**Literacy Task Force, City of Boston**

Boston City Hall, Room 966

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5707867623?pwd=NmcyTEgvb1NlcWNBUGwrTHA0aVBYUT09>

October 30, 2023, 10-11am

**Task Force Members**

* Dr. Edith Bazile, Black Advocates for Educational Excellence
* Yorsalem Brhane, BINCA
* Manuel Coronado, Immigrants Lead Boston alum
* Lori D’Alleva, Charlestown Adult Education
* Xiomara Gomez, Gardner Pilot Academy Adult ESOL program
* Lee Haller, English for New Bostonians
* Stephen Hunter, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
* Nicole Simeon, Bunker Hill Community College, First Literacy Scholar
* City Councilor Julia Mejia, *ex officio*
* Gayana Daniel, Office of Language and Communications Access, *ex officio*
* Papa Diop, Boston Centers for Youth and Families, *ex officio*
* David Leonard, Boston Public Libraries, *ex officio*
* Lesley Ryan Miller, Boston Public Schools, *ex officio*
* Monique Tú Nguyen, Mayor’s Office for Immigrant Advancement, *ex officio*
* Trinh Nguyen, Worker Empowerment Cabinet, *ex officio*

Facilitator, Dr. Elizabeth Santiago, *The Untold Narratives*

**City of Boston Staff for Task Force**

* Mariangely Solis Cervera, Chief of Equity and Inclusion
* Ân H. Lê, Director of Policy and Research, Equity and Inclusion Cabinet
* Meghan Crowley, Policy Fellow, Equity and Inclusion Cabinet

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**Prework:**

* None

**Meeting Goals:**

By the end of this meeting we will:

1. Continue to build community with each other as literacy task force members.

2. Building on our previous discussion, review the updated definition of literacy and data collection methods documents

3. Discuss next steps related to budget and timeline

**Agenda**

10:00-10:05: Settle in, welcome, quick review of agenda

10:05-10:15: Updates on where we are as we near the end of the year

10:15-10:30: Review updated definition of literacy

10:30-10:45: Review updated data collection methods

10:45-11:00: Determine next steps schedule next meeting, Final questions, comments, and wrap-up

**Attendance**

* Lori D’Alleva
* Papa Diop
* Yorsalem Brhane
* Brooke Machado & Joseph Le, for Trinh Nguyen
* Manuel Coronado
* Lee Haller
* Xiomara Gomez
* Trinh Nguyen
* Mario Paredes, for Monique Nguyen
* Gayana Daniel
* Nicole Simeon
* Stephen Hunter
* Dr. Liz Santiago
* Meghan Crowley
* Ân Lê

**Minutes**

1. Santiago: Overview of agenda, let members know that documents that will be sent in the zoom chat or hand outs for those in person.
2. Review updated definition of literacy: Revised definition after sub-committee of Machado, Bazile, and Ryan Miller to determine definition and the feedback members gave at the September meeting.
   1. Santiago: Read definition:
      1. “We define literacy as the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute, and use digital, printed and written materials to interact with the world around us. Not limited to reading and writing, literacy also includes speaking and listening, as well as applying numeracy with enough skill and confidence to make informed decisions and feel confident in communicating needs. We believe literacy enables our residents to reach their full potential as individuals, parents, families and community members, students and workers. Literacy starts at home with families reading, writing, speaking and listening to each other in English and in other native languages, and extends into school, community, work and recreational activities.”
   2. Feedback/notes:
      1. Nguyen: Great work on this! I assume that this is also adapted from MA/DESE and the industry standards as well? DESE’s biggest chunk of programs are in Boston. They're the largest funder of adult literacy in the state. Good to get their feedback. Brooke, if you can send the Task Force a draft/final letter to support the legislative this in process- the one we co-drafted with the Childcare team
      2. Santiago: Brooke, thank you for sending anything my way
      3. Machado: Resources were from national orgs and they might differ from states. We have something that's very close and in alignment with National standards.
      4. Santiago: Anything else needing refinement or work? It’s a working definition so if things come up, we can refine as we go along. At the last meeting Councilor Mejia asked if we could discuss this with community members. That is coming, probably in 2024.
      5. Hunter: So we will have time to circle back?
      6. Santiago: Yes, happy to hear feedback and incorporate it for all.
   3. Santiago: On the 3rd page of the definition report, it mentions the end of year report. Santiago is working on documents to help piece this report together.

3. Review updated data collection methods: Santiago passed out Existing Data Sources documents (in chat and physical copies). Edited based on the idea of a report and to get a sense of literacy rates in Boston.

* 1. Santiago: Proposing that we start by looking at current data and use additional data sources to see what the needs are. Recommendations for 2024 and beyond can use this as a beginning point. Are there data sources that are missing? Do you have any thoughts of getting the community voice?
     1. Feedback:
        1. Machado: Offering up another data source <https://www.oecd.org/skills/piaac/>
        2. Haller: Census and ACS
     2. Santiago: Does it feel mostly complete? Like a good start?
        1. Gomez: <https://abhealthcollaborative.org/>
        2. Machado: Literacy volunteers of America
        3. Hunter: What is all the data? Include higher ed. resources. Are MCAS sources incorporated there?
        4. Santiago: I can put that with BPS data
        5. Haller: Migration Policy Institute has good summaries by state of the census and ACS <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/migration-data-hub?qt-data_hub_tabs=0#datahub-tabs>
        6. Machado: Native language literacy. I’m familiar with a few programs in Boston that offer native language literacy classes in español. Came to mind because I was trying to think about who wouldn’t we catch in this list. There might be more, other small orgs, that support members of their language community.
        7. Gomez: <https://www.braziliancenter.org/>
        8. Gomez: I thinking organization that I know in my area Allston/Brighton
        9. Daniel: BPDA can help with that.
        10. Santiago: This is a good place to start. If other things come to mind, feel free to email me. I want to start putting a report together in the beginning of December.
  2. Santiago: The additional data sources people brainstormed to add at the last meeting were: page on City website, public campaign to make sure we can connect with folks all over the city, bringing a team together to talk to folks one on one, storytelling collection campaign, continue to work with programs for folks housed in prisons or shelters, and partnering with BPS to connect with students and parents.
     1. Santiago: Does this still feel like the right way to go?
        1. Hunter: I think we should start with community based orgs. Using literacy to connect with people who are illiterate is counterproductive. Being literate in one dialect is very different from another dialect. Reading and writing is even more complicated. Folks would be more trusting of word of mouth than a QR code.
        2. Santiago: That is what I was trying to capture.
        3. Hunter: This is definitely going in the right direction. Someone will be able to measure information collected. Similar to certifying credentials.
        4. Santiago: Any other thoughts?
        5. Paredes: Thinking of signing and ASL community. Who would we be reaching out to to get thoughts from the community on that?
        6. Nguyen: Great work. I think about adult basic education and ESOL, when those two intersect. Someone put some boundaries around it as well. English as a second language coupled with ADE has more richness or complex issues to help us shape strategis. On the strategies piece, is there an inventory of all resources available in Boston? We can plug that into the effort of a larger strategy. Chief Servera had us looking into programs for youth and we filled out that survey for her and that gave her an idea of what the scan is.
        7. Lê: We can use that template and adjust for this population.
        8. Nguyen: Looking at repositories of resources so a longstanding partner doesn't say they've been doing that work but haven't been contacted.
        9. Santiago: We want to take stalk of what’s already there. Good point.
        10. Santiago: Any other thoughts?
        11. Machado: Partnering with individuals or orgs to make sure info is sought in an appropriate way. Speaking back to Stephen’s point.
        12. Hunter: Including community health workers. They’re already on the ground in many communities.
  3. Santiago: Wanted to brainstorm things to take into consideration when making a budget request. Data gathering, looking for gaps, would require approval to put out RFP. I’m looking at the budget implications of that. Stipend and gift cards to pay people for their time for the data gathering component as well. Web development will take a chunk of the budget.
     1. Lê: Would that be the City website?
     2. Santiago: I’m not sure. It would be great for the City website.
     3. Lê: Something on every page or one page on the City website?
     4. Santiago: How do we create a page that could be a model for other pages?
     5. Lê: Depends on best practices. CoB uses websites that allow staff to make edits. Conversation with the website team may be needed.
     6. Santiago: Adding elements to a page as opposed to overhauling.
     7. Santiago: Someone asked for exemplars and there aren't. If anyone finds one let me know.
     8. Machado: City of Houston mayor’s office has a website where they list events and networking opportunities. Not sure if its an exemplar, but example of what another City is doing with this info for their residents <https://www.houstontx.gov/adultliteracy/>
     9. Machado: I have a couple other cities in mind, I’ll take a look and will send any I find to Dr. Santiago after the meeting.
     10. Gomez: Can you share the website through email?
     11. Santiago: Yes, we will send notes.
     12. Santiago: I just wanted to start looking at what we will ask for in 2024. Does anyone have any other ideas?
         1. Gomez: Is there information on events for things like this?
         2. Santiago: No. We hope to do that with this. I will add events to my list.
         3. Lê: We are waiting on recs
         4. Hunter: Looking at how this will actually work in the real world. Data gathering and stipends will be expensive real quick. Grassroots data collector stipends sound more attainable. Similar to Census with recruiting people who are already out in the community to do data collection. It would be possible to figure out stipend or coupons or some other benefit to get grassroots to reach out to the neighborhood. Could make it a competition for who can get the most. That can be the website where people go to site to get info they need to go out into the community to do the work.
     13. Santiago: Any further thoughts of feedback, please email me.
     14. Paredes: For data gathering, would it make sense to find University partnerships for the outreach? Maybe UMAss has a program
     15. Santiago: We will add that to list

4. Wrap-Up: Thank you for your time & email Santiago with any feedback or thoughts.