

Language Accessibility Advisory Committee Meeting Notes – 2/15/2018

Attendance:

Name:	Organization:
John Arntz	Department of Elections
Nataliya Kuzina	Department of Elections
Aurora Livingston	Department of Elections
Heather Kittel	Mayor's Office on Disability
Christopher Bardales	Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Omar Pimentel	Mission Graduates
Jonathan Stein	Asian Americans Advancing Justice, Asian Law Caucus
Gregory Keech	City College – Department of English as a Second Language
Jose Ng	Chinese for Affirmative Action

Minutes:

1. Nov 2016, San Francisco voters approved Prop N: Non-Citizen Voting in School Board Elections. This Charter Amendment allows a non-citizen resident of San Francisco who is of legal voting age, and the parent, legal guardian, or legally recognized caregiver of a child under the age of 19 living in the San Francisco Unified School District to vote for members of the Board of Education. Originally, Supervisor Fewer was taking the lead for drafting this legislation and guiding ordinances, but the responsibility has since shifted to Supervisor Yee.
2. The group discussed potential outreach mechanisms and messages that could be circulated to specific communities through community groups in the City.
3. The importance of providing a notice on the affidavit of registration for Prop N voters was emphasized. This notice would need to clearly explain the risks associated with providing personal information to the Department. The Department of Elections will be proactive in providing information to community organizations throughout the City as more information related to Prop N becomes available.
 - a. Supervisor Yee's office indicated that this notice could possibly be translated into 52 languages
 - b. It was mentioned that this "warning notice" would need to be available on the affidavit of registration in various native languages.
 - c. It was mentioned to have a "voter eligibility assessment tool" that Prop N voters could use to determine if they are eligible to vote
 - d. It was also mentioned that often times when individuals complete a Naturalization Application, they must sign under the penalty of perjury that they have not registered to vote or voted in any elections, in this case, Prop N voters would need some kind of documentation to attach to this paperwork.
4. The group discussed various outreach resources and methods that can potentially be utilized to provide information to community groups and members during the City's implementation of Prop N.
 - a. The Department of Elections uses a standardized approach to outreach, which typically helps individuals who are engaged in the elections process, they do this by posting information on their website, and distributing press releases to the public, etc.

- i. Elections Staff, including Poll Workers, will receive additional training with the implementation of Prop N.
 - ii. Bilingual Outreach Coordinators will include information on Prop N in community presentations.
 - iii. The Department will produce translated materials related to Prop N, such as informational flyers.
 - b. Because some Prop N voters will not traditionally be engaged in the elections process, John Arntz posed a few questions to the group related to the community organizations performing outreach in the City:
 - i. What resources can community organizations provide to educate community members about Prop N?
 - ii. What methods of communication can community organizations use to contact Prop N voters?
5. The ideal approach to Prop N outreach is an interpersonal, one-to-one approach.
 - a. Due to the sensitive nature of the information involved in registering to vote, and voting in a Prop N election, an effective approach to consider would be to have community organizations reach out to the community with information, including the risks, associated with a Prop N election.
6. Other outreach mechanisms include:
 - a. Educational Workshops – Mission Graduates indicated that there are 14 schools that they work with throughout the City, where this idea could potentially be implemented.
 - b. Chinese for Affirmative Action expressed the importance of working with community members who are monolingual. These community members are often engaged with various community groups who speak the same language provide an avenue for communication around this subject.
 - c. Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and Asian Law Caucus indicated that they participate in one-on-one consultations with community members and would be in a position to “pass on” an informational brochure related to Prop N in those meetings.
 - d. City College – Department of English as a Second Language created and shared a lesson plan with the group that could potentially be shared with a larger audience of community members to help them understand the basic concepts associated with Prop N voting and elections.
 - i. This includes a definition of terms in “plain language”
 - ii. This includes the risks associated with voting the wrong ballot
 - iii. Creating materials and teaching this information to ESL students poses some challenges because the knowledge associated with voting and elections varies greatly across the community. Some concepts are quite challenging to explain such as propositions, or school boards contests.
 - iv. It was mentioned that due to varying literacy levels, reading materials may not be the most effective method for getting information out to some communities.
 - v. There is also the challenge of teaching individuals these lessons in a language that is not their native language. For example, individuals who speak Mayan, would most likely receive this information in Spanish.

- e. One of the most effective methods of outreach is positive word of mouth.
 - i. This can be spread by community members themselves.
 - ii. There are also community family liaisons who partner with families in support of student success
7. The group discussed the role that grant money plays in the discussion of providing resources to community organizations for outreach related to Prop N.
 - a. Several group members indicated that additional funding from the City would allow community organizations to obtain more resources and more staff which would help them to prioritize the outreach effort related to Prop N.
 - b. The group discussed the different ways non-profits monitor grant money and methods they use to ensure the work the money is allocated for is being done.
 - i. One example of this is to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
 - ii. Another example of this is providing the numbers of educational workshops an organization conducted and the number of participants at each event.
 - c. It was indicated that Community Based Organizations (CBOs) could potentially provide more language ability and resources
 - d. The Department of Elections cannot be responsible for applying for grant money while creating elections procedures. It will need to be a group effort, and the group should think about ways to energize other agencies to provide assistance.
8. The Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services indicated that they could reach out to the Mayor's Office of Public Policy and Finance to see if they can obtain an inventory of the City's CBOs and the languages they provide services in.
9. The following organizations were mentioned by group members as sources of assistance that could potentially be utilized when applying for grant money or engaging with the community outreach effort:
 - a. Mayor's Office of Community Development
 - b. Human Services Agency
 - c. Mayor's Office of Housing and Homelessness
 - d. Mayor's Office of Education and Equity
 - e. Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families
 - f. San Francisco Unified School District
 - g. Youth Commission
 - h. Support for Families of Children with Disabilities
 - i. The San Francisco Foundation (assisting San Mateo county with implementing the California Voter's Choice Act)
 - j. The California Secretary of State has a history of co-funding innovative policies
 - k. San Francisco English Learner Advisory Committee (SFUSD ELAC)
 - l. Local Parent Teach Association (PTA)
10. The group needs a collaborative space to:
 - a. Bring together examples of outreach materials and methods
 - b. Ask questions
 - c. Provide feedback on various written materials

11. The Department of Elections will not ask people to disclose any information about themselves. Prop N voters will only be responsible for checking a box, declaring under the penalty of perjury that they are eligible Prop N voters. These voters will not be required to provide any type of supporting documents related to residency, citizenship status, or parental status.
12. Outreach related to Prop N should start as soon as March or April of 2018.
 - a. Most San Francisco schools will be finishing their semesters at the end of May 2018.