



Mayor Michelle Wu

Literacy Task Force, City of Boston

Zoom

February 26, 12-1 pm

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, Intern, Equity and Inclusion Cabinet

Guests from Northeastern University

- Evelis Cruz
 - Cameron Ackerman-Faedi
 - Laura Fusaro
 - Lydia Butler-Orr
 - Leah Peters
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Peworkk

- Review recommendations report
- Review materials from Northeastern team (materials to come)

Meeting Goals:

By the end of this meeting we will:

1. Build community as literacy task force members.
2. Build on our previous discussion to set the stage for our work in 2024.
3. Discuss initial findings from Northeastern University's research team.

Agenda

- 12:00-12:05: Settle in, welcome, quick review of agenda
- 12:05-12:15: Re-acclimate ourselves to the work of the Task Force by reviewing the Recommendations document and introducing Northeastern University team and their role in supporting the task force
- 12:15-12:50: Presentation and discussion of Northeastern University's initial research findings
- 12:50-1:00: Determine next steps, schedule next meeting, discuss potential future presentations, final questions, comments, and wrap-up

Attendance

- Papa Diop
- Manuel Coronado
- Nicole Simeon
- Melissa Theroux (for David Leonard)
- Lee Haller
- Gayana Daniel
- Yorsalem Brhane
- Lydia Butler-Orr (NEU)
- Evelis Cruz (NEU)
- Cameron Ackerman (NEU)



- Laura Fusaro (NEU)
- Leah Peters (NEU)
- Mario Paredes (for Monique Tú Nguyen)
- Lesley Miller
- Trinh Nguyen
- Edith Bazile
- Dr. Liz Santiago
- Meghan Crowley

Minutes

1. Santiago: Welcome, introductions, quick review of agenda
2. Santiago: Review of where Recommendations document is: Recommendation doc was submitted to Chief Solis-Cervera
3. Presentation from Northeastern University team on the state of literacy in Boston
 - a. Butler-Orr: Overview of how the data is divided into 4 subsections (The State of Literacy for: Students (K-12), Adults, English Language Learners/Limited English Speakers, & Incarcerated Individuals)
 - i. Haller: Can you explain more about the 4 subsections of data?
 - ii. Butler-Orr: The adults subsection includes all adults, no distinctions. The English Language Learners/Limited English Speakers section includes both children and adults, but there is far more data on children and students.
 - b. Butler-Orr: Overview of state of literacy for Students K-12 resources
 - c. Cruz: Overview of state of literacy for English Language Learners/Limited English Speakers resources
 - i. Paredes: In case it is helpful and you have not seen it yet, here is a recent report on newly arrived immigrant students and there is a section that talks about literacy:
<https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/Rising%20Number%20Unmet%20Needs.pdf>
 - d. Fusaro: Overview of the state of literacy for Adults resources
 - e. Peters: Overview of the state of literacy among Incarcerated Individuals resources



- f. Cruz: Overview of gaps in data
- g. Cruz: Overview of recommendations for phase two
- 4. Discussion and questions on Northeastern Team's presentation
 - a. Santiago: Feel free to also send any questions later if they come up.
 - b. Santiago: When you say "practical" what do you mean? I was wondering about digital literacy and wondered if there might be limited data there
 - c. Miller: What's the definition of practical literacy? What are the data points in terms of students in BPS that we want to get a sense of? We should touch base and put in a request to the data team here.
 - d. Butler-Orr: Literacy in terms of life related and day to day responsibilities. Example is communicating with a doctor. NEU team will come up with data points that would be helpful.
 - e. Santiago: Did digital literacy come up in any of the categories you looked at?
 - f. Butler-Orr: Some mentions of digital literacy, but from what I could see it wasn't a huge focus of the data. I can make a note to dive deeper into that moving forward.
 - g. Cruz: I looked for that in the ESL category, not much of a focus on measuring digital literacy.
 - h. Nguyen: Worker Empowerment wants to thank the task force members and NEU team. A major challenge in this work for us is the k-12 and adult basic education literacy rates are very broad scopes. There are different sets of challenges for different needs. What are your thoughts on that complexity?
 - i. Butler-Orr: It's meaningful to hear you say that it would be helpful to break down the subcategories further. Most of the data we found wasn't broken down into these subsections. That is something we can make note of and include as we go.
 - j. Cruz: This data is unfortunately not broken down, so we have to work from the ground up.
 - k. Haller: Thank you for that question Trinh and I think the thorough research of the team really shows the limitations of the existing data sources.
 - l. Paredes: MLRI launched a statewide Digital Equity Project and formed a Digital Equity Work so it might be worth reaching out to them or the MA Broadband Institute:



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<https://broadband.masstech.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/MA%20SDEP%20FINAL%2011.13.pdf>

5. Santiago: NEU team, can you share about phase 2 of your work?
 - a. Butler-Orr: Phase 2 is a survey as well as survey roadmap. Now we have on our radar to add subsections to the survey to address specific age groups, native language, etc. We would love to hear other ideas. Plan to start program research on best practices for disseminating a survey like this. The survey will hopefully fill gaps discovered in data.
 - b. Haller: What is the timeframe for this survey?
 - c. Butler: In the first week of April we will have a deployable survey ready.
 - d. Haller: Stating goals will be helpful in the survey. Goals over why
 - e. Santiago: I will send a follow-up email with information about another NEU group that is doing work on literacy equity. They would be happy to come talk about their work.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gLiUHCwY_xy1n3ju5aWKmuOEXvKCCJ5PKPre5GW9omw/edit#heading=h.mecx5y20stuq
6. Meeting ended at 1:00pm.