



November 19 5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Zoom: <https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/92461748993>

Summary of Conversation Topics

- Cambridge Youth Council Updates
- Shared understanding of the Language Justice Framework
- Agreement on updated proposal and next steps

Present:

Tina Alu, Branville Bard, Ben Clark, Sydney Down, Hiba Eddaif, Luba Feigenberg, Michelle Godfrey, Kim Goldstein, Irene Hill, Liz Hill, Claude Jacob, Michelle Lower, Maria McCauley, Bridget Rodriguez, Kenny Salim, Ellen Semonoff, Sumbul Siddiqui, Nancy Tauber, Tina Johnson, Andrew Liedtka, Rohan Kundargi, Emie Michaud Weinstock, Shayla Simmons, Atqiya Fairouz, Salma Boukouj, Elijah Lee-Robinson, Mohammad Jihad, Ester Serra, Hitomi Abe, Jen Baily, Melissa Peters, Robin Harris

Co-Chairs: Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui and Neal Michaels

Executive Director: Nancy Tauber

Notetaker: Sydney Down

5:15 Meeting Starts

- ❖ Welcome & Introductions
- ❖ Family Policy Council Business
 - Vote to adoption of Minutes (October 15, 2020 meeting)
 - Public Comment
 - Announcements
 - Enroot is hiring a new Senior Director of Development. Please share the job posting with your networks.
- ❖ Cambridge Youth Council Updates
 - Dignity in Schools Campaign -- CYC is part of this organization-
 - Welcoming new members -- 7 new members for 20/21 yr, first meeting this week 11/18 with introductions and project beginnings with the incorporation of new members. Grades -- 2 freshman, 2 sophomores, 2 juniors, 1 senior
 - Next Steps -- Members will be moving into subcommittees and they are planning their work for the year.CPS & Family Liaisons
- ❖ Presentations and Discussion:

- Family Policy Council Work Plan 2020-21 Proposal V.2 (See below)
- Building a Language Justice Plan Presentation (see below)
 - Hitomi Abe - Co-Leader Community Engagement Team - What it would mean to have a Language Justice framework for the city
 - Ester Serra Luque-Director of Community Services at Transition House - Overview of Language justice framework and process for developing a Language Justice plans
- Q&A-
 - At Transition house- using language justice plan only for transition house/ or for broader community? Language plans are very personalized, based on assessment of specifically Transition House, where we are now and what needs to be improved-- making adjustments accordingly. We share with others - the plan and journey in hopes that we will help other people achieve the same effect. Teaming up with other organizations to do even better and have greater uniform response.
- Breakout Group Discussions
 - Review Language Justice Framework and Family Policy Council Work Plan 2020-21 Proposal (See below)
- Whole Group Discussion
- Vote to adopt Family Policy Council Work Plan 2020-21 Proposal V. 2 - all voted yes

❖ Adjourn @7:15

Building a Language Justice Plan Presentation

- Community Engagement Team
- Transition House
- Definitions
 - Language Justice: When we refer to language justice, we mean the right everyone has to communicate in the language in which we feel most comfortable.
 - Multilingual space: We don't just mean a space where many languages are spoken, but spaces where there is a commitment to equality among languages, as well as a resistance to the dominance of any one language in the room
 - Dominant Language: Language that is privileged over others in a space or society.
 - Non-Dominant Language: Language that is not privileged in a space or society.
 - Interpreter: Converts oral or signed messages from one language to another
 - Translator: Converts written messages from one language to another
 - Language Access is connected to the right that every person has to communicate in the languages they are most comfortable in and it can manifest as:
 - Translating an organization's website into the languages most commonly used by community members.

Allocate resources

Money!



Look at your budget and see where you can reallocate **funds**

Research language access **grants**

Explore **partnerships**

Educate your **funders!!**



Time



Don't rush it. **Plan for the long haul.**

Build the work into your **staff's roles**, **don't make** it an added **burden.**

Don't forget to allocate time for **evaluation!**

Planning



Create a **working group** and/or **assign a point person**

Build partnerships with culture/ language specific community groups.

Build it in your **budget**

Create a **Language Plan!**



Food for Thought

- Advocating for a client does NOT mean interpreting for a client.
- Being bilingual does NOT mean being an interpreter or translator.
- Language is a site of both trauma and healing. ([Grounswell, Oral History for Social Change](#))
- When we refer to language justice, we mean the right everyone has to communicate in the language in which we feel most comfortable.
- Language impacts us on a multiplicity of levels. It is a phenomenon that is both intimate and exterior, both familial and cultural, deeply connected to our most private thoughts and on display in all manner of public contexts. We dream in language, we sing in language, we think in language. It is language that makes our lullabies, our stories, our jokes. We use language to name our food, our hometowns, our family members, our friends, ourselves. Language is personal, visceral, and powerful; it is tied to our lands, to our bodies, to our relationships, and to our knowledge. Every time we speak or sign in our particular accents and dialects, syntax and rhythms, cadences and inflections, we identify ourselves and bring social history and personal experience with us. (<http://antenaantena.org/>)

Family Policy Council Work Plan 2020-21 Proposal V.2

LANGUAGE JUSTICE

The Family Policy Council will investigate ways to develop city-wide supports and systems to ensure language justice and provide language access resources to families and providers; if appropriate, the council will develop recommendations for implementation.

We are defining language justice as the right everyone has to communicate, to understand and to be understood in the language(s) in which they feel most comfortable.

Language access includes written translation, interpretation/live translation, cultural translation, civic engagement, and social justice.

MATH MATTERS FOR EQUITY

The Family Policy Council will determine how FY21 funding should be allocated to support efforts to realize our vision that all young people in Cambridge graduate from high school equipped with the mathematical and problem solving skills, financial literacy, and growth mindset to successfully pursue their goals for education, career, and adult life.

FAMILY POLICY COUNCIL 2020-21 DRAFT WORK PLAN (Last updated 11-13-2020)

Focus Area: Language Justice

PHASE	TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS	ROLES
DISCOVERY <i>Lead an information gathering and needs assessment process to identify needs, gaps and key players.</i>	November Meeting (11/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Family Policy Council Area of Focus 2020-21 and Language Access Work Plan Presentation and Discussion: Transition House Language Justice Plan 	
	November - February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group will lead the discovery phase, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying key questions and methods for gathering information from families and providers/agencies - language access needs, feedback, and inventory of what they are currently doing. Collecting data and gathering information from families and providers/agencies. Researching best practices and what other communities are doing. Cambridge Youth Council will gather information on youth experiences and recommendations. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group (members TBD) <i>JOB DESCRIPTION</i> Cambridge Youth Council
	January Meeting (1/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present demographic data Share lessons from other communities Check in on progress of the working groups 	Working Group & CYC will share their progress to date on data collection
	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create summaries to share data and information collected by the working groups Determine budget request 	Working Group & CYC will create a summary to share at the February meeting
PLAN <i>Utilize the information collected</i>	February Meeting (2/11)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share the summaries and the key themes from the discovery process Make meaning of the data 	

<i>during the discovery phase to identify and prioritize potential actions.</i>	March Meeting (3/18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lead an action planning session to brainstorm and prioritize potential policies, practices, resources and actions based on the findings from the discovery process ● Discuss options for where the ongoing work could be housed or located 	
IMPLEMENT <i>Make recommendations regarding policies, practices, data and/or resources.</i>	March - April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft a report that summarizes the findings from the discovery phase and the recommendations from the planning phase 	
	April Meeting (4/15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present draft report with recommendations and gather feedback ● Recommend a place for the work to be sustained into the future 	
	May Meeting (5/13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalize report ● Develop a communications plan ● Discuss next steps 	

Focus Area: Math Matters for Equity

PHASE	TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS	ROLES
PLAN	November - January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Utilize information collected last year to identify and prioritize how to allocate funds. 	Math Matters for Equity Working Group
	January Meeting (1/21)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present recommendations 	Math Matters for Equity Working Group
IMPLEMENT	February - May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide funding ● Write report 	Nancy and those who receive funding
	May Meeting (5/13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present report ● Discuss next step 	Nancy and those who receive funding

NOTES - BREAKOUT GROUPS

Language Justice Learnings:

- How can we internalize it?
- Language Access in the short term, and continue until Language Justice

- We often think of it as a service or a means to an end, rather than a whole person vs. a technical service
- We need to think of all our work through a language justice framework
- There is a difference between interpreting/translating and actual understanding
- Taking a moment to pause and respect without assumptions
- If the City makes a real commitment to Language Justice, it could make a huge difference and transform the City.
- Inability to communicate can set someone up to fail
- Understanding the impact of trauma and language.
- Being multilingual and bilingual is an asset
- Rethink how we update the community
- It's a difficult balance to celebrate everyone's culture/language and having to have a common language to communicate.
- Connection to Racial Justice and Equity work currently happening
 - This work can really help us achieve something that has been a challenge. Being ready to really hear the voices of all our families in our community to better serve our community.
 - This work can build upon the City's racial justice work. More Work is needed.
 - City struggles with outreach and needs to do a better job reaching all people in Cambridge (part of the decision-making process, input on projects and take advantage of opportunities available)
 - How do we know we are reaching people and not missing them?
 - How do we provide info to people so their interest will be piqued and result in more engagement and empowerment
 - We need to clearly communicate what the decision processes are and how to be involved.

VISION

- What would language justice look like? Do a visioning session for language justice.
- At what point do we welcome up with a vision and steps to reach our vision?
- How to create a system - institutionalize language justice?
- Can we really create multilingual spaces?

Discovery Phase

- Where is a good place to start that is not too daunting for FPC? (access then justice)
 - There is a tension between solving immediate problems and culture shift
- Identify immediate and practical areas where we can make progress to support families
- What has/is already being done? What's working? Challenges? Suggestions?
- Learn from CET and Family Liaisons - what works and does not work
- Who else needs to be included?
 - Families
 - Cambridge Public Schools

- City Departments
- Library
- Police Department
- Nonprofits
- Business sector
- Clergy - Talk to Taja Jennings
- Dan R from City Manager's Office
- Department of Multicultural Affairs and Patient Services - Cambridge Health Alliance - Aviot Qessa
- *Gloria Maji (ask Michelle who this is)*
- Input from families and providers (those who work with families directly):
 - How will we hear directly from families and youth directly about their needs?
 - What the obstacles are
 - Find out their nuanced experiences
 - When have you really felt welcomed
 - Need to talk to excluded families
 - Broad-based survey to start - How likely are you to go to the library and ask for...? How likely are you to attend a City Council or School Committee meeting?
- Cambridge demographics
 - What data should we be looking at?
 - What is the turnover rate (people moving in and out of Cambridge)
- Can we compensate working group members and those who help us with this work?

Concerns

- Concerned about the timeline for discovery by February and full report by May.
- Cost!

What is the Role of the Family Policy Council?

- Start building internal knowledge and practice these things in your own space so you can then engage people from different sectors, city departments, etc. FPC members are great spokespeople for this work.
- Determine who is responsible and where Language Justice and Language Access will "live" so that this work is sustainable. Sustainability must be strong-- not person or individually dependent, must be systemic change!
- How can we come up with a plan that is usable and practical? The Transition House plan does not directly translate to FPC
- Would FPC be making recommendations to the City? School Committee? City Council?
- How do we help organizations do this work, share best practices and coordinate efforts?
- What are the budget implications? What should FPC be doing to pay for this work?
- How will we know we are successful?
- Commitment, \$ and support are needed.
- Support and uplift things that are already happening.

Specific Ideas

- Include American Sign Language
 - Impact of using acronyms and not breaking down culture
 - Include American Sign Language
 - Language Justice Ambassadors throughout the city
 - Need to be mindful of “the right way of speaking English” vs. How we may have been raised/taught to speak.
 - How to treat people when they are hard to understand?
 - Ask people what language they would like to communicate in
 - Training for interpreters and translators. Training youth to become interpreters (MSYEP). Career opportunities for young people.
 - How can we take advantage of technology (and move beyond Google translate)?
 - Help care caregivers communicate the needs of their family, children, and themselves - burden should not fall to the children.
 - Matahari Women Workers' Center: Movement Language Justice School Fellowship - Train up to 15 bilingual community members in language interpretation best practices, language justice principles, and community organizing. For more information, contact Jessica Oliveria at jessica@mataharijustice.org
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