



January 20, 2022 5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

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

Summary of Conversation Topics

- CYC Updates
- Welcome new members
- Review purpose of Family Policy Council
- Superintendent Greer's Entry Plan

Present:

Chair: Mayor Siddiqui

Members: ~~Tina Au~~, Akriti Bhambi, Christine Elow, Fred Fantini, Wendy Georgan, Bob Gittens, Sophie Goldman, Michelle Godfrey, Kim Goldstein, Victoria Greer, Liz Hill, Tabbie Howard, ~~Mike Johnston~~, David Kale, ~~Christine Kim~~, Elijah Lee-Robinson, Michelle Lower, ~~Alanna Mallon~~, Maria McCauley, Derrick Neal, Geeta Pradhan, Bridget Rodriguez, Ellen Semonoff, Tagesech Wabeto, Elaine Wen

Executive Director: Nancy Tauber

Find It Manager: ~~Andrew Liedtka~~

Cambridge Youth Council (CYC) Coordinator and Notetaker: Ty Ruwe

CYC Members: Jonathan Akbari

Guests: Rohan Kundargi, Khari Milner

5:15 Meeting Starts

Welcome & Agenda Overview

- Introduce the new members:
 - School Committee members - Fred Fantini and Akriti Bhambi
 - New Chief Public Health Officer - Derrick Neal
 - Youth Representatives - Sophie Goldman, Elijah Lee-Robinson, and Elaine Wen
 - 2 Community-at-Large Representatives - Wendy Georgan and Tabbie Howard
- Introductions (Name, pronouns, connection to Family Policy Council)

Family Policy Council Business

- Adoption of Minutes (Nov 18, 2021)
 - Adopted
- Public Comment
- Announcements

- Andrew Liedtka had a baby girl this morning - 12:03am. Everyone is doing well.
- February 10 at 9:30 CET and the Family Policy Council are hosting a networking event (Language Justice Part 3: "Plain Language" Best Practices
- The applications for the city scholarship are open. Due March 7th. \$3000 per scholarship. Last year they awarded 240k. This year, for the first time, folks can submit their application online. Open to folks attending college, high school, or in a post-grad program. Donations accepted! Check or online payment.
- Birth to Third scholarship outreach has started for next year!
- Ed Redesign is focusing on Success Planning for Each student initiative. Webinar coming up speaking more about it called Strategies for Supporting Students During the Last Covid Surge
 - <https://edredesign.org/events>

CYC Updates -

- Cambridge Youth Council and CRLS Black Student Union [2nd Annual MLK Fundraiser Challenge](#). They hope to raise \$10,000 by Valentine's Day. This year they are giving to 10 organizations in Cambridge who help the unhoused.
<https://cambridgecf.networkforgood.com/projects/151171-cyc-bsu-2022-mlk-day-fundraiser>
- Tonight CYC members are helping out at Incoming Freshman Night at CRLS. They will facilitate breakout sessions with 8th graders.
- MBTA Subcommittee
 - They are working on expanding transportation equity for Cambridge high school students. They have been working with someone from Mayor Wu's office to learn more about their MBTA fare-free movement.
- Mental Health Subcommittee
 - They were working on creating a mental health room at CRLS, but two other groups are also working on it so they have shifted focus to creating student-led mental health workshops. They have been researching similar efforts from the past to help create their workshops.

Presentation - [Family Policy Council - Who are we?](#)

[What is the Family Policy Council and List of Members](#)

FAMILY POLICY COUNCIL – WHO ARE WE?

According to the Ordinance, the Family Policy Council

- Acts as a clearinghouse and catalyst in mobilizing and coordinating other efforts within the City aimed at responding to the needs of children, youth, and families.
- Develops policy and program recommendations aimed at improving the quality of life for children, youth and families in the city of Cambridge that are preventative rather than reactive.

In addition

- We will bring an anti-racism approach to all efforts that we take on and audit all our recommendations through the lens of equity. Equity is our north star.
- We are a diverse group of stakeholders who meet regularly and have the opportunity to get to know each, strengthen relationships, and share important information and resources.
- We have the right people in the room who are committed to the wellbeing of Cambridge

families and their children and understand the needs and gaps of the community.

- We include other stakeholders who are not official members of the Family Policy Council.
- We have an Executive Director who aligns us with other stakeholder groups to avoid duplication of efforts, helps us be more strategic and connected, and ensures our voice is represented throughout the city.

The Cambridge Youth Council is our key partner in learning what to recommend and how to coordinate efforts.

- They lead us, inspire us, educate us by translating what's going on in the world for young people in their language.
- They are involved, productive, confident, and are getting stuff done (it's not superficial).
- It is important that young people are at the table when we talk about issues impacting them. It's easy to talk about youth in the abstract when they are not there.

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING AN AREA OF FOCUS

1. Directly addresses racism and inequities in Cambridge.
2. Acts as a clearinghouse and catalyst in mobilizing and coordinating other efforts within the City aimed at responding to the needs of children, youth and families.
3. Develops policy and program recommendations aimed at improving the quality of life for children, youth and families in the city of Cambridge that are preventative rather than reactive.
4. The members **and** Executive Director of the Family Policy Council and the Cambridge Youth Council have the capacity and resources to make it happen, and there are clear ways for them to contribute.
5. Does not duplicate or repeat efforts by others; however, it does build on and support existing efforts.
6. Focus is on systems and community-wide improvements. It is something everyone wants to get done but can't do it alone.
7. There are ways to measure progress and success.
8. Focus is community centered and the capacity to do the work is possible within the given time frame and parameters.



Past Areas of Focus

2012	2015	2018	2020
Enhance the Capacity of the Community Engagement Team	Find It Cambridge	Math Matters for Equity	Language Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FY23 Budget• Plain Language Writing Guide• CAT Tool Pilot• Nonprofit Pilot• Language Access Plan

“Get to Know You” Activity

Breakout 1 - Introduce yourselves to each other. Select an item in the room that has some meaning in your life and explain why to your group.

Breakout 2 - Merge with another group. Introduce yourselves. What did you notice that holds meaning and value to people in your group - based on what they said about their object?

Presentation - [Dr. Greer's Cambridge Public Schools Entry Plan](#)

[Dr. Greer's CPS Entry Plan Report](#)

Discussion

Q: On past initiatives: there has been a lack of alignment and/or fatigue around them. Commenter believes there needs to be a deeper insight into the goals of the institution, the alignment, and the outcomes, and so this new initiative looks promising since it addresses those things. How are we getting to the success of students being left behind?

A: It starts with expectations. Having high expectations, pushing students to greatness in a way that is encouraging. It's important that there is an understanding that kids of color are expected to be great, too. Transitional services conversations need to start much earlier-- early elementary and through upper school. Empowering kids of color, but also all students who are not reaching their potential.

Q: What surprised you most when you were doing your listening sessions with family and staff?

A: Why haven't we been able to address the critical needs in our most vulnerable students? Sat and learned from so many talented students and educators. May have something to do with structural and alignment issues; can't move forward if everyone is going in a different direction.

Q: Thoughts on how to effectively help kids who are dealing with the impact of trauma while navigating the education system? Restorative justice practices mentioned are a good start.

A: We have a very good ratio of counselors in the district, but what we are missing is wraparound services for students *and* families. Families may not be equipped to support their children at

home and in the community.

Breakout: What ways do we see the family policy council supporting the district's continuous improvement efforts?

Answers

- Mental Health and Wraparound
 - Priority issue: mental health issues are the biggest issues facing our schools – can lean on Cambridge Health Alliance and Dept of HHS
 - The importance of wraparound services, especially around youth mental health
 - Campaigns for mental health from a young age can help ease the stigma. The term “mental health” and “mental health services” can be off-putting for folks/make folks run the other way. Can this be reframed so communities don’t avoid it?
 - Define or reframe mental health (vs wellness). It is not a dirty word campaign
 - Success Planning, navigators - could be a useful model
 - Connecting the various groups and networks who can help families access resources. Centralize efforts together. It currently feels dispersed.
 - OST Networks
 - Library (social worker)
 - Navigator/Champions/Mentors Potential partners
 - City Connects
 - Cambridge Youth Programs
 - Harvard ReDesign Lab
 - City of Salem
- Defining Success
 - Do we have a definition of success for ALL kids?
 - If so, should we redefine success? (beyond graduating from college - broaden what success means)
 - How will we measure success?
- Access to resources, information, etc...
 - Build on Find It Cambridge. Find It is a nice example of how to navigate the district. Develop recommendations to grow its effectiveness and impact.
- FPC is an intersectional convener
 - Ask schools what they want from us. How do they see us being helpful rather than us telling them how we can be helpful?
 - FPC can provide sound boarding as Superintendent comes back with updates
 - The Council takes voices from all over, youth, SC members, non-profits, to create a safe space to share ideas, concerns
 - FPC leverages the resources across our city in the interest of supporting young people.
 - FPC operates like a children’s cabinet where the entire city works to help the school system
 - Need to make sure FPC priorities align with district plan and strategic objectives
 - Focus on one specific goal - Family Policy Council could be a powerful coalition
 - Student voice on FPC allows for on-the-ground feedback in terms of program and policy

success (e.g. Sophie's comment that some individuals do not want to sign up for free and reduced lunch due to privacy concerns)

- Partnerships
 - Schools can't do everything on their own
 - City needs to be a partner
- Early Childhood
 - How do we increase access to high quality early childhood opportunities
- Voc/tech and Internships
- Other
 - Importance of not only talking about big ideas and concepts but also discrete issues or challenges.
 - Library card example - change in policy so it's an opt out

Next Steps

- Next Meeting - Thursday **February 17** (5:15-7:15)

7:15: Adjourn