2000, the share of households composed of families with children was twice as large in Dudley as in Boston overall –</p>

<p>Single and working parents need support.</p>	<p>50% compared to 23%. Approximately 73% of children have at least one caregiver in the labor force and more than 60% of Dudley families earn less than the Boston Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard.</p>
<p><i>Data Gathering and Analysis</i></p> <p>We need information and data systems for measuring the effectiveness and impact of strategies and activities.</p>	<p>While a number of initiatives to build a continuum of services and solutions have been started in Boston – each has had their own data system to accompany the work. The BPI will coordinate these rich data resources within a place-based strategy and for a manageable, trackable number of residents (22,753). This will ensure that the data supports activities, investments and solutions which truly strengthen the neighborhood and make a significant impact on the turnaround schools at the heart of the community, as well as help parents become learning partners with their children and their children’s teachers.</p>

B. QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN & QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES

THIS SECTION ADDRESSES ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #2, #8, #9 AND #10

Ten years ago DSNI (with other community-based organizations) developed a plan which resulted in the Boston Parent Organizing Network, a group dedicated to organizing Boston’s diverse constituency of parents, students, families and others to work for the improvement of Boston Public Schools. *For the first time, community based organizations linked their neighborhood successes to the challenge of the schools and to increasing the quality of education that Boston children were receiving.* As a result, there are now examples of successful campaigns which have addressed budget priorities, the need for family and community staffing at schools, resources for English Language Learners and special education students, among others. Through all of this DSNI has developed relationships with children and youth, parents and families, schools staff, principals, the Superintendent and the School Committee.

Today, the Turnaround Schools Redesign efforts offer another fresh opportunity to bring community agencies and residents to align with the work and the goals of the schools. We will develop a comprehensive coordinated plan that supports the successful transition into kindergarten, middle school and prepares youth for the transition to high school.

There are six key levers in turnaround schools plans: 1. **transformative leaders**, 2. **effective teachers**, 3. **culture of high expectations**, 4. **focus on instruction**, 5. **social and emotional support**, and 6. **family and community engagement**. The transformative leaders have been selected and now the recommendations are under way with schools starting fresh in September 2010. Plans include designing, developing, evaluating and learning from each step of the turnaround process. This includes working with school partners and with leading out of school time organizations like Boston After School & Beyond, Boston Connects, Museum of Science, Boston Children's Museum, Citizens Schools, Outward Bound and higher education institutions like Tufts, Northeastern, and UMass/Boston; all are partners in planning BPI (*Invitational Priorities*).

In high school the key levers for school change are the same but a new opportunity is for teens to step up and play a role in the school turnaround process. At DSNI young residents have always played important leadership roles. When youth have been offered a supportive and challenging leadership environment that values their engagement, perspective and growth, they contribute to their own school's improvement and community's development. These abilities include civic, social, cultural, and intellectual skills, employability, physical health, and mental health. Programmatic feedback tools have shown us that youth leadership is strengthened with safety and structure, self-worth, belonging and membership, responsibility and autonomy, and self-awareness and spirituality. Youth, families, community organizations, schools and others can work together in partnership to prepare teens for adulthood and support their development of a positive identity while preparing for the transition to secondary school opportunities.

The transition from secondary school opportunities to a career has been the most challenging with community colleges identifying the growing numbers of youth arriving needing up to two years in remediation courses before they can even start on college courses. The remediation addresses skill building that youth need when they first have more than one teacher and need to learn to manage their time and responsibilities. There are fewer support services that address this post-secondary age group and their particular needs. Young adults are already facing one of the most challenging job markets in generations.

What has been missing is the opportunity to bring a comprehensive set of partners to focus with the community and families in a geographic area with the schools at the table and center the programming on the children and their academic, social and emotional wellbeing and success. Many organizations can run excellent programs and services, schools may individually succeed but this is an opportunity to “raise all boats” with a comprehensive, strategic process that approaches the issues systematically and designs collaborative solutions for medium and high need children from birth to 24 years. What follows is an explanation of how DSNI will bring the right skills, experience and people together to make the Boston Promise a reality.

1. How DSNI will Plan to Build a Continuum of Solutions To Improve the Academic and Family and Community Support Indicators in Dudley

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #2

DSNI is a dedicated community planning and organizing entity with a mission to “Empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create and control a vibrant, diverse, and high quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners.” From our founding, we devoted ourselves to whole community revitalization, encompassing the full range of economic, social, physical, and human development needed to create our urban village. This role has given the Dudley neighborhood the ability to convene, to coalesce around shared vision, to strategize and plan, and then to use our collective action to implement our plans.

Our groundbreaking revitalization work illustrates the use of innovative tools to advance and sustain the community's interests. For example, we have gain national prominence for using redevelopment tools such as eminent domain and establishing a community controlled land trust which now stewards over 32 acres of land including 225 units of affordable housing, commercial and office space, gardens and greenhouses, and playgrounds and learning spaces. In a different example, we designed and facilitated a community planning process that helped bring to our neighborhood the largest community center ever built in the New England. The values that have guided us since 1984 and will guide BPI include belief in *linked community destiny, collective resident leadership, vibrant cultural diversity, community collaboration, development without displacement, high quality of life, and that anything is possible.*

In our most recent strategic planning process, we prioritized the educational success of our children as a key leverage point for sustained community, family and individual success. Understanding the enormous impact early childhood has on educational success and the powerful role that organized communities can play in ensuring young children have access to positive developmental supports, in 2009 we created **Dudley Children Thrive**. Dudley Children Thrive seeks to ensure all of our children enter kindergarten ready to learn. Dudley Children Thrive, led by DSNI in partnership with residents, parents and community organizations (Project Hope, Children's Services of Roxbury and La Alianza Hispana) was chosen by the citywide Thrive in Five Initiative as one of its five core sites in early 2010 to develop and implement place-based family and community engagement strategies.

Through Dudley Children Thrive, DSNI is convening parents and service providers, engaging in collaborative planning, to connect families to information and resources, to better coordinate services, to ensure quality and accountability, and implement participatory data collection and analysis for greater impact. This work is paving the way for the broader mandate of BPI. As we do in all of our

work, we reached out to those who have historically been less engaged – including non-English-speaking immigrant parents, families in shelter, teen parents, and fathers of color. Their engagement in the process will guide and inform the development of strategies and plans for Dudley Children Thrive, and eventually, BPI and the entire Circle of Promise. Initial findings indicate that strategies will have multi-level focus: individuals, organizations, community, systems and policies.

Building upon this foundation, approach and community history, we will create a collaborative roadmap for implementing the Boston Promise Initiative. Drawing upon 25 years of planning experience and long term partnership with Interaction Institute for Social Change (IISC), DSNI will apply its methodical and adaptive approach to complex, cross-sectoral collaborative planning.

Too often, collaborative efforts fail because of the lack of attention to designing a clear and well-facilitated process and the nurturing and cultivation of relationships and networks. Our research and experience suggests that a number of key elements and principles are critical to the success of a collaborative planning process of any scope and size (See **Other: Attachment 2** for the Collaborative Principles). Essential to our approach is making complex systems both explicit and visual. For example, we build a network and process map that allows stakeholders to see their connections to one another and to locate themselves, understand their role, the phases of planning, the outcomes in each phase and the timeline (Please see **Other: Attachment 3** for Process and Network Maps).

There are several building blocks to designing a collaborative planning process: a) building cross-sectoral stakeholder alignment on the context, current reality and goal/s of the process; b) identifying all stakeholder groups and individuals and their level of involvement throughout the process; c) agreeing on the phases of planning; outcomes for each phase; d) setting the timeline, and e) mapping the network.

DSNI is establishing a multi-tiered structure that represents the governance and levels of stakeholder engagement in the planning and that ensures a forum which will foster our best strategic

and innovative thinking. The structure includes: the DSNI Board, the BPI Advisory Council, the BPI Strategy Group, BPI Pathway Working Groups (six) and the BPI Design Team (the roles of each group are explained below), as well as the BPI Going-to-Scale Strategy Group.

This structure will help to ensure that the BPI and the DSNI Board are accountable first and foremost to the members of the Dudley neighborhood. The **Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) Board of Directors** is a 34-member body elected by members of the neighborhood. Community-wide board elections are held every two years at the DSNI Annual Meeting. Equal representation is provided for the community's four major cultures – African-American, Cape Verdean, Latino and White. The overall structure of the board is as follows: 16 residents, 7 nonprofit agencies (representing the Health and Human Service fields), 2 Community Development Corporations, 2 businesses, 2 religious organizations, 3 youth (ages 15-17), and 2 residents appointed by the newly elected board. The DSNI Board is the lead entity for BPI, and is accountable to both the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and to the Dudley community. The DSNI Board of Directors will make all final decisions, approve all budgets and maintain full fiscal and programmatic accountability for all aspects of the project.

The **BPI Advisory Council** is an appointed committee, invited by the DSNI Board of Directors to serve as advisors and supporters for the BPI Planning Process as well as for future implementation and scaling up efforts. The Advisory Council will include members of the broader Boston community who oversee institutions and/or agencies which are closely aligned and partnered with the BPI, including but not limited to public officials, agency directors, college presidents and deans, religious leaders, arts organizations and civic leaders. While not making binding decisions, the Advisory Council will serve as champions and connectors and provide guidance on issues, policy and new thinking to the DSNI Board on matters related to the BPI.

The DSNI Board of Directors will also regularly rely upon recommendations for strategy, goals, action and specific next steps from the **BPI Strategy Group**. The Strategy Group will be the primary driver for the development of the BPI Implementation Plan to be drafted and approved by May 30, 2011. The role of the Strategy Group is to synthesize and link the plans developed by each of the Pathway Working Groups into an integrated, sequenced and comprehensive plan for impact. Each of the Pathway Working Groups is represented on the Strategy Group by its two co-leads as well as other key stakeholders whose voices are essential to the success of the plan.

The Continuum of Solutions will be crafted by six **Pathway Working Groups (PWG)**. Each group has primary responsibility for analysis and planning around a specific aspect of life for children and families in the Dudley neighborhood. Each Pathway Working Group will have two co-chairs (one Dudley resident and one “institutional” partner, i.e. a representative from a nonprofit, school or other agency). The PWGs will be staffed by DSNI and IISC to support their work and help connect it to the other parts of the BPI project. The six PWGs are as follows:

- Children Thrive Working Group (0-5)
- Achieving Students Working Group (K-8 & Turnaround schools)
- Young Adults Ready for Post Secondary Working Group (high school to college)
- Adults Career Launch Working Group
- Supported Families Strong Communities Working Group (family /community support)
- Participatory Data and Impact Working Group (data) *Note: this group will work closely with all other groups by engaging them in data collection and analysis.*

All of the planning work by the above stakeholder groups will be conducted in a process which is designed, staffed, documented and supported by the **BPI Design Team**. The Design Team is central to successful collaborative planning because of its range of roles and responsibilities, including designing, facilitation and content management for all meetings of the Working, Strategy and

Advisory Groups; synthesizing data as it emerges; implementing the communications strategy including website; blog, Facebook and Twitter; managing virtual collaboration and virtual meetings throughout the process, and project management and coordination for the entire effort. The Design Team is comprised of DSNI staff, a team of collaborative change facilitators, content and project managers from IISC, and a small number of representative stakeholders drawn from the overall initiative.

a. To Develop a Strategy for Significant Improvements in Turnaround Schools

Through more than 25 years of organizing to improve neighborhood schools, DSNI has established strong working relationships with all of our local schools, including their principals, school site councils, and turnaround design committees. In particular, many school leaders have been or are members of the DSNI Education Committee (a working group of the DSNI Board which will contribute members to the Pathway Working Groups). DSNI has a history and track record of parent empowerment, student engagement, working with school leadership, and acting as a convener of neighborhood organizations.

DSNI is thus uniquely able to convene the partners and plan for changes in this dynamic education reform environment. The potential for lasting and deep school turnaround in Boston has probably never been higher than it is now. Catalyzed by Race to the Top priorities, in January 2010, the Governor signed new education reform legislation providing unprecedented opportunities and accountabilities for districts to address the performance of their lowest-performing schools. DSNI is partnered with two of these turnaround schools, acting as the lead community partner for Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School³, and participating as a Dearborn Middle School design team member.

³ Each of the schools also has other changes underway: Orchard Gardens is also a *Fresh Start* school, which required that all staff resign and reapply for their jobs, and the Dearborn is the focus of a District i3 proposal which will make it an Expanded Learning Time school.

BPI's intersection with the turnaround plans will focus on parent and family engagement, community support for learning and school culture and climate change. Our efforts to ensure that the community voice is heard in policy decisions have been bolstered by the recent appointment of DSNI's Executive Director, John Barros to the Boston School Committee. It is important to note that both schools have a large number of students who live in the target area, but the number could (and we anticipate it will) increase as more families request these schools, following their improvements and demonstrated results.

Significant research shows the importance of parent and family engagement to student success. In *Organizing Schools for Improvement; Lessons from Chicago*, researchers identified essential reform elements that schools needed in order to improve, including a systemic and robust approach to family and community engagement.

During the process of preparing this proposal, Pathway Working Group members noted:

- To date, DSNI has organized revitalization efforts that focus on the neighborhood context and issues that directly and indirectly affect schools; for example, sponsoring a public health awareness campaign for neighborhood residents.
- As in most districts, Boston schools are a bit isolated from the highly impoverished communities within which they operate. Boston has made some progress in helping schools and communities to work together in mitigating the negative impacts of poor health, inadequate housing, unemployment, homelessness, as well as other barriers to learning faced by poor children. BPI will build on these successful efforts.
- Boston needs new systems and strategies for tapping neighborhood-based assets and resources to boost children's educational success.

We will use data gathered by the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group to to: a) understand what is not working/not consistent with the best practices of improving schools; b)

understand and explore what new solutions are needed; c) design solutions that can be tested, then expanded, modified or discontinued based on the results of that testing; and, d) build the relationships between and among parents, schools and community groups which will support the emerging culture of accountability and high standards for schools, and e) connect students who live in the neighborhood but do not attend one of our targeted schools with the solutions they need to succeed. Each of the turnaround schools is also expected to bring School Improvement Grant resources to support the implementation of their turnaround plans. BPI will support their comprehensive planning for the investment of those funds.

2. How Boston Promise Initiative Will Use Data

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #8

Boston is driving toward revolutionary ways of collecting, analyzing and using data as we build citywide capacity to synthesize vast quantities of information and bring it to bear on decision-making at all levels in transparent and compelling ways to accelerate constructive change. This newly developing capacity includes the emerging DSNI Data Institute (Please see **Other: Attachment 4** for an overview of the Data Institute) , the Boston Indicators Project (a partnership of the Boston Foundation, City of Boston and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council); Boston About Results (the City's performance management system); the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley's new goal-tracking system; and the Massachusetts Children's Cabinet's commitment to tracking individual student outcomes over time. In addition, many of the partners in the BPI have set rigorous measurable goals and identified clear impact measures for their own initiatives. However, to date, we have had no way to integrate these various capacities and sets of goals. This integration is what the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will address as a top priority.

The BPI will use a new open-source data visualization platform being developed at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. Locally funded by the Barr Foundation and led by the Boston Indicators

Project and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council with national partners in six additional US regions, the tool will allow the Initiative to:

- **Identify and align measurable goals;**
- **Refine strategies and track impact;** and
- **Build capacity for data gathering, sharing, analysis and evaluation.**

All aspects of the BPI Planning Year will be data-informed, and each member of the Pathway Working Groups will be trained to gather, interpret and critically analyze data which is essential to their planning for new solutions. In addition, the BPI is committed to combining traditional methods of data collection, management and dissemination with new and interactive methods, including video and photography⁴ as tools for data collection and documentation by the BPI Pathway Working Groups as well as other (especially youth) members of the DSNI community.

a. Using Data To Manage Implementation, Decision-Making, Stakeholder Engagement

Through the planning process as outlined above, the BPI will build community support for and involvement in the implementation of the plan, including establishing outcomes for children in the neighborhood that represent shared hopes and values. This unifying message will be communicated and analyzed on an ongoing basis by leaders and members of the community through activities which are designed to support the goals of the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group, which are to:

1. Create a learning community/engage residents in public research and data analysis
2. Use data to understand and track each child in the neighborhood, regardless of his/her school, and to develop analysis of which (new, existing, strengthened) solutions are needed to support their success.

⁴ For example, the Participatory Data and Impact Group will consider engaging *Photovoice* as a partner in training youth and adults to use photography as a tool for capturing baseline data on key indicators.

3. Use data to review and inform policy and practices to benefit Dudley residents; and then present and package this information in ways that can be shared with other communities facing similar challenges and concerns.
4. Develop and conduct rigorous program evaluation
5. Disseminate information, research and data to the entire community and provide mechanisms for looping reactions, insights, suggestions, concerns from the community back into the planning and implementation processes

Building on the work of Dr. James Jennings, our segmentation analysis will stratify children and families on a range of neighborhood characteristics that have been previously shown to indicate severe distress. These variables include those pertaining to income and poverty, crime and crime “hot spots”, housing conditions including foreclosure and abandoned properties, and health status for children and adults including asthma incidence, dental and vision problems, learning disabilities, teen pregnancy, physical activity and nutritional status. Since teacher training, accountability measures and governance structures can only support (not create) a child’s ability to be motivated and ready to learn, these are the *minimum* considerations in developing institutional change around academic performance and school success. Accordingly, in order to hone in on the multiple social, economic and health problems that impede students’ ability to learn, a neighborhood distress score will be created based on the most current data available in order to make comparisons across Dudley. Based on census tracts and block level data, the following variables will be utilized to design an index of distress: percent of families in poverty in 2006; percent female-headed households with children; per capita income; number and proportion of children under 17 years, projected to 2011; number of foreclosures in 2007; average household size; percent foreign born; percent persons 5 years+ who don’t speak English at home; percent persons 25 years+ without high school diploma; number of homicides, 2007-2008; and, the FBI crime index (1999-2003).

b. Using Data To Measure Success

DSNI is currently building a comprehensive, longitudinal data management system, which will include data on all academic and family and community support indicators described in this proposal. This project, the DSNI Data Institute, will also be expanded to include any additional indicators necessary for the design and implementation of a rigorous evaluation of the initiative.

3. Description of Commitment to Work with the National Evaluator

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #9

The DSNI Director of Research and Evaluation, Dr. Gia Barboza, will coordinate both the BPI Participatory Data and Impact Working Group and the relationship of the BPI with its chosen national evaluator. The focus of this work will be to ensure that our local data collection as well as program design work is consistent with and complementary to the needs of the national evaluator for use of standard methodologies across sites, and the overall effort to correlate solutions with outcomes. DSNI will commit to:

- Ensuring that the national evaluator has access to relevant program and project data sources (e.g., administrative data and program and project indicator data) through Memoranda of Understanding with appropriate entities;
- Developing, in consultation with the national evaluator, an evaluation strategy, including identifying a credible comparison group; and
- Developing, in consultation with the national evaluator, a plan for identifying and collecting reliable and valid baseline data for both program participants and a designated comparison group of non-participants.

4. Description of indicators to be used for needs assessment

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #10

The Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will coordinate with partners to create a comprehensive needs assessment of children along the cradle-through-college-to-career continuum

over a period of 3-5 months. The needs assessment process will focus on gathering and creating new data sources on the indicators of need outlined below, which include but are not limited to the indicators outlined in the Promise Neighborhoods Request for Proposals. Each data set, by indicator, will be segmented to help the Working Groups distinguish high-, medium- and low-needs children and youth, determine where they go to school and live, and enable Working Groups to focus their attention on producing new solutions for the highest need children. The Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will also be charged with investigating evidence-based practices and solutions which are effective in other cities and/or parts of this City, and bringing those ideas to the relevant Working Groups.

To share the data and present information on evidence-based practices, the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will meet monthly with each of the other Pathway Working Groups as well as the Strategy Working Group. These meetings will be forums to share collected data on academic, family and community support indicators in Dudley. As a second phase in the needs assessment, the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will conduct a segmentation analysis of the needs in the neighborhood among specific groups to better target solutions, especially for the medium and high-need children and families in the neighborhood.

Below are our selected indicators, by Working Group. These are the areas where we hope to make changes, and where available, we have included the baseline measurements for our neighborhood. Where baseline data is not yet available, we will develop baselines during the first part of the planning year. The indicators below are a combination of the required indicators and our initial planning groups' preliminary ideas on additional, optional indicators (noted with gray shading). Before any comprehensive changes in academic achievement can occur, it will be necessary to obtain a clear picture of the strengths and limitations of each turnaround school. Multiple data sources will be used

to identify the priority needs and assets of each school. Refinement and revision of current practices will then be informed with data.

The first step will be to develop a school profile based on five key dimensions that are crucial to understanding and promoting academic success. Once the profile is completed, it will be used to identify priority need areas to focus on and prioritize strength areas to build upon. The five dimensions are 1) student characteristics; 2) school organization and professionalism; 3) curriculum and instruction; 4) family and community involvement; and 5) student achievement. During the planning year, it will be necessary to choose the types of information to collect for each dimension, identify data collection procedures, select data collection instruments, collect data, perform statistical analyses and analyze the results for each of the five dimensions. Each step will be conducted not only by the researchers on the team but also with school personnel, students, community members and parents of children at each school. Data will be collected using a variety of methodologies particular to each type of data element being collected including interviews, focus groups and surveys. Data will also be triangulated and verified with non-perceptual data such as that collected by the Boston Police Department, medical records, Boston Public School administrative data, etc.

Zero to Five: Academic Indicators

Note: these are aligned with Boston’s Thrive in Five Initiatives, for ease of data integration, comparison and scaling up. Indicators shaded in gray were added by the planning partners.

- # and % of three-year-olds and children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning as determined using developmentally-appropriate early learning measures
- # and % of children, from birth to kindergarten entry, participating in center-based or formal home-based early learning settings or programs, including Early Head Start, Head Start, child care, or publicly-funded preschool

Zero to Five: Family and Community Support Indicators

- # and % of children birth to five years old that have a place where they usually go, other than an emergency room, when they are sick or in need of advice about their health.
- The # and % of children attending their well-child visits
- The # and % children in informal (family, neighbor) care settings in which providers have received training and professional development,
- The # and % of young children who are read to at least once per day
- # and % of pre-school children with on-time kindergarten registration

School Aged + Beyond: Academic Indicators

Note: These indicators are aligned with the Mayor's Balanced Scorecard for ease of data integration, comparison and scaling up. Indicators in gray were added by the planning partners.

- # and % of students at or above grade level according to state standardized tests in reading and in math for 3rd - 10th grade
- Attendance rates for students K – 12 [# and % below 80% average daily attendance and # and % of student monthly absences, reported by school, broken down by absence classification (e.g., illness, behavior problems, poor academics, unstable housing)
- # and % of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma
- # and % of students who obtain postsecondary degrees, vocational certificates, or other industry-recognized certifications or credentials without the need for remediation.

School Aged + Beyond: Family & Community Indicators

- # and % of children who have 60 minutes of moderate/vigorous physical activity daily
- # and % of children who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily⁵

⁵ Last summer (July 2009) Boston expanded the Bounty Bucks pilot program to all 14 participating neighborhood farmers' markets in the city as part of a series of initiatives Mayor Thomas M. Menino announced a goal to make Boston the "healthiest city with the strongest local food system in

- # and % of children with a BMI in the normal range
- # and % of students who feel safe at school
- # and % of students who feel safe traveling to and from school
- Student mobility rate
- # and % of students who say they have a caring, consistent adult in their home, school, and community
- # and % of parents who attend parent-teacher conferences
- # and % of students who have school and home access (and % of the day they have access) to broadband internet and a connected computing device
- The share of housing stock that is rent-protected, publicly assisted, or targeted for redevelopment with local, State, or Federal funds
- # and % of students who a) understand their own culture's history and b) who are knowledgeable about another culture within this community.
- # and % of children whose schools communicate in multiple languages representing the student population
- # and % of residents who report that they are engaged in one or more civic activities

During the community needs assessment phase, we will identify a baseline for each of the above indicators for the 8,646 children in our designated BPI area. The Participatory Data and Impact

America." The City's Food Council has agreed to participate in both planning and implementation on activities related to this indicator, and The Food Project is a DSNI Board Member as well as a member of Dudley Children Thrive.

Working Group will develop start by bringing information from existing City and State databases together to create a Dudley-specific a resource directory of public and community agencies that provide services to residents in the designated target area, including Boston public schools, health agencies, employment and workforce agencies, public assistance, housing, libraries, and recreation and parks. This will be compiled through review of agency and organizational information, existing databases such as the Boston Navigator (for out-of-school time programs) and the state's licensing records for early care and education providers. Added information will come from interviews with public officials knowledgeable about the range of services in the area. The resource directory will be developed with reader-friendly maps generated with GIS software.

With the baseline data in place, the Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will investigate specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure and opportunities by undertaking a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews with community stakeholders.

The target area is quite diverse and includes different groupings of children and people who must be engaged and who need to inform the planning for the success of our proposed strategy. This requires a range of approaches and methods in conducting the needs assessment. Broadly speaking these groups include:

- Children/youth at the partner schools (Orchard Gardens and Dearborn) who will be differentiated by family structure, gender, race, ethnicity, and linguistic characteristics; English Language Learners (ELL), special education students, and those working below grade level and/or testing as Needs Improvement on standardized assessments [*Invitational Priority*]
- Parents, who will be differentiated by family structure, gender, race, ethnicity, linguistic and social characteristics
- Business leaders in the community
- Teachers and school staff

- Residents living in the Dudley neighborhood
- Representatives of faith-based organizations
- Representatives of community-based organizations and public agencies

Focus groups and interviews will enable the Working Group to elicit detailed, qualitative information and ideas. The focus group sessions will take place in two waves; the first wave will help to refine questions and discourse for the follow-up wave of focus groups. The purpose of the focus groups will be to a) explain the proposed initiative to the community, and b) to gather feedback and suggestions, and c) obtain a sense of what community representatives see as major issues or challenges which impinge academic achievement and d) solicit ideas for improving the educational well-being of children and youth within a community context.

Focus group findings will be synthesized in ways to facilitate incorporation into strategies for implementation, as the Strategy Group and each of the Working Groups will be integrating the feedback from focus groups with best practices and evidence-based approaches.

The community needs assessment will also include personal interviews with key representatives of various community and educational initiatives in the target area (initial planning discussions in terms of community dynamics related to BPI suggest approximately 15-20 at this time). These representatives will be selected on the basis of their involvement with a) the turnaround schools, b) broader education reform and c) neighborhood revitalization efforts in the target area. They will include elected officials, ministers, business leaders, and representatives of nonprofits.

We will also develop strategies and tools which integrate the needs assessment process with BPI's goal of robust parent involvement. Children in the participating schools will share with parents a short and reader-friendly questionnaire (in various languages) that invites participation in an introductory workshop to be held at their child's public school. This tool will not only represent a benefit for parents interested in receiving this information, but possibly help to bond parents to the project and its

activities. We want to immediately indicate to parents that participation in the BPI will mean concrete benefits for their children, for themselves and for their schools. An important message that DSNI and its partners will convey is that parents and the community must be active participants in the proposed strategies for change. The workshop will be organized in a way that could be repeated to meet unexpected demand. The information and insights gathered under the community needs assessment will be organized and presented in formats that can be shared with a range of people and organizations. We plan four public sessions (or town halls) in different parts of the area for presentation and discussion of the needs assessment and implications for next steps.

The Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will conduct these activities in alignment with the other Pathway Working Groups (Children Thrive, Achieving Students, Ready for Post-Secondary, Career Launch and Supported Families, Strong Community). The other Pathway Working Groups will contribute to the design of the needs assessment, will be partners in distributing surveys, attending town halls, etc., and will use the information gathered as input for their own design of new or expanded solutions which are a) evidence-based and b) engage Partners in implementation. The BPI Implementation Plan will outline the rationale for the proposed solution in terms of both the community needs assessment and the evidence to support the likelihood of success for that specific solution.

5. The Extent the Project will be Coordinated with Similar or Related Efforts, and with Other Appropriate Community, State, and Federal Resources

DSNI and partners have been conducting, through the planning for this application as well as through planning for other collaborative work, an analysis of all of the resources contributing to the BPI area, including federal, state and local investments. It is notable that initially, three or more Boston organizations were planning to submit applications for the Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grants, and all of these organizations have joined together behind the BPI and this application. This

is indicative of the type and depth of coordination already existing in Boston, and which will be extended to the BPI planning and scale up efforts. That said, this willingness and ability to align our efforts across the City is relatively recent; and presents a significant and new opportunity for us to work cooperatively and collaboratively on improving schools and results for children. Below is an outline of some of the major investments currently supporting Dudley children and families, all of which will be part of the planning process for BPI. An additional listing of major Federal investments in our area is found in **Other: Attachment 6.**

Thrive in Five

Launched in 2007 by United Way of Mass Bay and Merrimack Valley and the City of Boston, Thrive in Five is a 10-year effort to build a movement that aligns families, early care and education providers, health and human service providers, the private sector, and the city to work together in new ways to achieve universal school readiness. – Dudley is one of five neighborhoods (with DSNI as the hub agency) selected to engage families and community in a place-based approach to the “Ready Families” portion of Thrive in 5’s equation (see below), with a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for an initial 18 month effort.



The Boston Opportunity Agenda + Success Boston

The Opportunity Agenda is a new \$27 million commitment to ensuring that all Boston children have access to high quality education, leading to successful completion of a post-secondary degree. The funding will be invested over the course of five years and engages all of the City’s major funders, public and private, including The Boston Foundation, The United Way, Combined Jewish

Philanthropies, Catholic Charities, Eos Foundation, Barr Foundation, Nellie Mae Foundation, EdVestors and New Profit, Inc. Most of these investors are already planning partners in the BPI proposal development process, and all of them will be engaged in BPI in implementation to fully coordinate and leverage this new funding through place-based, data-driven investments. Success Boston is a coordinated effort to invest \$5 million in finding new ways to support young people and post-secondary institutions to increase graduation rates by creating and expanding supports to ensure that BPS students are academically and otherwise prepared for college success, and able to access the applications, financial aid and other tools for matriculation and completion.

**The Boston Public Schools Alternative Education Network
and Re-Engagement Center**

This is a network of schools and out-of-school time supports which seeks to prepare at-risk students and/or drop-outs for future success by providing a supportive and academically challenging school environment which is tailored to meet their needs. It is funded by the funders above, the public school system and the Boston Private Industry Council.

Teen Futures and The Teen Initiative

Teen Futures is a \$3 million investment by the Hyams Foundation to support programs likely (evidence-based) to improve the success of young people (ages 16-22) by increasing the number who gain their high school credential and commence on a path towards higher education or a career focused training program. The Teen Initiative (an Initiative of Boston After School and Beyond) supports neighborhood based networks of youth development organizations in Dorchester, East Boston, Jamaica Plain, Lower Roxbury, and across the city.

Youth Development Network and Youth Summer Employment Program

The City of Boston, the Boston Private Industry Council and the Boston Public Health Commission collaborate on this ongoing, multi-million dollar effort to ensure that low-income, at-risk

youth have access to mental and physical health supports, summer jobs, mentoring and other services which increase their chance for successful transitions to post-secondary education.

Boston Rising

This \$10 million commitment from the Eos Foundation will work, through a place-based approach within the Circle of Promise to break the cycle of poverty in one Boston neighborhood (Grove Hall) while engaging the next generation of philanthropists in the issues of economic inequality and urban poverty. Eos will be on the Advisory and Strategy committees, and their work in Grove Hall will in part pave the way for the Grove Hall neighborhood to be a potential scale-up site for BPI.

Road to Opportunities Initiative + Skillworks

The Road to Opportunities initiative will link programs and measurement systems supported by the United Way in addressing the lack of a coordinated and effective service delivery system for out of school and out of work young people. Skillworks is a \$10 million investment in Boston's sector-based strategies to link low-skilled, low-income adults to family-wage sustaining jobs and career pathways.

C. QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

THIS SECTION ADDRESSES ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #3,

1. Organizational Capacity to Plan a Promise Neighborhood

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #3

“Twenty five years ago, the Dudley Street Triangle in Roxbury was a moonscape of arson-charred vacant lots that lured illegal trash and toxic waste dumping, illness, and crime—a recipe for neighborhood collapse. (With the creation of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative), the neighborhood seized control of its destiny and began rebuilding its community. (Since then, DSNI has) provided more than 250 homes to low-income owners through an ingenious land trust arrangement... and built community organizations to meet the needs of the neighborhood. (DSNI) ...has changed the long term prospects of the Dudley Street Area residents and leadership...the Ford Foundation holds it up as one of its most successful ...grantees.” -- [Holding Ground Revisited]

In 1987, the community engaged in a nine month process to develop *The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Revitalization Plan: A Comprehensive Community-Controlled Strategy*. The City of Boston adopted this as the Master Plan for our area. In 1988, the Boston Redevelopment Authority granted DSNI the power of eminent domain over privately-owned vacant land in the area designated as the Dudley Triangle. Combining the Dudley community's eminent domain authority with the creation of a community land trust, DSNI has systematically implemented the revitalization plan with remarkable results. Thirty acres of formerly garbage-strewn vacant lots now hold 225 units of permanently affordable housing, a community greenhouse, urban farms, playgrounds, and commercial space, all within the community land trust. The land trust model allows the community to own the land and to determine the best use within a whole community context, while the homes and buildings are owned by families, cooperative associations, or developers. The trust has protected against gentrification / displacement in "hot" markets and against sub-prime loans and foreclosure in the current real estate collapse, representing an island of family stability in an otherwise devastating foreclosure environment.

Since the 1987 plan, this diverse community has been engaged in planning around land use, housing design, education reform, youth development and youth jobs, schoolyards and parks, civic participation, food and fitness, economic development strategies, and most recently, place-based strategies to support families with children 0 to 5. We will bring the same systems-thinking, comprehensive community planning focus to building Dudley's developmental and social assets as the next phase of our place-based work.

Our fostering of resident engagement and leadership, our collaborative planning and decision-making tools, our history of successful implementation, and our ability to attract significant partnerships all point to the fact that *we are ready to lead the planning for BPI*. We have a strong

track record of rooting change deep within the fabric of the neighborhood and this is what will drive the success and permanency of the BPI.

a. Working with Schools

DSNI has engaged parents, youth, school leaders, staff and other community stakeholders in many ways over the past two decades in order to realize our goals for our children’s education. DSNI was part of the original design team for the Orchard Gardens Pilot School. John Barros, DSNI Executive Director, is a School Committee Member, and serves on the Boston Public Schools English Language Learners Task Force.

DSNI began organizing parents in schools in the mid-90s. During spring 1995, the Jeremiah Burke High School (the only high school in our neighborhood at the time) lost its accreditation after a number of years on probation. A resident, parent leader, and DSNI board member, Debra Wilson, co-chaired the parent effort that obtained \$8.4 million for improvements that ultimately led to the Burke’s regaining accreditation in 1998. DSNI provided concrete support in the winter of 1998 through leadership training and a \$10,000 Capacity Building grant to the Burke High School Family Center for parent organizing and leadership development. Another DSNI parent (Michele Brooks) involved in that project is now serving as a BPS Asst. Supt. for Family and Student Engagement, and will be a key member of both the Strategy Group and the Achieving Students Working Group. Michele is also a former member of the Boston School Committee, with a deep understanding of both the policies shaping the system and the navigational routes needed to change them. Michele brings a high level of expertise in, and commitment to, advocacy efforts for family and community engagement, which as noted above are essential for the ultimate success of turnaround schools.

In 1997, DSNI partnered with the Emerson School (centrally located in our target area, but not a turnaround school), organizing parents to lead the schoolyard improvement planning, and the school's designation for Title VII Project B.U.I.L.D. (Best Uses of Instruction for Literacy Development) for new bilingual services for Cape Verdean students K-5 and their parents. In 1997, key DSNI board and

staff members joined and helped formulate the Boston Parents Organizing Network (BPON) to organize parents for a city-wide campaign to improve BPS, and DSNI is still a co-chair of this group. BPON is now a valued partner of the District.

Today, DSNI staff, Board and members are actively working with both Orchard Gardens K-8 and the Dearborn.

b. Relevant Experience and Lessons Learned: Working With Residents, Serving Neighborhoods

DSNI's successful place-based efforts have been widely recognized in the community building field. This success is often credited to DSNI's deep roots in the community and our commitment to and skills in resident-led multi-stakeholder mobilization and planning. Our experience has shown an important relationship between the quality and inclusiveness of the process and the quality and sustainability of the product; in other words, we have found that when the community makes the decisions, the same community will work for and protect the outcomes.

The principle of resident decision-making is accompanied by the tools for making good decisions. We've taken "professional" functions like land use planning and housing design, and placed them in the hands of community people. To support this, we've worked with the professionals to develop user-friendly data presentations, maps, panoramic photographs, scenarios planning formats, as well as interactive group decision-making processes.

Fostering resident engagement and leadership is pro-active and integrated into all of our activities and in every level of our infrastructure. We are all on a learning journey to become better community leaders. With a model of shared collective leadership, we are constantly working with people, including our youth, to see and grow their leadership. An indicator of DSNI's success is that young resident activists who have opportunities opened to them return to Dudley to play significant roles. Our Resident Development Institute captures models, lessons, tools, and standards as well as offering a training series in core community leadership competencies.

Inclusive engagement in this diverse community means that we hold trilingual community meetings, as well as conduct significant door-to-door outreach. Our Board is comprised of a resident majority and has equal representation for the major racial ethnic groups as well as youth.

DSNI's progress in revitalizing a particularly devastated part of Boston is dramatic and has created models and precedents that continue to benefit the Dudley community as well as other poor urban communities.

Here is a recent example. In 2005, The Boston Salvation Army (TSA) approached DSNI to enter into a partnership to respond to a competitive national process to have a Ray & Joan Kroc Community Center built in the our neighborhood. The Boston Salvation Army/DSNI team ultimately won TSA's largest Eastern Region allocation, resulting in a grant of \$85.5 million, with the requirement that the local chapter raise an additional \$25 million. A world-class 90,000 square foot community center with a swimming pool, theatre, gymnasium, dance studio, a peace chapel, and classroom space is currently under construction.

Early in the process, the community wanted to ensure that this project would result in economic development for the community as well as community facilities and services. Without this, the center could be a gentrifying force, threatening to displace low and moderate income families. DSNI helped to craft agreements between the community and The Salvation Army (TSA) that community residents would get construction jobs as well as jobs in the new center. TSA agreed that the construction portion would adopt the employment standards set by the Roxbury Master Plan Oversight Committee⁶: 51% local, 51% minority, and 15% women. The General Contractor, Suffolk Construction, embraced these targets. To ensure that the workforce goals are met, DSNI convenes a

⁶ The Roxbury Strategic Master Plan is a strategic planning agenda developed by residents that provides a framework for the Boston Redevelopment Authority to guide their work in supporting economic growth for the next ten to twenty years in Roxbury.

broad collaboration of non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, and labor partners called The Dudley Workforce Committee (DWC). They were guided by a 2007 DSNI-facilitated process to identify “best practices” for pre-construction and construction jobs. We have set new expectations for union construction projects by meeting and in some cases exceeding the hiring goals. The Kroc Center is nearly complete and the process offers guidelines, partnerships, practical experience and a structure for transferring our success to the next generation of development projects.

c. Experience and Lessons Learned in Collecting, Analyzing and Using Data for Decision Making and Ongoing Improvement

The BPI will leverage and integrate existing high-quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions for all children, including but not limited to those who attend our two target schools (Dearborn – 300 students and Orchard Gardens – 750 students). The Participatory Data and Impact Working Group will be co-chaired by Dr. James Jennings and Dr. Gia Barboza. Dr. Jennings is senior researcher at DSNI and also Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning at Tufts University. He has designed and led many community-based evaluations and has provided technical assistance to community-based organizations in the areas of strategic collaboration, youth leadership development, business and economic development, and vocational technical education. He has worked with national initiatives involving projects with numerous community-based and educational organizations in urban areas. Dr. Jennings and Dr. Barboza bring expertise in evaluative research and related methodologies, GIS, policy and legal analysis, and statistics. They also bring a wealth of experiences in working with a range of community organizations across Boston neighborhoods.

DSNI has worked intensively on collaborative data gathering, evaluation, and other data tools over the years. For example, In 1993, the Annie E. Casey Foundation selected DSNI as one of five grantees in the nation for its comprehensive community initiative The Rebuilding Communities Initiative. The evaluation included a resident survey (based on Claudia Coulton’s work), whose

purpose was to convert qualitative data about neighborhood quality and social capital into quantifiable measures. DSNI worked with the national evaluators, OMG Center for Collaborative Learning, and the survey technicians, Metis Associates, to hire, train, and supervise a team of resident-surveyors. In 1999, we worked with Project Hope in a study on the impact of welfare reform on community institutions. In 1998, we designed, implemented, and analyzed a parcel-by-parcel land survey to determine physical conditions in the community and to guide land use planning efforts. In 2003, we worked with Abt Associates to design and implement a Resident Buying Survey to provide a planning resource to potential small business entrepreneurs. Every year, GOTCHA, our youth jobs collaborative, administers 2 surveys: one is a high school survey, and the other is a survey to assess the youth participants' summer job experience. DSNI's community land trust is beta-testing a web-based data base that will allow us to provide land trust homeowners with information about their properties, as well as to conduct ongoing surveys that track the land trust's effectiveness at achieving its goals. In each of these projects, we invest in the capacity of the community to gather and use data for the benefit of the community, including program improvement.

d. Creating Formal and Informal Relationships to Generate Community Results

DSNI has formed significant and sometimes unexpected partnerships and relationships to benefit the community throughout our history. The unprecedented conveyance of eminent domain authority by the Boston Redevelopment Authority to DSNI to assemble vacant land for development is perhaps the best known example. Then-Mayor Ray Flynn honored the desire of this community to act on our own behalf when public and private policy agendas had failed miserably. DSNI's community land trust has benefited from the pro bono legal expertise of a major law firm, Goulston & Storrs, through partner David Abromowitz. Earlier this decade, when we were wrestling with a complex community agenda, one of our national funders had a futurist on their staff, trained in systems thinking. He took off his funder hat and worked with us to develop a thinking process that led us to identify levers for

change that continue to be our strategic focus areas. Today, we are experiencing the benefits, impacts and results that come from developing strong relationships in the context of a shared community agenda. Our ability to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the owner, the general contractor, the construction trade unions, as well as the advocates and residents led to the success in securing construction jobs at the Kroc Center.

John Barros, DSNI's Executive Director and Social Entrepreneur, is a 2007 Barr Fellow. The Barr Fellows program is designed to focus on developing relationships among emerging leaders across Boston, in order to facilitate better results across the city's neighborhoods. It is intended to honor the contributions of the Boston area's most gifted and experienced nonprofit and public school leaders by giving them an opportunity for replenishment, and by supporting their organizations during this time. These leaders (107 in all) primarily come from nonprofits working within education, environment, the arts, housing and social services. The growing diversity of our city, especially the increase in immigrant populations, also suggests that effective leaders must develop a global perspective, and the Fellowship offers the opportunity to develop this perspective to the group as a cohort. John's work with the Barr Fellows creates two opportunities for the BPI:

- Deep personal and professional connections to those who can help develop and implement new solutions for the BPI, and
- A learning community and cohort to focus on planning for BPI as a first phase of implementation, with the goal of expansion and replication within the coming years.

John is also a member of the Boston School Committee, and will help to identify a policy agenda – and move that agenda in support of BPI's proposed solutions. John is multilingual (English, Portuguese, Cape Verdean) and has deep ties in the Dudley neighborhood where he was born and raised. He has done 20 years of community organizing and represents DSNI on the Orchard Gardens K-8 and the Dearborn Middle School's Redesign Teams.

DSNI will also use the BPI Planning Year as an opportunity to cultivate leadership within and among the residents of our community. Using our principles of collaborative planning,⁷ we will ensure that the BPI Planning process is clear, transparent, useful and accessible.

e. Experience in Securing and Integrating Funding Streams From Multiple Private and Public Sources

Each of the Pathway Working Groups will be charged with coordinating all of the work of BPI with the many public and private agencies, philanthropies, community and faith based service organizations, and individuals to gather and leverage resources needed to support the financial sustainability of the implementation of the BPI. In addition, the Strategy Group will include neighborhood and citywide leaders who are responsible for the oversight of major public and private investments which are currently funding projects, solutions and new services in our community. DSNI has 25 years of experience in blending funds from multiple sources to support innovative project and neighborhood development. For example, in 1994, the Annie E. Casey Foundation selected DSNI as one of five grantees for its eight-year, multi-million dollar comprehensive community initiative, the Rebuilding Communities Initiative (RCI). Casey's theory about critical elements for revitalizing distressed communities included the ability to attract public and private investments. During the RCI period, DSNI was able to attract significant public dollars through investments in affordable housing, community centers, and parks, as well as public and private investments to support youth employment, resident leadership development, recreational and cultural activities, and parent organizing.

D. QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

THIS SECTION ADDRESSES ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #4, #5

DSNI is a collaborative coalition, and is already leveraging the shared strength, networks and skills of our partners to build this project application. Adult education providers, churches,

⁷ See Principles of Collaboration in **Other: Attachment 2**

community developers, homelessness prevention advocates, and neighborhood residents and teens sit at the same table to wrestle with issues facing the community. In the process of developing this application, we convened numerous public agencies, non-profit service providers, neighborhood health centers, parents, school principals, child development experts, our community action agency, academics, intermediaries and others in a planning group as well as in six focus groups (one for each of the emerging Pathway Working Groups).

In addition to the previously mentioned DSNI sponsored projects which will support BPI, we will work with many groups as outreach and implementation partners to ensure that full community engagement, development of shared values, and a shared action plan for improving education as a realistic and top priority.

Through our current work in Dudley Children Thrive (to become the Children Thrive Working Group), we have engaged a broad range of community members in small group dialogues and planning for improved readiness among our of community's children, birth to 5. Participants included non-English speaking immigrant parents, home visitors working with teen moms, family day care providers, shelter residents, caregiver grandparents, fathers and others. DSNI community engagement methods include:

- Door-knocking and phoning
- Town Hall style community meetings
- Block parties and community events
- Kitchen table conversations
- The DSNI Facebook page and groups
- Blogs and text messaging
- Dedicated web pages
- Email blasts using Constant Contact

The work of BPI will be managed in similar ways, through extending this kind of approach to planning to a broader group of residents, namely all children and also their families, and the community organizations that sustain and nurture them. A time-task plan for the planning year is included as **Other: Attachment 7** and outlines the specific steps as well as who is responsible for all

major tasks during the planning year.

1. **Plan to Sustain and Scale-Up the Promise Neighborhood**

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #4

The scaling up planning process will be a modified version of the planning process for Dudley and will build on the infrastructure of Thrive in Five and Circle of Promise. Building upon the groundwork from the planning year in terms of alignment, data, stakeholder engagement in Dudley, the Strategy Group will be able to effectively lead an intensive and accelerated planning process that yields a vision of impact, needs and asset assessments, goals, objectives and process and network maps in within an efficient timeframe.

The BPI will take a results-based approach to financing our work, tapping *all* available resources. This approach includes all the nontraditional resources and supports that naturally exist in communities and neighborhoods and all in-kind services that can be exchanged or adapted to new purposes. The organizing capacity of DSNI supports the use of informal as well as formal investments in projects and new approaches/solutions, bringing the benefits of not only additional resources as a result of an expanded pool but also cultural competence and relevance. Below is an explanation of the formal commitments from our partners, which will be combined and analyzed as part of a whole system when coupled with informal supports and resources.

- ***Thrive in Five*** will continue to invest in place-based solutions for very young children, in Dudley as well as in other Circle of Promise communities.
- ***The Opportunity Agenda*** (see **Other: Attachment 8** for a graphic depiction of the Opportunity Agenda's theory of change) will build and sustain supports both in- and out-of-school to ensure that children have the resources they need to overcome any barriers to success – and to be college ready by high school graduation.

- *Boston After-School and Beyond* will, through the Boston Navigator, offer a tracking and data management system which enables both Dudley and other Circle of Promise communities the tools needed to connect each child, regardless of which school they attend, to strong, high quality neighborhood programming.

2. Description of Commitment from Partners

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #5

DSNI is a resident-led community planning and organizing institution. We have over 4,000 members (see **Other: Attachment 5**). Membership is open to anyone who resides or organizations located in the Dudley area. DSNI is governed by a resident-led community collaborative, elected by the community. The work of DSNI, and therefore of the BPI is (and will be) done through committees made up of Board members and the broader DSNI membership, which includes parents, community groups, and others. The commitment from these residents and community leaders is thorough-going, as the work is planned, and implemented by the same people and partners who will live with the results. Please see Memorandum of Understanding for a full description of the BPI Governance Structure.

The core collaborators (planning partners from the neighborhood and beyond) in this project have committed to working long-term on implementing the plan, and to ensure programmatic success of each component. This is a citywide team of planning partners, each of whom has signed the MOU and also assigned staff and/or executives to participate in the future planning for BPI. Additionally, the core collaborators will, as part of the planning process, develop a strategy to hold each other and the team as a whole accountable for meeting performance goals and milestones, and for making course corrections during implementation to accommodate changes affecting our ability to reach goals and milestones. This group will become a local community of practice to interact regularly and meet

the challenges of planning for new solutions to persistent problems and improving practices in areas of importance to children's educational success.

Each of the core collaborators brings a wealth of resources, skills, and experience in developing place-based solutions to the process. Some of our core collaborators are described, with examples of their commitment and expertise, below:

Thrive in Five: Thrive in Five has already invested in place-based solutions for children in early childhood in five distressed neighborhoods. The project is relatively new and therefore results are preliminary but early analysis suggests that each of the Thrive communities (including Dudley) will be able to significantly improve the school-readiness of children in their areas.

Boston After School and Beyond (BASB): With more than 600 organizations and 1,400 program opportunities, BOSTONavigator (hosted by BASB) is Boston's most comprehensive on-line directory of out-of-school time programs. Users can search for programs by age, zip code, or type of activity, and soon, with the support of the Circle of Promise, the Navigator will be able to track children's participation and outcomes across multiple programs and in any neighborhood.

Action for Boston Community Development: ABCD brings a citywide infrastructure for service delivery to very low income families across most city neighborhoods. Through partnership, the BPI will have access to a tremendous array of services which can be coordinated to better support educational success for children, including food security, physical fitness, civic engagement and child care services.

DotWell (Health and Human Services Center): This key partner in building and improving public health offers an array of programs and support groups to their patients as well as members of the community members through a collaborative partnership between the Codman Square Health Center and the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center. Services are delivered where they are most

needed, at affiliate sites throughout their and adjacent neighborhoods. Dotwell will be working over the course of the planning year to determine the feasibility and potential impact of a new full-service community health center within the Orchard Gardens K-8.

E. SIGNIFICANCE

THIS SECTION ADDRESSES ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #6, #7

The BPI Planning Year is designed to result in long-term systems change and improvements to the systems which currently interfere with our community's children becoming high achievers in school and beyond. The planning process, designed to both organize the community and develop new shared solutions, will build the relationships, the rigorous commitment to data-informed decision making and the infrastructure (physical and social) needed to ensure implementation. This initiative is framed by a theory of change that emerges from DSNI's work and accomplishments in improving neighborhood living conditions, but it is also a theory of change with much, and growing support, among our partners.

Preliminary meetings with a range of potential participants, including educators, community representatives, service representatives and researchers have helped to inform a potential problem and challenge to resolve. We understand that this approach may change as the community needs assessment is being conducted and DSNI receives feedback regarding concerns and solutions. A theory of change proposes that a problem exists due to certain causal, correlative, or historical factors that if addressed systematically, can help to resolve the problem.

In the case of Boston and the designated target area, children are consistently not performing adequately on education achievement measures, and a significant number of children are involved with behavior that results in disciplinary actions or low academic achievement. The latter can easily point students towards failure, including dropping out of school at some point, not acquiring basic communication and writing skills as young adults, and even involvement with the criminal justice

system. As some individuals become parents, a cycle of failure is generated. This is a major problem and crisis for a number of children and young people in the target area. We propose that exposing children and youth, and their parents to a continuum of supportive human and social services, engaging and enriching out of school opportunities, "and rigorous, high quality instruction in school" and delivering such services in comprehensive and collaborative ways, versus a traditional silo approach, will encourage and generate more children to achieve academically. An underlying theory here is that children's development is affected by a number of interrelated factors in, and outside the school, and involving peers, friends, parents, and other actors in the neighborhood.

Although it is generally realized that issues like poverty, poor health, inadequate housing, parental unemployment, toxic conditions in the home and air, and other problems all affect learning, public schools don't have adequate resources to address them comprehensively. There are a number of limitations in this model which limit the impact of public schooling on the learning outcomes and accomplishments of children. One limitation is the little attention paid to adverse systemic conditions which affects local public schools, as well as neighborhood-based organizations. Another limitation is the absence of systems and strategies for tapping neighborhood-based assets and resources. Additionally, people and children are categorized into demographic boxes for purposes of service delivery. And, certainly, there is an absence of a continuum of services and solutions. As a matter of fact, children and families who progress in certain kinds of situations where they previously had a problem or need sometimes find that supportive services are withdrawn because they no longer qualify as 'a problem.' Under this current scenario, foundations and government inadvertently support organizations doing their own thing, versus being guided by a community strategy aimed at benefiting all children and families. Nonprofits and community based organizations can be efficient along several dimensions, including fiscal health, leadership, professional development, etc. But they

operate in a system where people in need are treated in categories, and where there is an absence of community-wide strategies responses to problems. This scenario encourages ‘islands’ or silos where local businesses, faith-based organizations, and public schools seek to do better, but as islands rather than as integral connected parts of a vibrant community.

DSNI proposes that focusing on the improvement of academic achievement, and the triggering of a culture of love of learning and accomplishment within this kind of collaborative, place-based neighborhood context, will point to higher levels of academic achievement and learning for children in the partner schools, and indirectly, their neighborhood friends and peers living next door to them. DSNI and our partners want to change this situation around by not only providing services and solutions from ‘cradle to career and/or college’ but do so in ways that strengthen the neighborhood context as a resource for children, and which result in lasting change among the agencies that provide support, solutions and services.

1. Description of Plan to Track Available Sources of Funding

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #6

The Strategy Group will be responsible for tracking available and current sources of funding for the new and existing solutions as well as for ongoing data-gathering, implementation monitoring and expansion. Engaging leaders of major funding sources within the City and the state, as well as those who have responsibility for the tracking of funding (within city government), will help to keep the information coordinated and up-to-date, and the BPI Strategy Group will create new tracking tools to enable community residents to easily determine what funding is coming into the community and what it is being spent on (as well as the results emerging in conjunction with those projects.).

2. Description of How BPI will Identify Policy/Regulatory Impediments to Goals

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1, #7

Through the Boston Promise Initiative, DSNI will work with partners in Boston and with Promise Neighborhoods organizations and collaborations in other cities to identify federal and state regulatory and policy barriers to making long-term investments in low-income communities, to sharing data, and to coordinating and integrating funding streams. DSNI will also examine policy impediments to progress such as the “cliff effect,” which affects poor families’ upward mobility. The Boston Promise Initiative will be an opportunity to coordinate the information and efforts of many partners; programs which too often work with the same families, independent of each other. With the goal of increasing collaboration in order to provide more seamless transitions for families from one service or program to another, BPI will examine the potential for sharing data, balancing the need for confidentiality with the value of integrating information to be more responsive to the needs of children and their families.

The Boston Promise Initiative team will examine accountability standards that, in pursuit of excellence and results, have resulted in a rigidity that can be unresponsive to the needs of families across cultures, language, and economic status. BPI will also identify and assess policies and regulations that, as outgrowths of and responses to residential housing patterns of the 1960s, resulted in educational segregation and busing, and led to a weakened ability to organize around and support community schools. Regulatory and policy remedies need to address past wrongs and unintended consequences that undermine community investment and control.