

BAAFN to Select Board: Concrete steps to support the Brookline AAPI community

Dear Select Board members:

First, thank you for [approving the Statement Condemning Racism and Violence Against Asian Americans](#) at Tuesday's Select Board meeting, and for publicly posting the Statement yesterday. We suggest that you further circulate the statement, perhaps by posting an excerpt on the Town Soofa kiosks.

We very much appreciate the support, the solidarity, and the commitment to deeper engagement. In that vein, we'd like to offer some concrete steps that the Town and Select Board should take to better support the 17% of Town residents who comprise the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI community).

1. Services for the AAPI community

The Town should provide more services that specifically support the AAPI community. For example, there should be a social worker who has the cultural competency to serve the AAPI population, and should be bilingual in one of the predominant Asian languages spoken by limited English proficient (LEP) residents in town. This social worker could be part of the Brookline Forward proposal put forth by the Task Force on Reimagining Policing. Other components of that proposal that could serve the AAPI community include an Office for Immigrant and Refugee Services.

The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations provides a huge amount of support for the AAPI community and specifically to BAAFN. We would urge that DICR have more resources to provide that support.

2. Translation and Interpretation

More of the critical Town communications should be translated, and interpretation services should be offered to residents for certain important hearings. The Town should never rely on Google Translate without having a trained translator review the results. The Town should conduct an assessment of the language access needs of LEP residents and develop a plan to meet those needs in a systemic manner. (Suggestions are available [here](#) and [here](#)).

3. Data collection

All data collection that includes race as category should specifically include Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders as separate categories. There should be categories for more than one race or multiracial categories. Data collection should include surveys directly targeted to the AAPI community to assess our needs.

4. Multilingual materials on reporting hate crimes

Information for how to report a hate crime should be available in different languages in print, to be distributed at the Senior Center and other key locations that serve the AAPI

community. Some ideas are to print the materials that you included at the end of your statement at [Stop AAPI Hate](#) or these [multilingual hate crime handbooks](#).

5. Greater AAPI civic participation

There should be more and broader efforts to recruit AAPI residents to service on Boards and Commissions.

Of course, please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you wish to discuss further. Thank you for your consideration.

Chi Chi Wu

On behalf of the BAAFN Steering Committee