Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Cover Page

District: Region 15 Public Schools

Vision: To build and maintain a staff that represents the diversity of the world around us. We will embrace a culture committed to valuing diversity that fosters a sense of belonging for all students, staff and community members within Region 15 Schools.

Theory of Action: If Region 15 consistently uses research-based practices to support recruitment, hiring and retention efforts, then we will be successful in diversifying our staff which will ultimately strengthen the educational experience for our students.

Team Lead(s): Becky Faraci, Human Resources Coordinator & Erin Birden, Teacher in Residence for Diversity & Cultural Competency

Team Members:
- Heather Pellicone, Principal & Parent, Middlebury Elementary School;
- Yamira Raimundi, Assistant Principal's Secretary at Pomperaug High School & Parent;
- Amanda Reino, Classroom Teacher Grade 4 & Successful Graduate of CT Teacher Residency Program, Long Meadow Elementary School;
- Noah Cross, School Counselor & Baseball Coach, Memorial Middle School;
- Scott Brown, Paraprofessional & Parent, Pomperaug High School;
- Vidya Ganti, World Language Teacher, Memorial Middle School
- Fall 2024 team addition:
  - Anjali Arora, Grade 4 Classroom Teacher & Successful Graduate of CT Teacher Residency Program, Long Meadow Elementary School

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Recruitment
Goal (What are we trying to do?): Reach a diverse candidate pool for the vacancies in Region 15 to better represent the diversity (race, ethnicity, language, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, etc) of our students and the world around us.
Who Manages the Goal (Name and Position): Superintendent (Joshua Smith) & Assistant Superintendent (Carrie Chiappetta)

Key Activities (How are we going to do it?):	Indicators of Progress (How will we know if we are on track for success?):
- Introduce marketing materials (recruitment video, flyers and advertisements) that are representative of the diversity that currently exists in Region 15 and is valued - Increase job fair participation and frequency - Continue to participate in CT TRP program as partner district	- Video is completed and advertisements are posted that emphasize and show the diversity that exists in Region 15 and that Region 15 values diversity - Video statistics on views - Attend at least 3 job fairs per year (in person/virtual) by the Director of Human Resources, representative staff members, and/or building leaders, at least 1 with a focus on increasing educator diversity - Continue to host at least 1 resident through CT TRP - Shown increase in racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in % of applicants for open positions

Resources (What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):   - Personnel: Teacher in Residence for Diversity and Cultural Competency to lead recruitment video project, HR Director, Building and Content leaders, and representative staff for job fairs, District Web Liaison to implement marketing strategy   - Team Time: Allocation of time for staff to attend job fairs, for teachers to serve as TRP mentors and sponsor teachers & and for building principals to serve as building leader with TRP resident   - Technology: Video production software for recruitment video, use of platform for tracking views (e.g. YouTube account), Human Resources office platform for collecting demographic data on applicants to measure % increase in racial, ethnic & linguistic diversity of applicants   - Budget: Allocated funding for participation as a CT TRP partner district
Risks/Mitigation (What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):   - Limited personnel available for attending job fairs: Schedule placeholders on staff calendars as far out as possible for priority job fairs   - Expenses and limited funding to continue as a partner district for CT TRP: Appropriate budget planning and allocation in advance to secure proper funding   - Competition amongst other districts with limited candidate pool: Promote Region 15 through marketing efforts   - Lack of diverse candidates: Targeted marketing strategy that emphasizes and values diversity in Region 15
Communication (Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

- All administrators (hiring managers), HR Office
- Communication of recruitment activities to internal staff, educational institutions, and potential candidates (e.g. district partner of TRP program); new recruitment video and advertisements that emphasize value on diversity
- Updates to full leadership team with statistics on racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in applicants for open positions to ensure focus on recruitment goal

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Hiring & Selection:

Goal (What are we trying to do?): Develop evidence-based, consistent practices and resources across the district for hiring committees to increase the number of diverse (race, ethnicity, language, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, etc) candidates.

Who Manages the Goal (Name and Position): Superintendent (Josh Smith) & Assistant Superintendent (Carrie Chiappetta)

Key Activities (How are we going to do it?):
- Purposefully select a diverse hiring committee who apply an equity lens
- Implement required bias training for all committee members and review of the IED plan consistently prior to the start of each interview committee's interview process
- Utilize at least 2 interview questions that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion that were created by the Middlebury & Southbury Equity & Inclusion Council in each interview
- Implement annual review of hiring process guide to ensure it is inclusive of current, evidence-based resources for diversity, equity and inclusion in hiring & selection

Indicators of Progress (How will we know if we are on track for success?):
- Increased number of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse candidates being interviewed and offered employment
- Completion of bias training among all hiring committee members prior to serving on committee and sign-off upon completion
- Completed written reflection which self-assesses interview committee members' on their success of applying an equity lens through interview process
- Interview committee chair will note which questions were utilized during interview processes

Resources (What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):
- Personnel: Administrators who are leading hiring committees, Interview committees, HR Director, Teacher in Residence for Diversity & Cultural Competency to create bias training video
- Team Time: Administrative Council time for annual hiring process guide review and revisions through equity lens; Time to create bias training video for committees; Interview committees time for anti-bias training
- Technology: Video production software for creating anti-bias training video for hiring committees

Risks/Mitigation (What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):
- Inconsistency in using the hiring process guide, particularly for all staff groups (e.g. custodial, food services, security): Annual dedicated time to review and revise hiring process guide through equity lens with emphasis on the expectation to utilize the guide through equity lens for all staff groups
- Hiring committee failure to complete anti-bias training and review of IED plan: Create checklist with explicit expectation that these two action items be completed prior to start of interviews
- Incomplete Data: Some applicants may not answer demographic questions on application - applicants have the right not to respond

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Communication (Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):
- All administrators and every interview committee member: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and HR Director are responsible for communicating to administrator team that the activities outlined in this goal are required

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Retention:

Goal (What are we trying to do?): Foster a workplace culture where all staff feel a sense of belonging and connectedness with opportunities for growth, so that they choose to remain in Region 15

Who Manages the Goal (Name and Position): Superintendent (Josh Smith) & Assistant Superintendent (Carrie Chiappetta)

Key Activities (How are we going to do it?):
- Quarterly meetings with teachers new to the district, the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and HR to provide support
- 1-1 check in meetings for new teachers with building leaders to provide support
- Ensure all staff members have a mentor who is a trusted colleague, in addition to TEAM mentor and TCC meetings with new teachers/mentors)
- Implement professional learning on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging as part of onboarding process at new hire orientation
- Implement ongoing professional learning with an embedded equity focus, using topics identified by all staff groups as priority areas, with guidance from the Teacher in Residence for Diversity & Cultural Competency (example: facilitating equitable school improvement teams, ongoing racial equity professional learning, etc).
- Collect data from all staff to determine interest in establishing affinity groups for staff and create them where there is interest
- Teacher in Residence for Diversity and Cultural Competency coaches Pk-12 staff, districtwide, to foster a more culturally responsive and sustaining, competent workforce

Indicators of Progress (How will we know if we are on track for success?):
- Feedback collected during small group and 1-1 building and district check-ins and subsequent action taken by district based on feedback
- List of mentorship pairings and feedback from new hires on the impact of this practice as related to the retention goal
- Quantitative and qualitative feedback on onboarding process: new hires report being both well-informed *and* are able to name practices they will use that will contribute to a culture of belonging in our district
- Participation rate and list of ongoing equity-focused professional learning sessions
- Data collected by staff indicating whether or not the district should pursue establishing affinity groups for staff
- Disaggregate and analyze exit interview data to look for patterns among staff who identify as educators of color, and/or linguistically diverse

Resources (What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):
- Personnel: Administrators for facilitating building and district based check-ins, and for ensuring all staff members have a mentor who is a trusted colleague; Teacher in Residence for Diversity & Cultural Competency and other coaching staff (e.g. math, ELA, Instructional Teacher

Region 15 Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Leaders) to facilitate equity-focused professional learning, HR staff to collect data to determine interest in staff affinity groups
- Team time: Allocation of time for planning ongoing diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging focused professional learning sessions among administrators, coaching, and educator staff members who will facilitate trainings, to analyze and make changes based on feedback/data
- Technology: Online survey tools for feedback collection and analysis, tech for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging trainings,

Risks/Mitigation (What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):
- Low participation rates on feedback from staff to inform needs for further diversity, equity, and inclusion focused professional learning: Preserve time during professional learning session at end for participants to share feedback; follow up with 1-day and 3-day reminder emails
- Difficulty identifying mentor for each new hire: Encourage staff members to partner with and support their colleagues
- Low attendance at district check ins: Because they are not mandatory and can potentially be outside of contractual hours to allow time for all members to attend; Offer multiple times (1 earlier in the day with coverage during contractual hours, and 1 later in the day)

Communication (Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):
- Administrators: key activities and indicators of progress need to be communicated to leadership teams and adult learning facilitators, as they will be responsible for carrying out
- All staff need clear communication of the retention goal and emphasizing the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in our organization