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Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

West Hartford Public Schools Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

Vision

Our vision for recruiting, hiring, and selection for West Hartford Public Schools is to build a diverse staff that mirrors our community. We are committed to evidence-based practices, intentional recruitment, and transparent processes to create an equitable, inclusive environment. Our goal is to attract, hire, and retain a team of educators who reflect our student diversity and possess the instructional skills and capacity to support all students to maximize their learning and develop the habits of mind that lead to success.

Theory of Action

If West Hartford Public Schools actively implements evidence-based practices, centered around intentional recruitment efforts, transparent hiring processes, and ongoing support for the professional development and advancement of a diverse workforce, then we will attract, retain, and develop a diverse workforce and create an equitable and inclusive environment.

Recruitment

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Key Activities
(How are we going to do it?)

Indicators of Progress
(How will we know if we are on track for success?)

Goal
(What are we trying to do?): Recruit and hire educators from underrepresented racial or ethnic groups to increase their representation within our workforce and better align with the diverse demographics of our student population.

Who Manages the Goal
(Name and Position): Julio Duarte - Executive Director of Human Resources; Theresa Rangel - Executive Director of Equity Advancement; and The Extended Leadership Team

Key Activities
A. Develop targeted recruitment strategies to attract diverse candidates

- The Executive Director of Equity Advancement will attend job fairs with the Executive Director of Human Resources
- Advertise job openings through diverse networks and publications
- Forge partnerships with community organizations and minority-focused educational institutions to promote job opportunities and facilitate connections with potential candidates

- Continue to promote and support our external (CT Teacher Residency Program) and internal (Future Educators of Diversity) development programs
- Develop a recruitment video that features testimonials and success stories from a diverse group of students, faculty, and alumni. Highlight their experiences achievements, and the supportive environment of the school district

Indicators of Progress

- Number of job fairs attended by the Executive Director of Equity Advancement and Executive Director of Human Resources
- Reach engagement metrics for job openings advertised through diverse networks and publications

- Number of partnerships forged with community organizations and minority-focused educational institutions
- Participation rates in the internal and external development programs
- Feedback and viewership statistics for the recruitment video

Recruitment

Resources

Risks/Mitigation

Communication

Resources
(What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):

- Personnel: Julio Duarte, Theresa Rangel, and The Extended Leadership
- TeamTime: Allocation of time for attending job fairs, networking, and developing partnerships
- Budget: Funding for advertising job openings, attending events, and producing the recruitment video
- Technology: Tools for video production and dissemination, as well as tracking and analyzing recruitment data
- Recruit and hire an individual to help develop, improve, and maintain marketing strategies on behalf of the district

Risks/Mitigation
(What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):

- Lack of awareness or interest from diverse candidates: Increase visibility through targeted advertising, networking, and outreach efforts
- Limited resources for attending job fairs or advertising: Prioritize events and publications with the highest potential for reaching diverse candidates, and seek alternative funding sources if necessary
- Negative feedback or low engagement with the recruitment video: Conduct focus groups or surveys to gather feedback and make necessary improvements to the video content and distribution strategy

Communication
(Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):

- Consultation and engagement with the HR team, hiring managers, and diversity and inclusion committees
- Communication of recruitment efforts and opportunities to internal staff, community organizations, educational institutions, and potential candidates
- Updates and progress reports to the Executive Leadership Team and the Board of Education to ensure alignment with organizational goals and priorities

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Key Activities
(How are we going to do it?)

Indicators of Progress
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Hiring & Selection

Goal

(What are we trying to do?): Enhance educator diversity in the workforce by increasing both the number of educators of color applicants who are interviewed and the number of educators of color who are ultimately hired.

Who Manages the Goal

(Name and Position): Julio Duarte - Executive Director of Human Resources; Theresa Rangel - Executive Director of Equity Advancement; and The Extended Leadership Team

Key Activities
A. Selection & Interviewing Process

- Adjust the district selection process to be more inclusive. Incorporate a "screen- out" model allowing more candidates to undergo the initial screening process
- Create a standard set of interview questions that allow applicants to express their qualifications and share their experiences during the hiring process

- Require all hiring committees to review the implicit bias in the hiring and selection process video, as well as review the district's IED plan before participating on a committee
- Clearly communicate the organization's commitment to diversity in the hiring process

Indicators of Progress

- An increase in the number of minority candidates that are interviewed and offered employment
- The completion rates of implicit bias training among hiring committees

- All committees use a standard set of interview questions consistently during the hiring process

Hiring & Selection

Resources

Risks/Mitigation

Communication

Resources
(What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):

- Development of "Screen-Out Criteria"
- Bias in the Hiring and Selection Process video
- Development of standardized bank of interview questions

Risks/Mitigation
(What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):

- Failure to review the IED plan: Create a checklist or protocol to ensure committee members review the plan before participating
- Misalignment between communication and actions, regularly evaluate the hiring process to ensure it aligns with the organization's diversity commitment and make adjustments as necessary

Communication
(Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):

- District Leadership
- Establish dedicated communication channels to regularly update stakeholders on the inclusive changes to the selection process
- Actively solicit feedback from existing employees or affinity groups to gather insights and feedback

Retention

Key Activities
(How are we going to do it?)

Indicators of Progress
(How will we know if we are on track for success?)

Goal

(What are we trying to do?): Ensure the long-term success and connectedness of our diverse employees. Create a workplace culture where every individual feels an authentic sense of belonging and is provided with equitable opportunities for growth and advancement.

Who Manages the Goal

(Name and Position): Julio Duarte - Executive Director of Human Resources; Theresa Rangel - Executive Director of Equity Advancement; Extended Leadership; and Building EDC Liaisons

Key Activities

A. Inclusive Onboarding

- Continue the development of a comprehensive onboarding program that introduces new hires to the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Initiate and implement year-long mentorship programs that connect employees with experienced mentors who can provide guidance and support (separate from TEAM)
- Continue to support employee affinity groups focused on various diversity dimensions, providing a platform for employees to connect, share experiences, and contribute to organizational initiatives

B. Professional Development and Diversity Training

- Conduct regular diversity and inclusion training sessions for all employees, emphasizing the importance of diverse perspectives and fostering a culture of respect

- Provide access to training and professional development opportunities that enhance the skills and capabilities of diverse employees
- Tailor development programs to meet the specific needs and aspirations of individuals from diverse backgrounds

C. Equal Opportunities for Growth

- Clearly communicate pathways for career development and advancement, ensuring that diverse candidates have equal opportunities for professional growth
- Actively promote and encourage enrollment in the district's CCSU partnered 092 program
- Ensure employees are aware of tuition reimbursement benefits aligned with each bargaining agreement
- Ensuring leadership is intentionally varying opportunities for all levels of leadership

Retention

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Key Activities (continued)

D. Regular Check-Ins

- Schedule annual open-door forums at each building that allow employees to freely share their thoughts, concerns, or provide feedback on how the district can improve

E. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Broadcast and promote our Employee Assistance Program that provides support for personal and professional challenges, contributing to the overall well-being of your diverse workforce.

Indicators of Progress

A. Inclusive Onboarding

- Percentage of new hires who report feeling well-informed about the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion after completing the onboarding program
- Number of mentorship pairings established and feedback from mentees on the effectiveness of mentorship in providing guidance and support

- Percentage of staff that participates in affinity groups and reports feeling connected via an annual survey

B. Professional Development and Diversity Training

- Participation rate in diversity and inclusion training sessions
- Post-training surveys to measure employees' understanding of the importance of diverse perspectives and their perception of the organization's culture of respect

Retention

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Indicators of Progress (continued)

C. Equal Opportunities for Growth

- Tracking the career advancement of diverse candidates within the organization over time
- Schedule and artifacts of discussions and monitoring activities related to diversity in leadership opportunities at the building level
- Enrollment and participation rates in the 092 programs and utilization of tuition reimbursement benefits

D. Regular Check- Ins

- Attendance and participation rates in annual open-door forums at each building
- Feedback collected during these forums and subsequent actions taken by the district based on employee input

E. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Utilization rates of Employee Assistance Programs

Retention

Resources

Risks/Mitigation

Resources
(What people, time, money, and technology will be needed?):

A. Inclusive Onboarding
- Training Materials and Facilitators
- Feedback Collection Mechanism
- Technology for Training Delivery
- Time for meaningful connections

B. Professional Development and Diversity Training
- Trainers and Training Materials
- Technology for Training Delivery
- Survey Tools

C. Equal Opportunities for Growth
- Tracking and Reporting Systems
- Career Development Program
- Tuition Reimbursement Benefits

D. Regular Check- Ins
- Facilities for Forums
- Feedback Collection Mechanism

E. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- EAP Services
- Communication Channels

Risks/Mitigation
(What could go wrong? How will we make that less likely to happen?):

A. Inclusive Onboarding
- Resistance to Training: Some new hires may resist diversity and inclusion training, mitigate by emphasizing its importance
- Ineffective Training: Regularly update training materials based on stakeholder feedback
- Surveys are a moment of time: Multiple surveys and strategic timing of delivery along with time for completion. Indicate the purpose and intended outcomes

B. Professional Development and Diversity Training
- Low Participation: Encourage participation through clear communication and advanced knowledge of scheduled meeting times
- Lack of Understanding: Assess training effectiveness through post-training surveys and adjust content as needed

C. Equal Opportunities for Growth
- Unequal Advancement: Monitor and address disparities in career advancement
- Low Enrollment: Promote programs and benefits

D. Regular Check- Ins
- Low Attendance: Promote forums and their importance
- Unaddressed Feedback: Act on collected input to show responsiveness
- Some staff not feeling heard: Create an opt-out strategy vs opt-in

E. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Low Utilization: Promote EAP benefits and reduce stigma around seeking assistance

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Retention

Communication

Communication
(Who needs to be consulted/engaged? What needs to be communicated? To whom?):

A. Inclusive Onboarding
- District Leadership
- New processes and objectives need to be communicated to leadership teams and presenters

B. Professional Development and Diversity Training
- District Leadership
- Staff
- Clear communication on objectives need to be communicated to leadership teams and presenters

C. Equal Opportunities for Growth
- Transparent career advancement opportunities publicized
- Discussion with building leaders, being intentional and strategic in selection of staff for building leadership opportunities
- Promotion of programs and benefits to all staff

D. Regular Check- Ins
- Building Leadership & Staff
- Communication of the date a representative will be in the building and forum structure

E. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- EAP proactive promotion
- Promote EAP's connection material to staff potential candidates