

# What's New With Community Engagement Team (CET) Outreach Work?

Fall 2018 Issue 9



**Dear Reader,**

We are excited to get back into the swing of things! The Community Engagement Team (CET) partners with many agencies including the Cambridge Public Schools (CPS).

In this newsletter, you will learn more about the Cambridge Public Schools. We also introduce our new CET co-leader, Hitomi Abe who started her position in the beginning of September. Welcome, Hitomi!



From left to right: Danie Pelissier, Nicole Meehan, Rabeya Akther, Carrine Bury, Thurya Beek, Kaniz Fouzia, and Seble Kidane  
Not pictured: Maria Chavez

*The Community Engagement Team is a multi-agency collaborative that reaches out to underserved Cambridge families and connects them to community events and resources, develops community leaders, and supports agencies in working with a diverse community.*

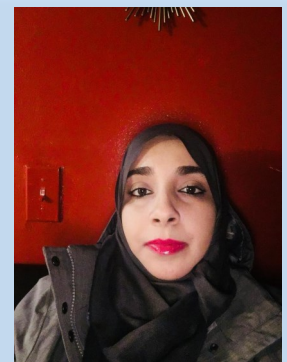
## CET FAMILY STORY

My name is Aisha and I am from Sudan. I have been living in Cambridge with my family since 2011. I have 3 children and they all attend Cambridge Public Schools. I enjoy living in Cambridge because there are many programs and services for families, like the parent workshops at the Cambridge Public Schools and the outreach worker support from CET.

I really like that Cambridge public schools offer workshops for parents. I attended a workshop called Mind Matters program last year which was very helpful. I learned a lot about ways to support my children with their learning, and I have recommended this workshop to other families.

I also really like the support from the CET outreach workers. One of the CET outreach worker that has helped my family is Thurya. Thurya is the Arabic speaking outreach worker. She helps and supports Arabic speaking families.

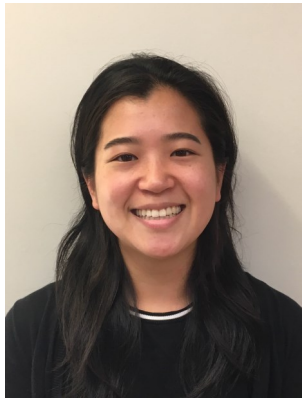
When there is a meeting or a program at my children's schools, Thurya always calls to let me know about the event and reminds me. If there is something about a school event that I don't understand, I can ask her, and she helps explain it to me. I want to thank her for always supporting me and my family!



Aisha Osman

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## Community Engagement Team Co-leader Hitomi Abe

Hi, my name is Hitomi Abe and I am the new co-leader for the Community Engagement Team (CET).

My role as co-leader is to work with my partner Michelle to support our outreach workers connect and engage with Cambridge families. CET also provides agencies and programs with technical assistance to help them build their community engagement capacity.

Before this position, I worked at the Boston Public Health Commission, where I coordinated a community coalition that focused on bringing community residents and partners together to promote healthy babies and families.

I am so excited to be working with the CET outreach workers to support families across Cambridge!

If you are interested in learning more about the work of CET, my role, or how you can request for services, please contact me at [habe@cambridgema.gov](mailto:habe@cambridgema.gov) or 617-349-6278. I look forward to hearing from you!



## Cambridge Public Schools & Community Engagement Team



“This workshop helped me learn about the importance of parent-teacher conference. The conference is an opportunity to meet one-on-one with the teacher to talk about my child.”  
- CPS Workshop participant

### CPS Workshop Highlights

CET partnered with Cambridge Public Schools to host a 2-part workshop for immigrant families in the elementary schools. The first workshop focused on cultural differences between schools in a parent's home country and the United States. Part 2 of the workshop focused on how Cambridge elementary schools work. The workshops were offered in 5 different languages and hosted across the elementary schools. We had many families attend and participate in the workshops this year!



*CPS Workshop Part I :Cultural Differences  
in Bangla at The Fletcher Maynard Academy*



*CPS Workshop Part I :Cultural Differences  
in Creole at The Fletcher Maynard Academy*

## What's new at Cambridge Public Schools

This year, CPS welcomes 4 new Family Partnership coordinators at the upper schools! Like the elementary school family liaisons, Family Partnership coordinators support families and help students succeed in schools! They help share school related information and support communication between schools and families. Below includes contact information for all the family liaisons and family partnership coordinators at Cambridge Public Schools. Please reach out to them and get to know your school's family liaison!

Schools with family liaisons	
Elementary School Family Liaison	
<b>Amigos</b> Lilian Rater, 617-349-6315	<b>Haggerty</b> Lissa Gallucio, 617-349-6555 x208
<b>Baldwin</b> Susan Tiersch, 617-349-4377	<b>Kennedy-Longfellow</b> Nancy Wyse, 617-349-4865
<b>Cambridgeport</b> Kristen Emack, 617-349-6587 x 111	<b>King Open</b> Neusa DaCosta, 617-349-6540 x138
<b>Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.</b> Marguerite Hicks-Gyewu, 617-349-6454	<b>Morse</b> Denise Sullivan, 617-349-6575 x108
<b>Fletcher Maynard Academy</b> Daniel Skeritt, 617-349-6588 x112	<b>Peabody</b> Nicole Sullivan, 617-349-6530 x1141
<b>Graham &amp; Parks</b> Lauren Morse, 617-349-6577 x115	<b>Tobin Montessori</b> Mary Frawley, 617-349-6600 x 153
Upper School Family Partnership Coordinators	
<b>Cambridge Street Upper School</b> Will Adams, 617-349-3050 x 330	<b>Rindge Avenue Upper School</b> Taraneh Ahmadi, 617-349-4060
<b>Putnam Avenue Upper School</b> Shayna Jones, 617-349-7780	<b>Vassal Lane Upper School</b> Obi Carrion, 617-349-6550
High School liaisons & support	
<b>Cambridge Rindge and Latin School</b> Greta Hardina, 617-349-6660	<b>High School Extension Program</b> Ashley Goodwin, 617-349-6880
Additional Support Staff	
<b>Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)</b> Mildrid Gedeon 617-349-6577x120	<b>Special Education Liaison</b> Zuleka Queen Postell 617-593-4402
<b>Haitian Liaison</b> Jardine Jerome 617-349-6468	<b>Spanish Language Liaison</b> Jose Riveira 617-349-6468

# What is your favorite Holiday?

## **Kaniz & Rabeya (Bangladesh)**

Our favorite holiday is the Bangla Happy New Year which is called **Pahela Baishakh**. It is celebrated on April 14 each year. The festival is celebrated with processions, fairs and family time.

Bangladeshis celebrate the day with traditional food, dress, and with Bangla culture. We love the event a lot because there are different varieties of cake and many different dishes from our culture. During that day, we celebrate early in the morning our cultural dance and music. Our national fish is the **Illsha** fish. We celebrate with fried Illsha fish and white rice and varieties of Bhorta or Chatni. Women wear red and white **Saris**. Men wear red or white **Panjabi** and children wear colorful clothes.

## **Maria (Dominican Republic)**

One of the important days for most of Latino countries is on May 10th which is Mother's Day. For other Hispanic countries, they celebrate it towards the end of May. It's a special day to recognize and appreciate the dedication and hard work of a mother.

## **Thurya (Sudan)**

The best and favorite holiday for me is Eid al Fitter and Eid al adha (sacrifice) because all Muslims on this day perform prayer in the same place. This means equality to me. Also, I get to meet all of my friends and their kids which helps my kids make friends.

## **Seble (Ethiopia)**

My favorite holiday growing up as a child was Ethiopian New Year, because the girls on this day sing New Year's songs from door to door and receive money from friends and family.

## **Nicole (United States)**

I love all the holiday festivities, but my favorite is Christmas. It is special to me because it is the one time I get to spend time with a lot of family and friends. A few years back I decided to do an Annual Christmas Eve party and every year it gets BIGGER and better. I know the holidays can be hard for many people. I make it a priority to check in with those who may not have families or the means to celebrate. I will do whatever I can to help them.

## **Danie & Carrine (Haiti)**

Independence Day is my favorite holiday from my country. We celebrate it on New Year's Day, which is when Haiti gained Independence from France in 1804. We like it because on this special day Haitian people consumed the traditional "soup joumou" as a historical tribute to Haitian independence. Children dress up on this day and visit grandparents and relatives and collect money.

 **Happy Holidays!** 

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