



April 15, 2021 5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

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

Summary of Conversation Topics

- Cambridge Youth Council Updates
- Find It Cambridge Update
- Language Justice Discovery Phase Presentation and Discussion

Present:

Co-Chairs: Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui and Neal Michaels

Members: Tina Alu, Branville Bard, Ron Benham, Ben Clark, Hiba Eddaif, Luba Feigenberg, Michelle Godfrey, Kim Goldstein, Irene Hill, Liz Hill, Claude Jacob, ~~Mike Johnston~~, David Kale, Michelle Lower, Alanna Mallon, Maria McCauley, ~~Geeta Pradhan~~, Bridget Rodriguez, ~~Kenny Salim~~, Ellen Semonoff, Tagesech Wabeto, ~~Ayesha Wilson~~, **Executive Director:** Nancy Tauber

Notetaker: Sydney Down

Find It Manager: Andrew Liedtka

Cambridge Youth Council (CYC) Coordinator: Tina Johnson

CYC Members: Kaliab Kebede, Rhodes Pate, Samia Afrose, Salma Bokouj, Ziya Forbes, Hiba Eddiaf

Guests: Robin Harris, Shayla Simmons, Christine Elow, Rohan Kundargi, Carolyn Turk, Lindsay Diaz, Ester Serra Luque, Kate Thurman

5:15 Meeting Starts

Welcome & Agenda Overview

Family Policy Council Business

- Adoption of Minutes (March 18, 2021)
- Public Comment
- Announcements
 - CET/Family Policy Council Networking Event - April 29 10-12:30
 - New Guaranteed income pilot over 18 months is beginning
 - I Vote Sticker - CRLS Graphic Design students are designing 2.5" round stickers . I vote will be translated into 6 other languages besides English. English, Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Bengla, Amharic, and Arabic. We are going to narrow down the choices then CET outreach workers, CYC members, and poll workers will vote on the winner. Designs are due May 21 and we should have a winner by June 4th.
- CYC Updates
 - Mental Health and Racism Subcommittee
 - Working with other student unions at CRLS to create spaces for students enduring racism and mental health

- Attending school and city council meetings
 - CRLS participatory budgeting passed a project to open designated classrooms for mental health resources, a previous idea of CYC
 - RAW perspectives Jubilee (youtube debate series) style conversation is to be conducted and recorded in the upcoming week.
 - Improving Guidance Support at CRLS Subcommittee most recently met with the head of guidance and is currently debriefing their meeting with her.
 - Vote16 Subcommittee attending state-wide Vote 16 organization/ campaign meetings.
 - Cambridge Community Foundation posted a story about the CYC/BSU Fundraiser - <http://bit.ly/BSUCYC>
- Presentation on challenges and benefits of virtual organizing and time for Q and A with members
 - Appreciating the ability to be together as a group in person more than ever. The work the council does is much more easily productive when they are able to collaborate, bond and create safe spaces with each other.
 - New members who have connections to other organizations, initiatives, clubs in the city are finding ease in connecting the organizations due to their overlap and collaborative nature of efforts of young people in the city.
 - Vote16 has been able to connect with HerVote club at CRLS this year to combine efforts to lower the voting age and fight for voting rights.
- Find It Updates
 - Number of engaged users of Find It Cambridge
 - FY19 - 32,696
 - FY20 - 46,283 (+41.5%)

Presentation and Discussion: Language Justice Working Group Discovery Phase

KEY LEARNINGS

- **Language access is more than meeting legal requirements and technical assistance. It's about language justice!**
- **Funding** is needed!!!
- Commit to a **phased rollout** (can't do it all at once).
- Need to support our community **partners**
- Garner **buy-in** from leadership.
- Incorporate **accountability** mechanisms.
- Lead with a **continuous improvement** mindset and process.
- Build off of **existing** efforts.
- Organizations rely on **staff** but don't necessarily pay or train them.
- Most organizations don't have a **budget** for translation and interpretation.
- **Burden** is often placed on the people who need help.
- Organizations **rely on individuals** to identify their own language needs.
- About half of organizations provide translation and interpretation, those who do often use Google Translate.
- Limited English Proficient (**LEP**) individuals provide their own interpreters.
- There is **limited infrastructure** for language access (no policies, plans or training).

- Majority of people **do not know** about language access resources available in Cambridge, but they want to **learn more and collaborate**.

RESEARCH-BASED STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Organizational Infrastructure

- **Budget!**
- **Dedicated Staff** (coordinate efforts for the city and partners)
- **Department Liaisons** (support language access efforts)
- **Digital Specialist** (website, video, digital materials accessibility)
- **Community Language Access Team** including city, school and community partners

Learning Community

- Regularly get **feedback** from the community
- Strategize how to use **shared** vendors, technical assistance, staffing, etc.
- Continue to **learn** from other communities

Personnel, Hiring and Training

- Offer training to all to ensure best practices in customer service, cultural translation and hiring and retaining **multilingual staff**
- Develop a **Language Access Complaint Process** and **Multilingual Employee Incentive Program**

Shared Resources and Tools

- Maintain an **online resource** available to city, school and community partners
 - Toolkits and Guidelines
 - Translation and interpretation services directory
 - Training opportunities
 - Equipment
 - iSpeak cards and posters
 - Vital documents

Language Access Policies & Plans

If we design and implement thoughtful, strong language access policies and plans, **then** our community members will be understood, valued, and have equitable access to all available services and resources. Cambridge will be a more **welcoming**, more **democratic**, and a more **just** city.

BREAKOUT GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What did you notice? What surprised you?
2. What else do we need to learn?
3. What advice do you have for the working group as they continue to develop the strategies and recommendations?

SUMMARY

- Are we ready to support language justice work in Cambridge?
- Language Justice includes persons with disabilities **and** LPOE (Language Preferred Other than English) individuals. Communications need to make sure this is clear and explicit.

- Other Cities: How did they start? Who did they hire?
- Define the problem(s) we are trying to solve
 - Find out what the end users really want/need (beyond the numbers and stats)
 - “Don’t create programs for us, without us.”
 - Ask those who are directly impacted
 - Ask providers who work directly with the public
 - Ask multilingual staff what they need and what LPOE individuals need
- Where to start? Prioritize recommendations and then test some out
 - Focus on schools first
 - CEOC Candidate Night model – use all simultaneous translation
 - Zoom - Use “Closed Caption” function
 - Ispeak cards & posters and cards that say “Hold on, I’m going to get someone to help me translate”.
- Staffing (language access, disabilities, and digital support)
 - Figure out how to recruit and retain multilingual staff
 - What is working now and not working?
 - Hire staff with lived experiences to coordinate language access
 - Just because staff are bilingual, it does not mean they have the skills to do translation and interpretation
- Training
 - More coordinated
 - Focus on language justice, cultural translation, customer service, anti racism, inclusion, diversity
 - All staff should know how to support PwD and LPOE individual
 - Help create a pathway for people to become interpreters and/or translators.
- Communications
 - Make sure community and providers knows what is available
 - Include young people! (it is stressful for the children who are doing the translating/interpreting, as well as the parents.
- Partner with businesses
 - What would be win/win opportunities for City and businesses (ex. Narcan training)
 - Define the role of businesses
 - Find out if other cities are partnering with businesses?
- Survey - break it down by city, school, partners
- Build off of existing efforts
 - Ask Amigos School what they do
 - Incorporate the Family Engagement Statement adopted by the City Council and School Committee

Children and teens thrive when policy makers, schools, and city and community organizations partner with families to actively support children’s learning, development, and well-being. It is our shared responsibility to engage each other in meaningful and culturally respectful ways. This effort is continuous across a child’s life from birth to adulthood and carried out everywhere they learn and grow.
 Developed by the Birth-3rd Grade Partnership Family Engagement & Partnership Subcommittee

QUESTIONS

- Is it better to be imperfect or not do it at all?

- What technology is available?
- How does disabilities fit in with this work? Consider the neurodiversity needs of the consumers?
- Staff who translate and interpret - how much time does that take out of staff time?
- What will the budget be for FY21?

7:15 Adjourn