

# **Report of the Subcommittee on Asian Communities: Lessons and Recommendations on Integration of Residents of Asian Ancestry**

Presentation to the Board of Selectmen  
and the School Committee

February 6, 2017

**25%** Estimated percentage of Lexington's residents who are of Asian Ancestry in 2017

**37%** Percentage in FY2017 of LPS students of Asian ancestry

Do our civic leaders have the responsibility to plan strategically for the growth of Lexington's Asian population or should they deal with any consequences as they occur?

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN COMMUNITIES**

Increase integration of residents of Asian ancestry into all aspects of life in Lexington by drawing on lessons learned in communities across the U.S. with larger relative populations of Asian residents.

# SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIAN COMMUNITIES

**Chinese-American  
Association of  
Lexington**

Faith Lin  
Bin Zhou

**Indian Americans of  
Lexington**

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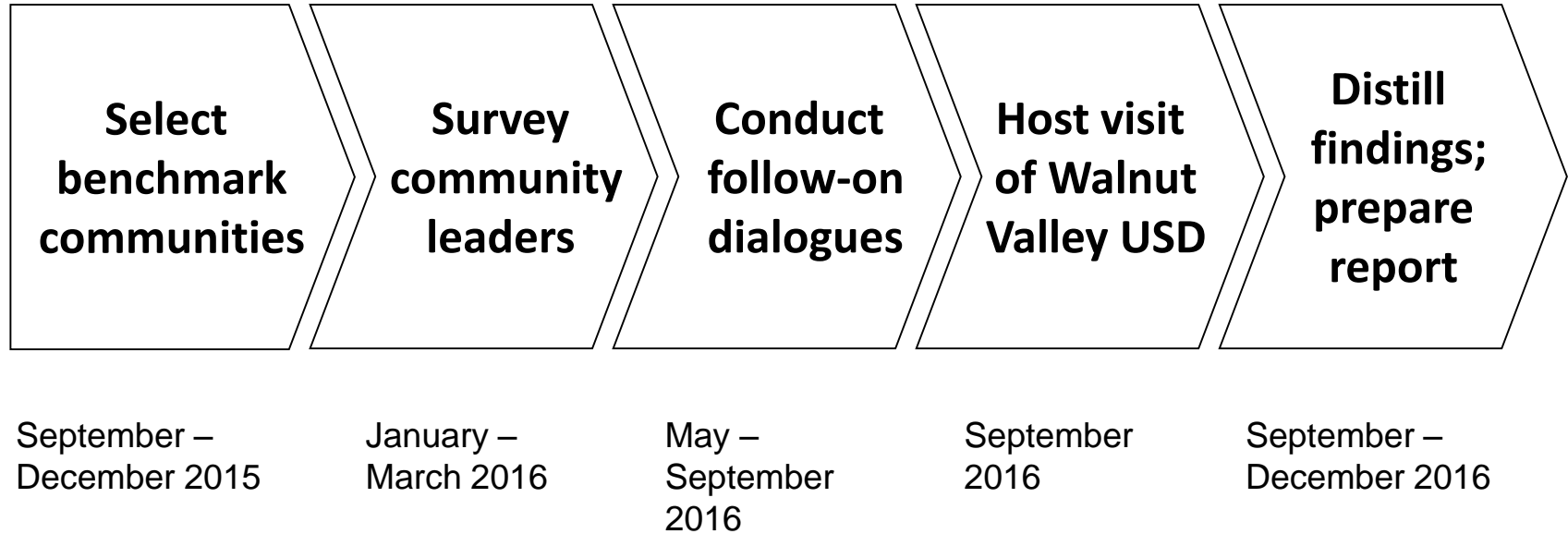
**Members at Large**

Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti  
Pat Costello  
Margaret Heitz

**20/20 Vision  
Committee**

Margaret Coppe  
Dan Krupka

# PROCESS AND TIMELINE



## SURPRISING FINDINGS – Page 1 of 4

### ***Meaningful outreach by civic leaders***

Virtually all respondents recommended that civic leaders build personal relationships with leaders of Asian communities with the objective of drawing them into the all aspect of the life of the community.

### ***A standing body on diversity***

The Walnut Valley has established the Diversity Think Tank which is adept at theory and practice of diversity

### ***Diversity training for all***

Respondents reported diversity training for

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Municipal employees
- PTA/O leaders

## SURPRISING FINDINGS – Page 2 of 4

### ***Dual immersion schools***

- Mandarin - English elementary school in two California districts
- Spanish - English elementary school in one California school district

### ***Stress in schools***

- All school leaders mentioned it
- All had programs for addressing it

### ***Service organizations as promoters of diversity***

- Rotary clubs in two municipalities committed to increasing the diversity of their members
- Membership by Asian residents viewed as stepping stone to elected office



## **SURPRISING FINDINGS – Page 3 of 4**

***Role of recreation department***

Examples of non-traditional programs that are of particular interest to Asian communities

***Caucasian on board of an Asian organization?***

Suggested by a city manager, but not yet implemented.

***One courageous leader makes a difference***

In Cupertino, twenty years after the City Manager took a chance on a new form of civic discourse, the programs launched on his watch continue to prosper and grow

## SURPRISING FINDINGS – Page 4 of 4

***Integration,  
neighborhood style***

Cupertino has implemented a Block Party Program to foster integration neighborhood by neighborhood

***A systems approach to  
diversity management***

- A handful of committed individuals cannot sustain a program
- It must be part of the life of the community
  - Measurable goals
  - Commitment to continuous improvement

## **OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATION**

Diversity should be a critically important issue on the agenda of Lexington's civic leaders.

## WHO?

1

***For the Superintendent  
and the Town Manager***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Establish “Diversity Think Tank” to serve the needs of the schools and the Town by June 30, 2017
- First tasks: Select diversity training programs for schools and Town
- Secure budgets for diversity training at earliest opportunity

## WHO?

2

***For the Town Manager,  
Board of Selectmen,  
Superintendent and  
the School Committee***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Beginning immediately, establish a higher priority for getting personally acquainted with the leaders of Lexington’s Asian community organizations

# RECOMMENDATIONS – Page 3 of 8

## WHO?

3  
*For the leaders of  
CAAL, IAL and KOLex*

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Beginning immediately, become personally acquainted with
  - The Town Manager
  - The members of the Board of Selectmen
  - The Superintendent
  - The members of the School Committee
- Beginning immediately, strengthen programs to integrate newcomers into the community
- By June 30, 2017, consider sponsoring leadership training for potential leaders

## WHO?

4

***For the Town Manager***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Beginning immediately, encourage hiring of more Town employees of Asian ancestry
- By June 30, 2017, explore broadening programs of the Recreation Department that interest families of Asian ancestry and have broad appeal
- By December 31, 2017, pilot concept of a Block Party program

## WHO?

5

***For the PTA/O  
Presidents' Council***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- In collaboration with the Asian community organizations, continue to host forums fostering participation in school volunteer programs
- Request a seat on the “Diversity Think Tank”



# RECOMMENDATIONS – Page 6 of 8

## WHO?

6

***For the Superintendent***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Beginning immediately
  - increase efforts to hire more principals who reflect the demographics of the student body
  - Encourage principals to hire a more diverse staff
- By June 30, 2017, at the high school, adopt the practice of annual meetings of guidance counselors with students and parents
- Consider adopting two practices used at the Walnut Valley USD
  - A Wellness Center
  - A Student Advisory Council

## WHO?

7

***For the 20/20 Vision  
Committee***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- Continue to monitor the progress towards increased integration of Lexington's Asian residents
- Convene a session in May 2017 to assess progress following a format similar to that used in May 2015

## WHO?

8

***For all of Lexington’s civic leaders***

## WHAT? WHEN?

- The recommendations, while created with Lexington’s Asian communities in mind, apply equally well to people of all backgrounds.