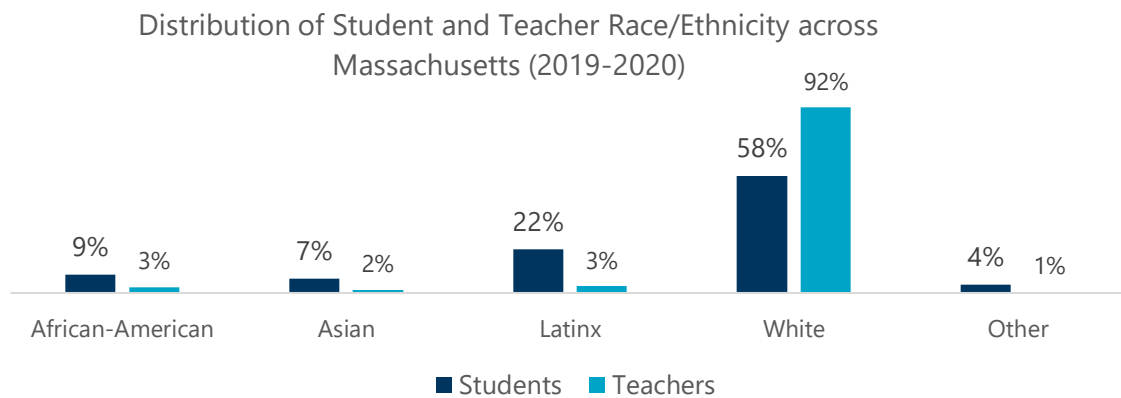


# PROMISING RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

For a Diverse Massachusetts Teacher Workforce

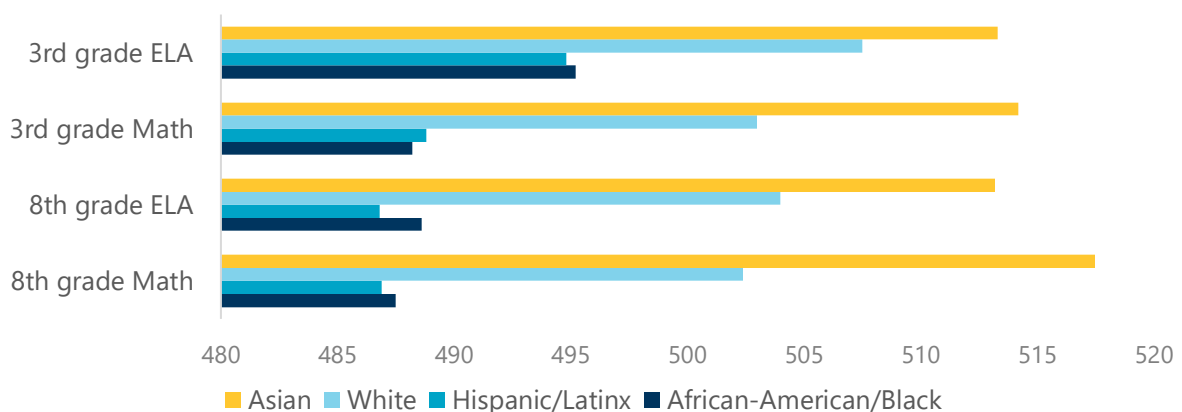
## Introduction

A range of research points to the value of a racially and ethnically diverse teaching staff for *all* students, particularly students of color.<sup>1</sup> Yet, as our population of students is becoming increasingly more racially and ethnically diverse, our teacher workforce is not. In fact, here in Massachusetts over 40 percent of our students are students of color, while only 8 percent of our teachers identify as people of color.



Source: [MA DESE Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity Reports](#). (Teacher data are based on staff report filtered by teachers only)

At the same time, we see consistent disparities between the performance of our Black and Latinx students compared to white students.



2019 MCAS Scores by Race/Ethnicity

Source: [MA DESE MCAS Reports; Summary of 2019](#)

TNTP's *The Opportunity Myth* shows that the achievement gap is actually highlighting opportunity gaps. Students of color are 25 percent less likely to have access to grade appropriate content. Across the country, many students of color are attending a classroom every day that does not even provide the opportunity to reach the demands of their grade level.<sup>1</sup> Here in Massachusetts, we know that students of color are far more likely to be assigned to an ineffective teacher as compared to their white peers. In 2016-17, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) found that students who are economically disadvantaged, students of color, or English learners are more than 1.7 times as likely to be assigned to a teacher rated Needs Improvement/Unsatisfactory, compared to their white peers.<sup>2</sup> And the cumulative impact of that opportunity gap means that students are continuously falling behind, losing ground as they reach for their post-secondary dreams and aspirations.


This opportunity gap is playing out for a range of reasons, but one very important one is the lack of racial and ethnic diversity in our teacher workforce. Data show that teachers of color have higher expectations for students of color when compared with white teachers<sup>3</sup>. This core belief in student ability and capacity immediately elevates the rigor of the content and opportunities that students have in the classroom. In fact, in a study of standardized test scores in Florida showed a positive impact on test scores for black students, when instructed by a black teacher.<sup>4</sup> Further, schools with a larger number of black teachers or a black principal have greater representation of black students in gifted programs.<sup>5</sup> And research shows that the experience of just one black teacher in grades 3 through 5 significantly reduces the probability of dropping out of high school among low-income black males.<sup>6</sup>


However, we need to be preparing *all* students to engage in a multicultural society. As so many American communities continue to be segregated, many students and adults are not able to interact with people of other races interrogate their own entrenched beliefs about race, class, ability and privilege. Unconscious biases (see Appendix for a definition of unconscious bias, along with other definitions of terms used in this Guidebook) are challenging our school systems, leading to inequities. These biases are influencing policies around recruitment and hiring, student discipline, professional development and academic placement. These biases are also influencing one-on-one interactions between students and staff and among colleagues. While meeting the needs of Massachusetts' students demands greater racial and ethnic diversity in the teacher workforce, systems need to create the culture and climate that recognizes the value of teachers of color in reaching more equitable outcomes for students.

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<sup>1</sup> TNTP, 2018, *The Opportunity Myth*, <https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>

<sup>2</sup> DESE Center for Instructional Support, Massachusetts State Equity Plan Update, 2018: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/equitableaccess/plan.html>

<sup>3</sup> Seth Gershenson, Stephen B. Holt, and Nicholas Papageorge, "Who Believes in Me? The Effect of Student-Teacher Demographic Match on Teacher Expectations." Working Paper 15-231 (W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2015), available at [http://research.upjohn.org/up\\_workingpapers/231/](http://research.upjohn.org/up_workingpapers/231/). 

<sup>4</sup> Anna J. Egalite, Brian Kisida, and Marcus A. Winters, "Representation in the classroom: The effect of own-race teachers on student achievement," *Economics of Education Review*, 45 (2015): 44-52; Katherine W. Phillips, "How Diversity Makes Us Smarter," *Scientific American*, October 1, 2014, available at <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>. 

<sup>5</sup> Grissom et al., 2017, "Teacher and Principal Diversity and the Representation of Students of Color in Gifted Programs: Evidence from National Data," *Elementary School Journal*, Volume 117, March 2017; [journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/690274](https://journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/690274)

<sup>6</sup> Gershenson et al., 2017) "The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers," [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2940620](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2940620)

**The purpose of this Guidebook is to support district and school leaders to design and implement a teacher diversification strategy in service of achievement and equitable outcomes for students.**

Engaging more staff of color requires intentional, reflective, and open-minded practices that are grounded in both the *technical work* of revising talent activities and the *adaptive work* of exploring individual identity and the manifestation of biases. As this Guidebook outlines, a talent diversification strategy requires an approach to both reevaluating and revising current practices around recruitment and selection while also taking steps to create a more inclusive culture through ongoing cultural proficiency work across the district.

In order to support districts to engage a more racially and ethnically diverse group of teachers, DESE launched a three-year Teacher Diversification Pilot Program Grant in the spring of 2019. During this time, DESE distributed approximately \$2,000,000 to fourteen school districts to support their efforts to strengthen and diversify existing teacher recruitment and retention programs. In the fall of 2019, an additional distribution of funds was awarded to the initial fourteen school districts along with six new districts. In the third and final year of the pilot program, DESE expects to distribute a final round of funding to fourteen school districts. Recipients of the grant demonstrated their commitment and investment in building programs and opportunities to introduce more people of color into the teacher workforce. TNTP has partnered with DESE since the beginning of this grant. Through this partnership, TNTP has supported districts as they design and implement teacher diversification strategies ranging from facilitating training around identity and bias to collaborating on updated recruitment and selection models. This document reflects the collective learnings that have emerged from the work of these districts, guided by national experts, research, and best practices.

**Your Team**

This Guidebook has been designed as a process guide for district and school leadership teams. Determining who should be at the table to both assess current practices and lead decision-making around changes in practice is a key first step in this work. As you build your team, be sure to pause and consider whose perspectives are missing from the conversation and ensure you broaden your team. In addition, building a culture that welcomes a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce does not sit only with positions such as the Director of Human Resources or Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. As noted throughout this Guidebook, this work is a combination of technical and adaptive work. If we only address the technical work of updated recruitment, selection, and retention efforts, we will *not* be successful in growing the applicant pool, attracting more people of color to the field, and ensuring that educators of color stay. To that end, this work must be done across central teams, with authentic and consistent stakeholder input, and deeply connected to the district's commitment to equitable outcomes for students. Engaging staff who facilitate professional learning, curriculum decisions and data and accountability should all be engaged in components of this process. Building an understanding of the barriers to diversification will only enhance the work across the district and in classrooms.

## The Process

We propose four key steps to building and implementing a talent diversification strategy:

- 1 Understand why teacher racial and ethnic diversity matters to your students and district:** Naming your 'why' and aligning commitments, communications, practices, and policies to reflect that 'why' is key to building a coherent approach to building a more diverse workforce.
- 2 Audit your current talent management processes, understand the experience of your stakeholders, and set goals:** Investing in a data-driven review of the current practices across the talent cycle will support both the understanding of gaps and barriers in the current practices and inform strategic short and long term efforts.
- 3 Adjust your talent practices:** Armed with a clear understanding of the gaps in current practices, changes can immediately begin across areas of recruitment, selection, and retention.
- 4 Create a long-term diversification strategy:** Building on learnings from the first three steps, create a long term strategy of continuous improvement that elevates the role of diversification in the district's commitment to equity, integrating ongoing work toward a more inclusive, culturally sustaining culture across all talent practices.

As teams engage with this Guidebook, it will be evident that decision-making must be grounded in the work of understanding the experiences of students, families, and staff of color. The reflective work of exploring our individual dimensions of identity and the intersection with unconscious bias also illuminates the importance of elevating more voices and perspectives to better understand the challenges and opportunities available. Creating a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce is not *just* about updating recruitment and selection models; we must attend to *retaining* teachers of color to ensure that students and communities benefit from the sustained impact of more diversity at the front of the classroom.

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## Step 1: Understand why teacher racial and ethnic diversity matters to your students and district.

In the design of a talent diversification strategy, it is key to build a clear vision for *why* a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce will support your students, and then to align commitments, practices, and policies to that ‘why.’ In this section we propose a process to begin to more deeply understand the current experience of your students and how a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce can support your equity journey.

### Key Takeaways

- A breadth of research points to the positive impact of having a more racially diverse teacher workforce for students.
- Ongoing work around cultural proficiency and exploring identity and bias is critical to building an understanding of the student and staff experience and engaging a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce.
- A coherent approach to talent diversification should be grounded in a clear vision for how a more racially and ethnically diverse workforce will support equity in your district context.

A breadth of research has pointed to the importance of ensuring that students have access to a more diverse teacher workforce.<sup>7</sup> Taken a step further, research around the culturally biased barriers that limit access to the teaching profession for more racially and ethnically diverse candidates raises important questions about how our systems define quality, criteria, and effectiveness. Building an effective strategy to bring more diversity to your teacher workforce requires a shared vision and commitment to the role that more teachers of color can play in ensuring that students have access to more equitable experiences in the classroom. Building a clear vision for *why* a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce will support your students will lend itself to mitigate the barriers that are within the scope of your control, and build the culture and climate that welcomes, values, and celebrates diversity of experience, background, perspective, and approach in service of more equitable experiences for students.

In this section we outline an approach to explore why and how talent diversity matters to your district:

- Understand the research and data behind why teacher diversity is important for your students and community;
- Engage in cultural proficiency work, exploring how identity and bias are influencing the perceptions of experiences across the district, and ideas for solution;

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<sup>7</sup> The Education Trust-New York, *See our Truth*, October 2017; <https://seeourtruth-ny.edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2017/10/See-Our-Truth.pdf>. See also: Johns Hopkins University, 2017, <https://releases.jhu.edu/2018/11/12/black-students-who-have-one-black-teacher-more-likely-to-go-to-college/>; The Long Run Impacts of Same Race Teachers – March 2017 - <http://ftp.iza.org/dp10630.pdf> Johns Hopkins University- April 2017 - <https://releases.jhu.edu/2017/04/05/with-just-one-black-teacher-black-students-more-likely-to-graduate/>

- Define why a more diverse teacher workforce is important for *your* students, and the work of creating more equitable learning experiences;
- Design a value proposition for candidates of color to come to your district.

Consider using the Step 1 Template in the Appendix to guide your work through this section.

**Understand the research and data behind why teacher racial and ethnic diversity is important for your students and community.**

Research shows that racially and ethnically diverse teachers produce a myriad of positive outcomes for all students, especially the most historically marginalized students. While almost 40 percent of Massachusetts' students in public schools are students of color, less than 10 percent of their teachers are non-white. Research shows that while all children benefit from being in diverse classrooms, such as by reducing stereotypes and encouraging cross-cultural social interactions, the effect on children of color is particularly significant. Race must be acknowledged as part of the equation for producing the most effective workforce; research shows more positive school experiences and outcomes for students of color when they have teachers of color:

- For black students, having a black teacher by third grade meant they were 13 percent more likely to enroll in college; students who had two black teachers were 32 percent more likely to enroll in college.<sup>8</sup>
- Schools with more black and Hispanic teachers and administrators have more black and Hispanic students in their gifted programs, respectfully.<sup>9</sup>
- Low-income black male student in grades 3 through 5 who are taught by at least one black teacher are less likely to drop out, reducing the probability by 39 percent.<sup>10</sup>

Yet, teachers of color who do enter the profession are retained at lower levels than white teachers, in Massachusetts and nationally.

While a national and statewide dataset can begin to illuminate the importance of designing a teacher diversification strategy, deepening understanding of the specific district context is key. Gathering a range of qualitative and quantitative data specific to the experiences of students and staff of color are important components in defining the purpose of your talent diversification priorities and how they connect to your vision for equity. Consider the following efforts to begin to build a data-informed foundation for a talent diversification strategy:

- Explore your current students and staff demographics through the [DESE website](#).

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<sup>8</sup> Johns Hopkins University – November 2018

<https://releases.jhu.edu/2018/11/12/black-students-who-have-one-black-teacher-more-likely-to-go-to-college/>

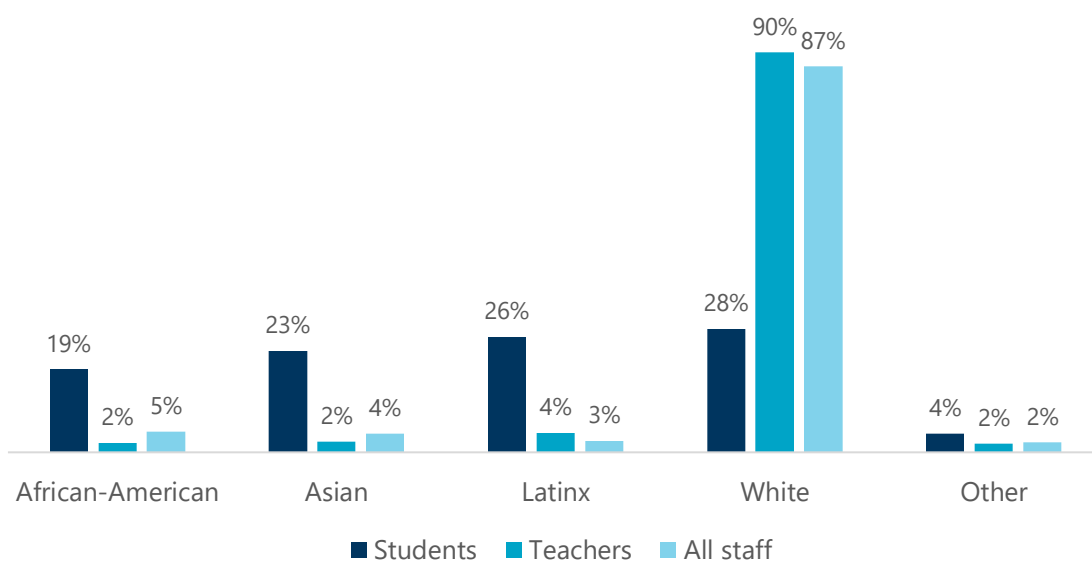
<sup>9</sup> Grissom, J. A., Kern, E. C., & Rodriguez, L. A. (April 2015). "The 'Representative Bureaucracy' in Education: Educator Workforce Diversity, Policy Outputs, and Outcomes for Disadvantaged Students". *Educational Researcher*, vol. 44, no. 3, pp. 195-192.

<sup>10</sup> <https://kappanonline.org/why-we-need-diverse-teacher-workforce-segregation-goldhaber-theobald-tien/>



- *What percentage of your students are non-white? What is the breakdown of race and ethnicity for your students?*
- *What do you see if you compare the race and ethnicity data for your teachers to the students?*
- *What changes when you bring in race/ethnicity of other school-based staff (i.e. counselors, paraprofessionals, interventionists, custodial staff, etc.)? What can you learn about your students as you break down specific race groups by national origin? And what does that mean for the work of more deeply understanding your students?*

District Example: Race/Ethnicity of Students Compared to Staff



*Note: Student enrollment data by race/ethnicity are available [here](#). Teacher and Staff data are available [here](#).*

- Explore student, teacher and community data (qualitative and quantitative) that can be helpful in better understanding how people of color are experiencing your district. (More on data collection in Step 2).

### **Engage in cultural proficiency work, exploring how identity and bias are influencing the perceptions of experiences across the district and ideas for solutions.**

Research shows the influence of unconscious bias in recruitment and selection activities. At least one research study found that White education majors are hired at higher rates than their minority peers. Further, research studies have shown that candidates with a more “Black-sounding” name have been less likely to be hired. And most recently, research has shown that even the observed speech patterns of candidates are leading to biased decisions based on assumed socioeconomic class. Unconscious bias is at play here. What we know about our unconscious bias is that we are constantly looking for patterns, for ways to put people into groups and connect those groups to our mental models. The purpose of creating

and adhering to a selection model is to ensure that your hiring process provides structures that disrupts our brain's instinct to categorize people based on these biases. As researchers continue to quantify the impact of unconscious biases in hiring practices, it logically follows that these biases continue to show up after the selection process in the way we interact with colleagues, students, and families.

Throughout this Guidebook we call attention to the importance of the ongoing work around building cultural proficiency. There is not a way to eliminate our biases, but there are multiple strategies that can be used to build the habits and self-awareness to recognize these biases showing up, and work to disrupt them. On the inter-personal level, districts should build a comprehensive approach to cultural proficiency capacity-building across the district, supporting all staff to begin to build their awareness: reflecting on their own identity, learning about unconscious biases, and deepening understanding of historical context. At the macro-level, leaders must work to deeply understand the systems that predict and direct educational outcomes for students, and their role in creating the awareness needed to dismantle them. This work includes personal, reflective work alongside equity audits to engage with data that begin to illuminate inequities across the districts. This simultaneous work is critical. "It stands to reason that any problem, definition, or solution created by biased individuals — which we all are — will perpetuate inequity if the process does not actively acknowledge and combat bias."<sup>11</sup>

There are a range of resources to support leadership teams to begin to explore identity and bias (see the Appendix for a list of recommended resources). Through this process, leadership teams should develop cultural proficiency professional development plans that support the entire district community to continue their own journey toward cultural proficiency.

### **Define why a more racially and ethnically diverse teacher workforce is important for your students and for creating more equitable learning experiences.**

Defining the "why" behind your district's commitment to engaging a more diverse workforce should be grounded in the context of your community, the experiences of your students and families, and connected to your district's vision for equity.

Work with your team to:

1. Engage a racially and ethnically diverse team of students to understand the experience they believe will set them up to reach their goals, and the qualities they are seeking in their teachers. (See Holyoke Public School's example found in the Appendix.)
2. Continue to gather a range of data to understand who is having that experience, who is not, and begin to explore the range of reasons for the disparity.
3. Define the role that teacher racial and ethnic diversity will play in ensuring more equitable experiences for students.
4. Build a shared language across the district (students, staff and families) around the priority of building a [culturally sustaining](#) experience for all students and staff.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://medium.com/equity-design/racism-and-inequity-are-products-of-design-they-can-be-redesigned-12188363cc6a>

### **Design a value proposition for candidates of color to come to your district.**

Once you have defined your “why” for talent diversification, connected to the student experience and commitment to equity, it is important to then define the experience that staff of color can expect. As noted above, it is important to understand why teachers of color are more likely to leave their school district than their white peers and seek to address those issues. National data provide some insight into the experiences of educators of color that may be influencing these attrition rates. Research has shown that teachers of color are up to three times more likely than white teachers to work in a hard-to-staff school. And teachers of color are more likely to be teaching in high-poverty schools compared to white teachers. Their high-poverty placements often include worse working conditions, such as a lack of autonomy and support. Further, Black and Latinx educators have reported experiences with racial discrimination and stereotyping. The undercurrent of systemic racism that leads staff of color to be one of only a few adults of color in the building often also results in unwelcoming colleagues, continuous microaggressions, and feelings of isolation.<sup>12 13</sup>

As part of the teacher diversification strategy, districts need to design a value proposition for potential staff of color. There are many factors that might attract a teacher to a school or district and keep them working there year after year. The Teacher Value Proposition is a set of attributes that candidates and employees perceive as the value they gain through employment in an organization. These include both tangibles (such as benefits, compensation, career pathways) and intangibles (such as culture, support system, and mission). Data from staff of color, including surveys, empathy interviews, and focus groups can illuminate some of the key strategies to support a better, more sustainable work environment.

These messages about your school and district are key to ensure a strong match between you, your school, and the candidate. When facing a recruitment or retention crisis, leaders often scramble to find a quick solution to boost teacher satisfaction—offering the chance to attend a conference, for example—without taking a close look at what’s truly pushing teachers to leave. We recommend that leaders look at all aspects of a teacher’s experience at their school—mission and fit, work environment, compensation and rewards, and professional growth—to pinpoint the problem and find integrated solutions. The result is a strong teacher value proposition that will help attract and retain more top teachers in both the short term and long term. Consider the guidance below when drafting or revising your school’s value proposition for your desired candidates.

RECOMMENDATIONS	EXAMPLES
Consider the factors that inspire teachers of color to select a position in your school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate your commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and celebrate the value of your students’ diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• Promote collaboration and involvement in school leadership that gives the teachers a sense of community, value, and opportunity for growth</li> <li>• Describe opportunities for collegial support and any kind of mentor system</li> </ul>

<sup>12</sup> <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ThroughOurEyes.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Our-Stories-Our-Struggles-Our-Strengths-FINAL.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the dedicated, safe space for teachers of color to form relationships and collaborate, such as affinity groups.</li> </ul>
Describe the learning community and professional atmosphere in your school/district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly state your vision and mission for the school</li> <li>Highlight yourself as a leader, and cite a unique strength that drives that vision and mission</li> <li>Update your language each year with recent school/student achievements</li> </ul>
Current statistics and long-term goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain how you will meet these goals</li> <li>Highlight your vision for the future</li> </ul>
Personal connection to the school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share teacher bios or testimonials that are inspiring and provide the opportunity for individuals to connect to current staff</li> <li>Share student bios that support the focus on creating welcoming environments for all students to thrive</li> <li>Share information on community highlights and activities</li> </ul>

## Step 2: Audit your current talent management processes, understand the experience of your stakeholders, and set goals.

After you have completed the initial work to understand why teacher racial and ethnic diversity is critical to the success of your students, your next step is to assess various types of data, including the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's teacher preparation partnership pipeline report, that will then inform your goals for recruitment, selection, and retention. In this section, you will find guidance on how to conduct an audit of your current talent management processes, understand the experience of your students, families, and educators of color, and set targets using the data you gather.

### Key Takeaways

- Effective goals are data-driven. Before setting targets, you must first use data to get a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of your talent processes and the experiences of your key stakeholders.
- There is a wealth of data already at your disposal. Start by using the data that already exists.
- If you do not currently have data that you need, now is the time to plan out how and when you will collect and analyze that data.
- Keep in mind that data can be interpreted in different ways. It's imperative to have a diverse set of stakeholders interpreting and exploring data to avoid bias and blind spots from interfering.

### Assess the current status of diversification in each of your talent management processes.

The next step in diversifying the teacher workforce in your district is to understand your teacher pipeline and the current status of diversification in your talent management processes, including recruitment, selection, and retention. This data will allow you to prioritize strategically, set goals, and monitor your progress.

For example, your data might convey that the candidate pool is very diverse and that a proportionate number of white and non-white candidates are hired through the selection process. However, your data might also show that teachers of color are leaving the district at higher rates than white teachers. These data points suggest you should prioritize your retention strategy, create retention goals around diversity, and closely monitor your progress against these goals. In reality, your data is likely to tell a much more complex story than this example, as best practices for effective recruitment, selection, and retention are all intertwined.

Data is only as good as the way it is interpreted. To mitigate bias, be sure to have a diverse set of stakeholders involved in interpreting the data. It's imperative to have a diverse set of stakeholders interpreting and exploring data to avoid bias and blind spots from interfering.

To get started, we suggest using the following planning tool. This tool includes examples of guiding research questions for each talent management process along with the analysis items needed to answer those questions. Your team should customize this tool based on the specific context of your district.

TALENT PROCESS	GUIDING QUESTIONS	ANALYSIS ITEMS
Pipeline Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where are there existing pools of talent already within your community (e.g., students, paraprofessionals, student teachers, community organizations, etc.)?</li> <li>Which of these pipelines convert individuals to diverse teacher/administrator hires in your district?</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher Preparation Partnership Pipeline Report (P3) in Edwin Analytics for student teachers</p> <p>District hiring data</p>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which recruitment sources and methods have been effective in recruiting teachers of color?</li> </ul>	Applicant recruitment source by race/ethnicity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the barriers that teachers of color face when starting and finishing the application process?</li> <li>What do we know about applicants of color who start the application process and do not finish?</li> </ul>	Application conversion rates by race/ethnicity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are first-touch-point communications (such as the district website) 1) clearly communicating the district's value proposition for teachers of color and their commitment to cultural proficiency and 2) ensures the application process is clear, welcoming, and includes supports?</li> </ul>	Trends in recruitment communications and messaging
Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are we encouraging, supporting, and selecting teachers of color to continue in the hiring process at different rates than white teachers?</li> <li>At which step in the application/selection process might we be exhibiting bias, based on which teachers are getting through to the next round?</li> </ul>	Selection rates by race/ethnicity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the barriers that teachers of color face when going through the selection process?</li> </ul>	Selection conversion rates by race/ethnicity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are our selection process communications (such as interview invitations and follow-ups) 1) clearly communicating the district's value</li> </ul>	Trends in selection communications and messaging

	proposition for teachers of color and 2) ensuring the selection process is clear, welcoming, and includes supports?	
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are teachers of color leaving the district at a different rate than white teachers?</li> <li>Why are teachers of color leaving at different rates than white teachers?</li> </ul>	<p>Attrition rate for teachers by race/ethnicity and survey/focus group data</p> <p>Address issues raised in exit interviews.</p>

### Collect and analyze a range of data to understand the experiences of staff, families, and students.

In addition to assessing the current status of diversification in each talent management process, it's imperative to understand the experiences of your students, families, and educators of color. There are many ways to access existing quantitative and qualitative experience data for your students, families, and educators of color, including surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, and informal conversations. Fortunately, public school districts in Massachusetts have access to comprehensive quantitative student and educator experience data compiled DESE.<sup>14</sup> As you begin the data collection and analysis process, we recommend beginning with the following existing internal and DESE compiled datasets:

1. Take advantage of any qualitative experience data that already exists in your district or school, such as job satisfaction surveys, exit interviews, feedback received, and individual conversations with students and families.
2. Your district's [Student Experience Report](#) is critical in helping you understand if students of color in your district are having a different classroom experience than their white counterparts. The report includes data on the *student assignment gap*, which shows student assignment to educators by educator experience level, qualifications, effectiveness ratings, and educator attendance along with the *student performance gap*, which shows student performance by race/ethnicity. The data can be viewed at both the district-level and school-level. Note that there are detailed instructional videos available on how to generate and interpret these reports.
3. Your district's [School and District Profile Reports](#) contain a wealth of student experience data and will help you understand how students of color are experiencing classroom discipline, which special groups they are assigned to, their likeliness of graduating high school, and many other experience data points. We suggest exploring the reports in full, with particular focus on the following areas:
  - Student discipline data (in-and-out of school suspension and emergency removals)
  - Special education identification data
  - Advanced placement participation and completion data
  - Graduation rates data
  - Dropout data
4. Your district's Edwin reports from [Edwin Analytics](#) provides a comprehensive data reporting and analysis tool that allows authorized users access to new information and reports that are intended

<sup>14</sup> Massachusetts School and District Profiles: Statewide Reports. [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state\\_report/](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/)

to support improvements in teaching, learning, and educational outcomes. Some of particular note include:

- CR608 –Student HS Preparation and PS Performance Report which shows you post-secondary outcomes of prior students as a potential source for targeted outreach and recruitment.
- EP903 – Teacher Preparation Partnership Pipeline Report which shows the preparation providers with student teachers in your district, who you are hiring from, as well as their effectiveness and retention in your schools.

In addition to analyzing existing experience data, consideration should be given to collecting additional qualitative data through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and informal conversations. The [Shadow a Student Challenge](#) offers excellent guidance on better understanding the student experience. TNTP's [COVID-19 Support Survey](#) is an example of how to collect student, family, and teacher experience data through the use of surveys.

As a reminder, data is only as good as the way it is interpreted. To mitigate bias, be sure to have a diverse set of stakeholders involved in interpreting the data who can provide diverse perspectives that might be missed otherwise.

### **Use your data to set talent goals and targets.**

The datasets above are integral to setting targets related to recruitment, selection, and retention of racially and ethnically diverse staff. This data will inform the strengths and weaknesses of your current processes and the experience of your students, families, and educators of color. You can use this data to set and prioritize talent goals and to strategize how to best meet your goals.

After assessing your available data on 1) the current status of diversification in your recruitment, selection, and retention processes and 2) the experience of stakeholders such as students, families, and teachers of color, you can use this data to set teacher recruitment, selection, and retention goals.

Effective goals meet the “SMARTIE” checklist:

<b>STRATEGIC</b>	reflects an important dimension of what your organization seeks to accomplish (programmatic or capacity-building priorities)
<b>MEASURABLE</b>	includes standards by which reasonable people can agree on whether the goal has been met (by numbers or defined qualities)
<b>AMBITIOUS</b>	challenging enough that achievement would mean significant progress; a “stretch” for the organization
<b>REALISTIC</b>	not so challenging as to indicate lack of thought about resources or execution; possible to track and worth the time and energy to do so
<b>TIME-BOUND</b>	includes a clear deadline
<b>INCLUSIVE</b>	brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.



## EQUITABLE

includes an element of fairness or justice that seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression

Source: [The Management Center](#)

See the Appendix for more guidance on setting SMARTIE goals.

For each talent management process, use your available data to set new goals and a data-driven strategy using the process below:

1. Collect all available data that applies to the talent management process at hand.
2. Use the available data, along with the SMARTIE checklist, to set new goals.
3. Use the available data to start brainstorming a strategy to accomplish the new goals. These strategies will be further informed by best practices for each talent management process, which are described in the next section.

See below for an example of what this might look like for your recruitment and retention processes.

TALENT PROCESS:	AVAILABLE DATA:	NEW GOAL:	STRATEGY TO MEET GOAL:
Pipeline Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SY19-20, we supported more than 50 student teachers and hired 2 from this pool, 20 percent of the students which teachers identified as individuals of color.</li> <li>• In SY19-20, there were 150 para-educators in our schools, over 45 percent identify as people of color.</li> <li>• In SY19-20 12 percent of graduating seniors indicated interest in becoming a teacher.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SY20-21, 20 percent of paraprofessionals with bachelor's degrees will receive teacher preparation support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct teacher interest surveys of all paraprofessionals in the district.</li> <li>• Provide teacher development resources, in multi-languages, to interested paraprofessionals.</li> <li>• Identify how financial support may be provided to support paraprofessionals prepare for exams and/or preparation programs.</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SY19-20, 20 percent of candidates applying for teaching positions identified as people of color.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SY20-21, 40 percent of our teacher applicants will identify as people of color.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize recruitment through LinkedIn</li> <li>• Audit all recruitment materials, including the website, job descriptions, and job postings, to ensure the district's</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In SY19-20, 80 percent of applicants of color learned of the position via LinkedIn.</li> <li>• In SY19-20, 30 percent of applicants of color reported that the district's commitment to diversity was clearly communicated during the recruitment process.</li> </ul>		<p>commitment to diversity is clearly communicated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about how to ensure the recruitment process is appealing and welcoming to applicants of color through independent research and qualitative data gathering (e.g. recruitment survey).</li> </ul>
Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From SY19-20 to SY20-21, 90 percent of white teachers were retained while only 45 percent of teachers of color were retained.</li> <li>• In SY19-20, 80 percent of exiting teachers of color reported that a top reason they left their position is because they did not feel valued.</li> </ul>	In SY20-21, we will retain 90 percent of our current teachers of color.	<p>Ensure that teachers of color feel valued through the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about what would make teachers of color feel valued through independent research and qualitative data gathering (surveys, focus groups, conversations).</li> <li>• Conduct "stay" conversations throughout the year.</li> <li>• Publicly recognize and reward teachers.</li> </ul>

### **Set up data collection processes that allow you to gather data throughout the year.**

If you do not currently have all the quantitative or qualitative data that would help to inform your talent management goals and strategies, now is the time to plan for how and when to collect this data in the future. We recommend that for each type of data item collected, your team ask a series of guiding questions to effectively plan out your future data collection processes.

For each type of data described above...	...use these questions to map out your data collection plan and timeline.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversification data: recruitment</li> <li>• Diversification data: selection</li> <li>• Diversification data: retention</li> <li>• Experience data: students</li> <li>• Experience data: families</li> <li>• Experience data: teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on what we already know and what data we already have available, is it a priority to collect and analyze this data?</li> <li>• How will we collect and analyze this data?</li> <li>• Who will collect and analyze this data?</li> <li>• When will we collect and analyze this data?</li> <li>• What will we do with what we learn from the data?</li> <li>• Who will be involved in interpreting this data?</li> <li>• How will we mitigate biases and blind spots?</li> </ul>

See the Appendix for a timeline to assist in your planning process.

## Step 3: Adjust your talent practices.

After you have used data to assess your diversification status, understand the experience of your students, families, and teachers of color, set talent goals and targets, your next step is to adjust your talent practices to ensure teachers of color are supported at every stage in the talent management process. This section is broken up into three categories of talent management processes: recruitment, selection, and retention.

### Key Takeaways

- Using your data, targets, and knowledge of best practices, adjust your talent management processes to attract, welcome, support, and retain your teachers of color.
- Track your talent data so that you can monitor your progress, continue to make adjustments, and celebrate your successes.

### Pipeline Development

#### **Implement pipeline strategies that target and cultivate racially and ethnically diverse candidates.**

Research from the Massachusetts pipeline<sup>15</sup> suggests that significant shifts to the demographics of the educator workforce are unlikely unless we support and pursue a longer-term strategy to cultivate talent for our schools. We suggest considering the following practices.

- **Cultivate and support interest with your students.** Talking with middle and high school students explicitly about becoming educators. Find ways to connect them with opportunities to work with other students in the district, either through tutoring supports or workstudy efforts in elementary schools. Working with guidance counselors who support students to navigate college options, provide connections to preparation providers serving the area. Work with local preparation providers to establish tuition and program discounts for a commitment to returning to work in the district.
- **Intentionally partner for and coordinate student teaching candidates.** Coordinate at the district level an awareness of the student teachers placed in your schools. Engage intentionally with the preparation providers in your area to secure diverse candidate placements, pair them with other educators of color already working in the district and have explicit recruitment and hiring conversations with them before the end of their practicum. Provide feedback back to preparation partners about your needs and candidate strengths/areas of growth.
- **Support individuals teaching on a waiver.** Have an explicit conversation with educators employed on a waiver about what they need to do to secure licensure and full employment in the district. Connect them with resources and supports to navigate the process. Consider intentionally involving them in district induction and mentoring supports.

Remember that pipeline development work can be both a recruitment strategy for incoming educators but also a retention effort to support teachers in your existing workforce.

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<sup>15</sup> [Harvard Kennedy School: Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston: Racial Diversity in the Teacher Pipeline: Evidence from Massachusetts.](#)

## Recruitment

### Implement recruitment strategies tailored to racially and ethnically diverse candidates.

We suggest considering the following practices to ensure your recruitment strategy is effectively attracting and supporting candidates of color to apply.

- **Remove barriers where possible.** Assess where candidates are dropping out of the recruitment and application process and actively problem solve when gaps emerge disproportionately for candidates of color and see what steps you can take to level the playing field. For instance, if fewer candidates of color are applying to certain subject areas or submitting the full application, review all available data and processes to understand why and identify what steps may be taken to ensure a fair, equitable application process.
- **Focus on diverse markets.** Review and assess your current paraprofessional talent pool as paraprofessionals are often an untapped source of talent. In certain school districts, paraprofessionals represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the students and the community. Conduct outreach to racially and ethnically diverse communities, universities with a higher ratio of students of color, and conduct meaningful outreach to community organizations that serve racially and ethnically diverse populations.
- **Skip niche tactics.** There is no shortage of diversity-focused job boards, but these rarely produce results. While there is rarely harm in adding postings to these sites since they are relatively inexpensive, don't rely exclusively on these sources.
- **Represent racially and ethnically diverse teachers in all marketing.** Examine all marketing materials and ensure that teachers who represent the type of racial and ethnic diversity you're targeting are amplified in your marketing materials. Be wary of swinging too far on the pendulum as teachers may feel like they were given the bait and switch if they see marketing materials that are wildly different than the reality of the schools they'll be working in.
- **Include value proposition language in all marketing.** Incorporate the value proposition you created in Step 1 in all recruitment materials. Your value proposition should be clear and prominent on your website, in job descriptions, advertisements, flyers, brochures, and all other collateral.

### Track data

Tracking recruitment data is critical to detecting and eliminating potential barriers to recruiting teachers of color. Though Massachusetts districts cannot ask for racial or demographic data in their applications directly, demographic questions are listed as optional in the centralized SchoolSpring application. Gather this information and monitor progress at the candidate, subject area, and stage levels. For example:

- **Monitor recruitment conversion rates with as much detail as possible.** Conversion rates refer to the percentage of candidates who complete a desired goal out of the total number of candidates. For example, if 10 candidates of color start a job application and 4 submit the application, the conversion rate for that step is 40 percent. You should track conversion rates as they will help you paint a picture of what recruitment strategies are successful at attracting candidates of color to complete your application. If possible, include a question about race/ethnicity on your application. If that is not possible, see if the platforms where you post your

job descriptions, such as LinkedIn, offer accompanying data on race/ethnicity. Recruitment data can include:

- Where applicants are learning of the job opening (e.g. 80 percent of applicants of color learned of the position via LinkedIn),
  - Who starts an application,
  - Who completes and submits applications (e.g. 20 percent of applicants of color started an application but did not submit it, and the application step that they dropped off was the resume portion).
- **Collect experience data.** By seeking to understand how applicants are experiencing the recruitment process at every step, you are better able to strategically pinpoint and address the factors affecting their interest. Administer a brief recruitment survey that captures additional sourcing and experience data with questions like,
  - How did you learn of the position?
  - Was the application easy to navigate and the instructions clear?
  - Did you know who to reach out to for questions during the application process?
  - Was it clear that XYZ Public Schools values racial and ethnic diversity through the application process?

## Selection

### **Implement selection strategies tailored to racially and ethnically diverse teachers.**

*Build your team's awareness of bias and the role it plays in selection and hiring decisions.*

Building awareness of your own personal biases and the types of interview biases will help your team objectively select the best candidate for each position.

Interview bias occurs when an interviewer focuses on a single aspect of a candidate, preventing an unprejudiced consideration of their ability. Not all interviewer biases negatively impact the candidate. For example, a candidate may be well-received because they went to the same college as the interviewer. However, in either case, the bias is falsely used as a proxy for information that should be directly inquired about by the interviewer. Bias is typically not immediately visible, and it is the responsibility of school and district leaders to be diligent in uncovering and unpacking it.

Here we describe two types of common interviewer bias: personal bias and situation bias. Interviewers can have personal biases based on their individual background and experiences. Personal biases include but not are limited to:

- Political affiliations
- Appearance or dress
- Certification route
- Previous employers
- Age
- Geographic location
- Name

Interviewers can also exhibit situational biases, which are described in more detail on the next page.

SITUATIONAL BIAS TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Positive-Negative Leniency Error	Interviewer tends to be too hard or too easy on everyone.
Trait Error	Interviewer tends to be too hard or too easy on a given competency or event (i.e. teaching ability or writing sample).
Repetition Error	Interviewer unfairly compares candidate to the candidates seen immediately before ("This candidate reminds me of the last 20 candidates.").
Sympathy Score	Interviewer sympathizes with candidate's efforts ("Well, the candidate is trying hard and is really enthusiastic." ).
Order Effects	Interviewer unfairly inflates evaluation of candidate in comparison of previously seen candidates ("This candidate is average but is much better than the previous 3 candidates we've seen.").

*Mitigate bias in the selection process.*

- **Build a diverse selection committee.** Your selection committee should be representative of the teachers you hope to hire. As much as possible, the staff on the committee should represent a variety of races, ethnicities, genders, ages, and other identities. A diverse selection committee helps to prevent bias in the selection bias. Additionally, having a selection committee that represents the candidate's identity can help candidates to feel safe, welcomed, and included.
- **Ensure structure and consistency in the interview process.** For example, avoid requiring some candidates to complete a video interview while others are on the phone.
- **Rely more on objective work samples and less on interviews.** It is easier for bias to creep into how we rate candidates during interviews than it is when we score their writing samples and application essays.
- **Conduct blind evaluations of candidate materials.** Where possible, evaluate candidate materials blindly. Some schools do this by hiding the name, race/ethnicity, and gender when evaluating resumes and applications.
- **Be aware of and do not ask illegal questions.** Under laws enforced by the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#), it is illegal to discriminate against an applicant because of that person's race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age, disability or genetic information. See [here](#) for a sample list of illegal questions to ask during the selection process.

*Rethink your competencies, indicators, and selection activities.*

A good selection model not only mitigates biases in the selection process, but also helps selection committees to articulate and align on the type of teacher candidate they are looking for and how to identify those characteristics. As you build this out, consider what you learned from students in Step 1 and

prioritize the competencies that are most important to your students, and most likely to create more equitable classrooms across the district.

KEY QUESTION	SELECTION MODEL COMPONENT
What are you looking for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified criteria are called "Competencies."</li> <li>Example of one competency: Teaching Ability</li> </ul>
What does it look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each Competency has examples of specific behaviors called "indicators."</li> <li>Examples indicators of Teaching Ability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conveys ideas and information clearly</li> <li>Provides reasonable examples of effective lesson-planning, instructional strategies, and/or student assessment</li> <li>Possesses the ability to make content meaningful for students</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
How are you going to see it?	Selection activities (application questions, interview questions/scenarios, writing prompts) are aligned with one or more competencies.
How will you evaluate it?	<p>Candidates are rated.</p> <p>Example of a four-point rating scale: (1) exemplary, (2) somewhat strong, (3) somewhat weak and (4) poor or ineligible.</p>

See the Appendix for an example of Somerville Public School's competencies, indicators, and aligned interview questions and for Cambridge Public School's Racial Equity Bank of Questions aimed at assessing candidates' commitment and understanding of racial equity during interviews.

*Communicate your value proposition throughout the selection process.*

Remember that candidates are interviewing you, too. Be sure to articulate your value proposition throughout every step of the selection process. Candidates of color should know that they are valued, why they are valued, what kind of support they can expect, and what leadership is doing to increase and promote all aspects of cultural proficiency in their schools.

### **Track selection data.**

Continue to monitor conversion rates in the selection process. Just as you tracked conversion rates in the recruitment process, you'll want to continue this practice in the selection and hiring process. Below are a couple examples of how to use data and conversion rates in the selection process.

RESEARCH QUESTION	EXAMPLE	POTENTIAL ACTION
What percent of applicants are invited to an interview?	30 percent of applicants of color were invited to an interview vs. 85 percent of white candidates.	Closely examine process for selecting which candidates are invited to an interview, as there is likely bias present in the current process.



What percent of applicants invited to an interview schedule and attend the interview?	60 percent of candidates of color invited to an interview scheduled and attended the interview vs. 100 percent of white candidates.	If possible, reach out to candidates to see why they did not accept the interview invitation. Examine your communications to ensure you are communicating your value proposition, using welcoming language, and eliminating any possible barriers.
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### **Collect experience data.**

Continue your efforts to understand the teacher experience by asking for feedback on how the selection process felt for candidates, both for those who completed the process and were hired and for those who were not. Act on this data by modifying the selection process according to feedback collected.

See the Appendix for an example of a selection survey from Somerville Public Schools.

## **Retention**

### **Implement retention strategies tailored to racially and ethnically diverse teachers.**

Teacher attrition costs districts countless time, resources, and dollars and creates inconsistent learning experiences for students. The good news is that data show that retention among effective Massachusetts teachers is higher than their less effective peers, so we know that many of our best teachers are remaining in our schools. But, retention among educators of color is not as strong as among their white peers.<sup>16</sup> In fact, as captured in Massachusetts' Equity Plan Update in 2018, 85 percent of white teachers stayed in their schools, while only 75 percent of black teachers, and 80 percent of Latinx teachers stayed in their schools. In the work of understanding how to not only attract a more racially diverse teaching staff, it is critical that retention of educators of color be a top priority.

School and district leaders first need to understand why teachers of color are leaving, commit to taking steps to creating safe and welcoming environments for their teachers of color to thrive, and then invest in the specific strategies that will motivate them to stay in the classrooms where they're needed most. District and school leaders should actively plan to create more equitable and inclusive environments that recognize the important contributions of educators of color and provide them with the support they need.

It's important to keep in mind that your teachers of color are not a monolith and have different, unique, and intersectional identities. Prioritize getting to know your individual teachers of color, celebrate their contributions, and learn about their experiences to inform your retention approach.

- **Set teacher retention goals, especially when it comes to keeping teachers of color, to drive network strategy.** To create a strong district and school wide retention strategy, leaders must first decide what goals they have for teacher of color retention. Given that teachers are most often leaving early in their teaching careers, district and school leaders should come to an understanding about

<sup>16</sup> DESE Center for Instructional Support, Massachusetts State Equity Plan Update, 2018:  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/equitableaccess/plan.html>

what kind of environment they want to provide for teachers of color from the very beginning. Leaders should think about how long they want teachers to stay, and the percent of teachers they are hoping to retain over time. What is important is that there is a defined approach to teacher retention. Setting clear overall goals for teacher of color retention upfront will enable you to build a retention strategy aligned to these goals. (See Step 2 for further guidance on goal setting.)

- **Differentiate retention strategies.** Given the unique identities, backgrounds, and needs of your teachers of color, district and school leaders should think differently about what strategies will work for their teachers of color. Specific strategies that can be included in your retention approach include:
  - **Create affinity spaces for your teachers of color.** Encourage your staff of color to create affinity spaces to collaborate and share stories. These groups provide an important social and professional network for staff of color to engage with each other and share experiences, workshop challenges and explore innovations.<sup>17</sup> A separate list serve for staff of color can also provide an important platform to communicate. Be sure to communicate your commitment to your staff engaging in affinity spaces by protecting that time. These opportunities should be offered as continuous and valued without risk that that time becomes repurposed for other activities.
  - **Hold stay conversations.** Many teachers use the winter holiday to think about what's next. Block off time after Thanksgiving to talk to your teachers of color about continuing to teach and lead at your school next year. Tell them that they are irreplaceable and how much you want them to return. Ask them about their own interests and concerns, if they are considering other options, and what you can do to convince them to stay. There are six steps a school leader can use when planning for and conducting their stay conversations:
    - **Praise:** Highlight the positive. Link this teacher's performance with the bigger picture impact you see this teacher making on their students & your school.
    - **Probe for a Pulse Check:** Start with a targeted question & encourage the teacher to share their feelings with you. How does the teacher feel about their work and their role in the school.
    - **Determine Intention:** Use probing & dialogue to determine whether or not this teacher is planning to stay at your school.
    - **State Desired Outcome & Retention Strategy:** Tell the teacher you'd like them to stay and how you'd like to reward their performance.
    - **Plan Ahead:** How will this reward actually play out? What can this teacher expect in the upcoming weeks and months?
    - **Follow-up:** Set timeline for follow-up and make sure you follow-up. Reiterate how much you appreciate the teacher's contributions.
  - **Recognize and reward.** Don't let success be a secret. Set aside 5 to 10 minutes in regular meetings to publicly celebrate teachers of color who have done exceptional work in the classroom or achieved a notable milestone with their students. Congratulate them and tell

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<sup>17</sup> Micia Mosley, 2018, The Black Teacher Project: How Racial Affinity Professional Development Sustains Black Teachers; <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c01b0d6b98a78f723592deb/t/5c744c4624a694f706f0322c/1551125574620/MoselyUrbanReviewArticle.2018.pdf>

- what they're doing to the school's goals and vision of great teaching. Don't praise everyone every time; leaders should be careful to avoid false praise for mediocre or poor performance. While individual school leaders should regularly recognize and reward their teachers, central action will create a more supportive and satisfying environment for teachers across the network. Such recognition could include yearly honorees who are exemplifying the district's values and/or honoring teachers on anniversaries of service such as 5 years, 10 years, etc. Rewards could be monetary or symbolic and align with the district's vision and mission.
- **Give specific and timely feedback.** Effective teachers often receive less feedback than their less effective counterparts.<sup>18</sup> Be sure to provide your teachers of color with specific feedback on their strengths as well as help them to identify areas for development to support their continued professional growth within the classroom. Proactively ask your teachers of color about what resources they need (curricular resources, technology, supplies, collaboration spaces, etc.) to be successful. Make it a priority to provide these resources, even if they cannot be provided for the entire grade level or school.
  - **Identify opportunities or career paths for your teachers of color.** Besides typical leadership opportunities that take teachers out of the classroom for part or all of the day, think of leadership roles they can take on while still in the classroom. These might include:
    - Grade level lead
    - Subject lead
    - Mentor teacher to new or struggling teacher(s)
    - Committee participation

- Formal roles are not the only way for teachers to take on additional leadership. You might also put them in charge of smaller projects, such as taking the lead on a school-wide effort to engage more parents or providing PD and follow up feedback to teachers on their use of student talk in the classroom. Increase investment in the school by asking for their opinions or participation in decision making. This could range from asking your teachers of color to sit on your hiring panel for new teachers or to think about how to spend money budgeted for curricular resources.
- **Consider how teachers of color are placed across your district.** Teachers of color are disproportionately likely to work in schools with less resources and where there may be long standing cultures of lower expectations for students. School districts should address these systemic issues, including by examining their approaches to assigning teachers and why. Explore ongoing equity audits to determine where your teachers of color are placed; closely review not only the schools, but also the classes they are teaching. Consider: *Are they teaching any of the more advanced classes? Are they in the higher need schools?*
  - **Create specific mentor/support programs for your new staff of color.** In the 2018-2019 school year, a quarter of Massachusetts teachers of color leaving the profession identified

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<sup>18</sup> 2012, TNTP, The Irreplaceables; [https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP\\_Irreplaceables\\_2012.pdf](https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_Irreplaceables_2012.pdf)

inadequate mentoring as a major factor in their departure.<sup>19</sup> Pair new teachers with a veteran teacher who will serve as a mentor or buddy and help answer questions, share information, and provide their perspective.

### Track data

Tracking retention data is critical in identifying if teachers of color are leaving at a higher rate than white teachers and why.

- **Monitor retention rates with as much detail as possible.** When tracking retention, it is best to know who exactly is leaving and staying. If possible, track or obtain your teacher retention and attrition by race and ethnicity, gender, subject area, grade level, certification status, years of experience, and compensation. Then, analyze your data to determine who is leaving and staying. For example, your data might tell you that black male teachers are more likely to leave than black female teachers. This hard data can point you into the right direction of further inquiry.
- **Collect experience data.** In the example above, your data informed you of a retention trend of black male teachers leaving at higher rates, but only experience data can uncover the reasons this might be happening and how you can address them. It is imperative to collect experience data for exiting teachers and current teachers. For exiting teachers, consider an exit survey or interview to understand more about why they are leaving. For current teachers, consider administering job satisfaction surveys or conducting focus groups or individual interviews to understand how they are experiencing their role. See the Appendix for a protocol for conducting empathy interviews and for a sample exit survey.

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<sup>19</sup> Massachusetts COVID-19 Talent Guide: Navigating the Decisions, Considerations and Policies Affecting the 2020-2021 Massachusetts Educator Workforce. June 2020.

## Step 4: Create a long-term diversification strategy.

In this section, you will receive guidance on how to plan for a continuous cycle of assessing and improving your recruitment, selection, and retention processes and goals.

### Key Takeaways

- Efforts to increase the diversification of your teacher workforce should be an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement.
- To ensure your goals are met, it is critical to map out your long-term strategy with as much as detail as possible.
- Learning about your identity and biases and those of your staff and community is a never-ending journey and is a necessary step in advancing your cultural proficiency and that of your staff.

**Using what you've learned and the adjustments you've made, create a long-term strategic plan for how you'll monitor progress and reach your goals.**

If you have arrived at this step, you have made a lot of progress toward diversifying the talent workforce in your district. You have begun to:

- Read and digest the research behind why teachers of color are important for your students and community.
- Engage in cultural proficiency work, including learning about your identity and biases and those of your students and staff.
- Identify and define why talent diversification matters in your district.
- Assess the current status of diversification in your recruitment, selection, and retention processes and start to make adjustments.
- Collect and analyze a range of data to understand the experiences of staff, families, and students, and how those experiences differ based on race/ethnicity
- Use your data to set talent goals and targets.
- Set up data collection processes that allow you to gather data throughout the year.
- Plan to adjust your practices and strategy to effectively recruit, select, and retain teachers of color.
- Strategically prioritize talent practices according to the time of year and your specific data and goals.

**Once your plans for implementing talent practices that will increase the diversity of your teacher workforce are in place, ongoing work is needed to determine if your goals are being reached and to make changes as needed to address barriers and challenges.**

Building on your learnings from the first three steps, you can now create a long-term strategy of continuous improvement that elevates the role of diversification in the district's commitment to equity and integrating ongoing work toward a more inclusive, culturally sustaining culture across all talent practices. You will analyze and evaluate the data you have gathered to determine what changes are necessary in order to achieve your desired outcomes.

Use the following template to:

- Capture the vision and value proposition you created in Step 1;
- Document your goals for recruitment, selection, and retention processes you created in Step 2;
- Plan for how and when you'll measure progress toward goals, who will be responsible for monitoring progress, and how you will know your goal has been reached.

Use this tool on an ongoing basis to monitor your progress. Based on what your data tells you, continue to adjust your practices until your goals are on track and/or met. See the Appendix for a data equity protocol on reviewing data.

Vision:				
Value Proposition:				
	How will we measure progress toward this goal?	When will we measure progress toward this goal and make adjustments?	Who will be responsible for data collection and analysis?	How will we determine your goal has been reached?
Pipeline Development Goal 1:				
Recruitment Goal 2:				
Recruitment Goal 3:				
Selection Goal 1:				
Selection Goal 2:				
Selection Goal 3:				
Retention: Goal 1:				
Retention: Goal 2:				
Retention: Goal 3:				

### **Suggestions for continued Cultural Proficiency learnings and development**

Learning about your identity and biases and those of your staff and community is a never-ending journey. It is critical to your success and the success of your students for you to continue to engage, reflect, and grow in cultural proficiency practices. See the Appendix for a list of suggested resources, including books, articles, podcasts, and videos.

## **Conclusion**

Commissioner Riley's report *Our Way Forward* illustrates a vision to disrupt the opportunity gaps, ensuring more equitable learning experiences across Massachusetts' classrooms. Ensuring more students have access to more diverse teachers, particularly racially diverse teachers, across their classrooms is a critical component of this pathway.

The process, tools, and resources captured in this Guidebook aim to provide leadership teams with a roadmap that can be customized based on what makes the most sense in your context. But at its core, building an approach to teacher diversification requires attention to both the technical work of continuously improving strategies around recruitment and selection while attending to the adaptive work of building a more inclusive, culturally responsive system where teachers of color and all students thrive.

# APPENDIX



## Definition of Terms

The definitions below are relevant to the way select terms are used in this Guidebook. As districts and schools build their strategy to recruit, select, and retain a diverse teacher workforce, they should develop their own common language for these terms and ground it in the unique context of their schools and community.

**Bias** is a preference or inclination for or against something; a judgment despite having compelling data and information to the contrary.

**Cultural Proficiency** or intelligence is the understanding of how cultures can be different, plus the ability to identify cultural gaps; the capability to relate and work effectively in culturally diverse situations.

**Cultural Responsiveness** is an approach to viewing culture and identity as assets, including students' race, ethnicity, or linguistic assets, among other characteristics. Zaretta Hammond, a leading scholar on cultural responsiveness, explains it this way: "Cultural responsiveness is a way to use culture to build trust and relationships with students as well as develop the cognitive scaffolding that builds on the broader knowledge students already have so that they can become competent, independent learners."

**Diversity** refers to racial and ethnic backgrounds of individuals. While the term 'diversity' can encompass a variety of identity markers (e.g. gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability status, income status, nationality/citizenship), in Massachusetts a significant and persistent academic achievement gap exists between white students and students of color (specifically Latinx and African American students), and a representation gap exists between educators of color and students of color (specifically between Latinx, African American, and Asian educators and students). Therefore, while The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) values all types of diversity, in this context diversity refers to race and ethnicity. While Latinx and Hispanic can be considered cultural or linguistic categories rather than racial ones, for the purpose of this strategic plan, Latinx is used as a racial category. Unless otherwise stated, the terms "people of color" or "students of color" refers to Latinx, African American, Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or multiracial individuals.

**Equity** is a necessary component of fairness. Equity focuses on the important of actual access to the status, rights, and opportunities available. Even with equality, no access means that all individual cannot achieve the same outcomes. **Racial Equity** is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares.

**Identity** is who you are. Identity is both social and personal. In a social sense: a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes. In a personal sense: some distinguishing characteristic that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable.

**Inclusion** is the process of putting diversity into action by creating an environment of involvement, respect, and connection – where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed to create value.

**Privilege** is the rights, advantages, and protections enjoyed by some at the expense of and beyond the rights, advantages, and protections available to the other.

**Unconscious Bias** is a perspective formed outside of conscious awareness that influence your behavior and judgment; a judgment made without being aware that you are doing so.

## Cultural Proficiency Resources

RESOURCE TITLE	TYPE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
<i>Unconscious Bias in Schools</i> by Tracey Benson and Sarah Fiarman	Book	Application text for how to situate bias in an educational context and support facilitating for equity using data effectively across the dimensions of our work in schools from academics, to culture, to discipline.
<i>Whistling Vivaldi</i> by Claude Steele	Book	Social-science text that explores the impact of stereotype threat and how to support positive identity development.
<i>The Person You Mean to Be</i> by Dolly Chugh	Book	Social science text that further explores how to mitigate bias and the power of vulnerability and storytelling in service of equity.
<i>Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain</i> by Zaretta Hammond	Book	Brain-based text that explores impact of culture on learning that we will apply to the learning of adult learners.
<u><a href="#">Willingness to Be Disturbed</a></u> by Margaret J. Wheatley	Book excerpt	A chapter from <i>Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future</i> by Margaret J. Wheatley, where she asks educators to reflect on their willingness to have their beliefs challenged by others and espouses the idea that strong leaders cannot create change unless they are willing to be disturbed.
<u><a href="#">Number 1 for Some: Opportunity &amp; Achievement in Massachusetts</a></u>	Publication	Publication from the <a href="#">Massachusetts Education Equity Partnership</a> on the different experiences of Black, Latino, and low-income students in Massachusetts schools than their white and higher-income peers and what must be done to address these inequities.
<u><a href="#">The Opportunity Myth: What Students Can Show Us About How School is Letting Them Down – and How to Fix It</a></u>	Publication	Publication from <a href="#">TINTP</a> that uses student experience data to show us how schools are not providing all students the opportunity to reach the demands of their grade level.

<a href="#"><u>We Teach Who We Are by Christina Brown</u></a>	Publication	In this Teachers of Color Magazine article, Christina Brown describes her experience as an educator and how it is impossible to separate the act of teaching from who we are and the self that enters the classroom.
<a href="#"><u>Unlocking Us: Brené Brown with Ibram X. Kendi on How to Be an Antiracist</u></a>	Podcast	An episode of Brené Brown's podcast <i>Unlocking Us</i> where she interviews Ibram X. Kendi on his book, <i>How to Be an Antiracist</i> .
<a href="#"><u>Hidden Brain: In the Air We Breathe</u></a>	Podcast	An episode of NPR's podcast <i>The Hidden Brain</i> exploring how unconscious bias can infect a culture — and how a police shooting may say as much about a community as it does about individuals.
<a href="#"><u>Sharon Davies: Implicit Bias in School Discipline</u></a>	Video	This video shares with viewers how our brains make implicit associations naturally, but also the ways in which these implicit associations can be harmful for others.
<a href="#"><u>Vernā Myers: How to overcome our biases? Walk boldly toward them</u></a>	Video	Diversity advocate Vernā Myers looks closely at some of the subconscious attitudes we hold toward out-groups. She makes a plea to all people: Acknowledge your biases. Then move toward, not away from, the groups that make you uncomfortable.

## Step 1 Template

**Understand the research and data behind why teacher diversity is important for your students and community.**

### *Dig into Available Data*

- What are your data telling you about the diversity of your students as compared to your staff?
- What other data do you have that can be disaggregated by race?
- What are these data illuminating about the experiences of students and staff of color?
- Are there current tools/efforts in use that should be revised to include questions about race?

### *Learn More*

- What are the gaps in our current data tools?
- Consider short, targeted surveys to “take the pulse” of the school and district community.
- Implement systems of interviews and shadowing to better understand diverse experiences across the district.
- How will you use these data? Who will you share it with?

**Engage in cultural proficiency work, exploring how identity and bias are influencing the perceptions of experiences across the district, and ideas for solutions.**

- How is your district currently approaching cultural proficiency professional development for staff and why this is important?
- As you have begun to look at data, what is standing out to you? What makes this work feel urgent?
- What commitments will you and your team make to further your own learning and reflection?

**Define why a more diverse talent workforce is important for *your* students, and the work of creating more equitable learning experiences.**

*Discuss with Your Team*

- How can you engage students in defining the district's aspirational student experience?
- What are you learning from this groups of students? And what is emerging around the inequities across your district?
- What role can more diverse teachers play in reaching this vision?
- What is the work necessary to engage your district community in this commitment?

**Design a value proposition for candidates of color to come to your district.**

*Discuss with Your Team*

- What commitments are you making to potential candidates of color?
- What makes your district unique?
- What supports are in place?
- And what opportunities can candidates look forward to?
- How are you supporting all educators to contribute to equitable educational experiences?

## Holyoke Public Schools Teacher Characteristic Domains

Students from the Equity Board met to identify necessary qualities for incoming HPS teachers. Students identified 4 domains and worked in small groups to develop this document. One important lesson learned from this exercise is that young people know what they deserve from their education. This resource was created by and for Holyoke Public Schools and represents a draft version. It should be modified to fit your district's individual circumstances and needs. Created by Dr. Zrike's Student Equity Advisory Board, a group of 18 students spanning 9-12 grades, across both high school campuses.

### TEACHING PRACTICE

*As students, we are looking for teachers who...*

- **Know how the brain works, and therefore, how we learn:** Reviews and connects to prior knowledge, brings energy and life into the classroom, is consistent with routines, and is clear around expectations
- **Use many modes of learning:** Has a thoughtful classroom set up and creates an environment that fosters Student Discourse and invites us to be both a learner and a teacher. Has created structures and routines for us to provide regular feedback, regarding the class
- **Is both relatable in terms of relationships and regarding curriculum content:** Builds trusting relationships and authentic caring. Introduces curriculum that is relevant to our lives as young people in Holyoke
- **Creates time both in and outside of class to connect with students one on one:** Circulates the room to check-in with individual students. Regularly offers office hours and after school support

### COMMUNICATION

*As students, we are looking for teachers who...*

- **Clearly communicate how students can get academic help/support**
- **Clearly communicate the purpose of the lesson/unit:** Intentionally communicates how the learning is connected to the Real World
- **Uses communication skills to build relationships with ALL students (this includes students who do not speak English):** We want our teachers to value our language and if they don't speak Spanish, we want teachers committed to learning the language. Uses humor to connect with students. Takes time to talk out issues in the class
- **Express love for being a teacher because it's not just a job, it's a way of life:** Know that your passion or lack of passion for what you do will impact our lives. We deserve teachers who love what they do.
- **Demonstrate qualities of being patient and empathetic:** Checks in one on one with students if they appear to be having a problem. Works with students not against students
- **Treats students equitably**

### COMMUNITY

*As students, we are looking for teachers who...*

- **Know our community, our histories, our cultures, see us and our identities:** Create opportunities for our voice and ideas to be heard in authentic ways. Ensure that we are reflected in the curriculum. Show up in and for our community, even if they do not live in Holyoke-
- **If they are not from Holyoke, make a strong effort to learn about our hometown**

### BELIEFS ABOUT STUDENTS

*As students, we are looking for teachers who...*

- Humanize us:**
- Believe that teaching goes both ways and that students can be teachers and that teachers are also learners
  - Understand that we have lives outside of school and that our responsibilities are important
  - Believe all students should have access to support (both academic and social-emotional)
  - Are conscious of cultural, gender, racial and ethnic bias, while working to unpack and challenge their own biases
  - Value the learning styles, personalities and interests in ALL students
  - Have high expectations for what we can learn and who we can be

## SMARTIE Goal Guidance

For goals to be effective in driving an organization's performance, they need to be:

### STRATEGIC

reflects an important dimension of what your organization seeks to accomplish (programmatic or capacity-building priorities)

### MEASURABLE

includes standards by which reasonable people can agree on whether the goal has been met (by numbers or defined qualities)

### AMBITIOUS

challenging enough that achievement would mean significant progress; a "stretch" for the organization

### REALISTIC

not so challenging as to indicate lack of thought about resources or execution; possible to track and worth the time and energy to do so

### TIME-BOUND

includes a clear deadline

### INCLUSIVE

brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

### EQUITABLE

includes an element of fairness or justice that seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression

Source: The Management Center: <https://www.managementcenter.org/resources/smartie-goals-worksheet/>

## SMARTIE Goals Practice

**Using the examples below, practice making important priorities into SMARTIE goals. Focus on making them measurable by asking, “What would success look like? How will I know it when I see it?”**

Priority: Ensure the steering committee is highly engaged this year.

SMARTIE Goal:

Priority: Build strong relationships with key community stakeholders.

SMARTIE Goal:

Priority for my role: \_\_\_\_\_

SMARTIE Goal:



**Fill out your Success Sheet. Use this template to plan and get aligned with your manager about what success looks like for you.**

Time Bound:

My goals between \_\_\_\_\_ (start date) and \_\_\_\_\_ (end date) are to:

Make it Measurable (how I will know success when I see it)

The main activities or tactics I'll use to make it Realistic to reach the outcome include:

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Strategic, Ambitious, Outcome:

Make it Measurable (how I will know success when I see it)

The main activities or tactics I'll use to make it Realistic to reach the outcome include:

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_ (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Strategic, Ambitious, Outcome:

Can you imagine there being any unintentional disparate impact along lines of race, gender, class, ability, access, or power?

How might you change the goals to either mitigate that disparate impact or to make equity and inclusion an intentional feature?

## Talent Processes Timeline

The timeline below outlines recommended actions by month to support leaders in planning to continuously refine and implement a talent diversification strategy and monitor progress. It is important to note that this is just a suggestion, and is not exhaustive, but aims to reflect the key priorities outlined through this document. We strongly urge leadership teams to create their own timeline based on when they can start the work, with the goal of aligning to the below recommendations in future years.

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze your available student and staff data, and begin to explore the questions that the data are elevating about representation and equitable opportunities.</li> <li>Bring together the leadership team to set the priority to engage in cultural proficiency, and set short-term commitments.</li> <li>Engage with a group of racially and ethnically diverse students to contribute to the vision for the highest priority teacher competencies in the classroom.</li> <li>Design a plan to gather additional qualitative and quantitative data from students and staff of color to better understand their experiences.</li> </ul>
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze recruitment, selection, and retention outcomes from last year, with particular attention to any disparities across racial groups.</li> <li>Identify key priority areas for improving talent practices in the coming school year.</li> <li>Launch data collection plan as students and staff are coming back to school.</li> </ul>
SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin to reflect on qualitative data you have gathered to define priority areas in fostering a more inclusive and responsive environment for your staff of color.</li> <li>Define your why for teacher diversification, with explicit connections to the experiences of students, and commitment to equity.</li> <li>Convene a small committee to inform and support a district (or school) wide approach to building cultural proficiency, including a strategy to gather feedback from stakeholders on the experience(s).</li> </ul>
OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on what you are learning from data collection efforts, set your commitment to staff, and define your teacher value proposition.</li> <li>Set talent goals, and build structures to collect and analyze data in an ongoing way.</li> <li>Update recruitment plan to expand access to a more diverse talent pool.</li> </ul>
NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch professional development and support plan to build cultural proficiency across the district or school.</li> <li>Begin to implement specific retention strategies including check-ins and “stay” conversations.</li> <li>Begin to update recruitment materials to reflect your commitment to diversification, and the value proposition.</li> </ul>

TIMELINE	ACTION STEPS
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with a diverse group of stakeholders to finalize recruitment materials.</li> <li>Reach out to local partners and preparation providers to explore additional recruitment strategies.</li> <li>Gather school-based information on anticipated vacancies.</li> <li>Continue cultural proficiency work.</li> </ul>
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch recruitment campaign.</li> <li>Reflect on data from current staff and prior year's hiring process to design a more inclusive selection process.</li> <li>Train leadership on bias in hiring, and strategies to mitigate bias.</li> <li>Continue to implement retention efforts.</li> </ul>
FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor candidate pool, make adjustments to the campaign as needed.</li> <li>Finalize updates to the selection process.</li> <li>Continue to implement retention efforts.</li> <li>Continue to engage in cultural proficiency work.</li> </ul>
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to monitor candidate pool, including current student teachers placed in the district, making adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Begin selection process, gather feedback from candidates and interview teams at each stage.</li> <li>Monitor selection results, make adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Continue to implement retention efforts.</li> <li>Continue to engage in cultural proficiency work.</li> </ul>
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch Spring data collection efforts, aligned to Fall activities to understand the experiences of students and staff of color.</li> <li>Continue to monitor selection results, making adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Continue to implement retention efforts.</li> <li>Continue to engage in cultural proficiency work.</li> </ul>
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to monitor candidate pool, making adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Continue to monitor selection results, making adjustments as needed.</li> <li>Administer exit surveys and interviews with staff who are exiting the system.</li> <li>Continue to engage in cultural proficiency work.</li> </ul>
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review on final data from the hiring season, reflect on strategies that were most effective in supporting diversification priorities.</li> <li>Reflect on the effectiveness of the cultural proficiency efforts and set priorities for the coming school year.</li> <li>Engage a range of stakeholders in reviewing and making sense of the data.</li> <li>Codify learnings, priorities, and updated goals in a Teacher Diversification Strategy.</li> </ul>

## Somerville Public Schools Teacher Competencies

Note: This resource was created by and for Somerville Public Schools. It should be modified to fit your district's individual circumstances and needs.

### Overview

Meeting our goals for students requires that they all have access to a more diverse teacher workforce. As we enter the 2020-21 hiring season, Somerville Public Schools aims to provide systems and guidance that will support hiring practices that elevate its commitment to diversity and equity, while promoting a selection process that assesses the skills and mindsets necessary to being a successful Somerville teacher. As an important first step, the table below captures draft competencies and indicators identified by Somerville leaders. This draft language will be used for continued discussion and stakeholder feedback, with the goal being to:

- Evaluate candidates in a consistent way that is grounded in a shared set of core competencies that all candidates need to bring to support Somerville students to reach their potential.
- Support interview teams to design systems and structures to mitigate bias throughout the process.
- Create an experience for candidates that feels safe and supportive, and provides some understanding of Somerville Public School staff, students and culture.

The table below reflects draft competency, indicator, and interview language as Somerville engages in ongoing discussion and incorporates systems and structures to create an inclusive selection experience.

### Draft Somerville Teacher Hiring Competencies

1. Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
2. Community and Collaboration
3. High Academic Expectations
4. Teaching Ability

COMPETENCY AND INDICATORS	SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
<p><b>Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</b></p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates persistence in forming trusting relationships with all students</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for student voice and ideas to be heard in authentic ways</li> <li>• Reflects upon and recognizes societal and one's own biases and uses reflections to strengthen instruction and culture</li> <li>• Demonstrates the belief that all students' backgrounds, identities, and perspectives are unique and valuable</li> <li>• Plans for activities and materials that reflect students' unique backgrounds and identities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How have race and culture informed or impacted your work as an educator?</li> <li>• Please share an example of a work product or experience that demonstrates your respect for diversity.</li> <li>• Please share a personal or professional experience that demonstrates how you've worked to understand perspectives of people whose cultural or racial background is different from your own.</li> <li>• How have your previous life, work, or educational experiences prepared you to educate students from diverse groups?</li> <li>• How do you honor your students' racial, ethnic, or cultural differences in your instructional pedagogy?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What data can you share to support your ability to raise the academic growth and achievement of all students, especially those historically marginalized such as English Language Learners, students in Special Education, Black, and Latinx students, and students from low socio-economic homes?</li> <li>• What is your definition of educational equity and how would you incorporate this concept into your role?</li> <li>• Please comment on how you envision yourself contributing to our commitment of culturally responsive teaching and learning.</li> <li>• XX percent of our students across the district identify as POC, a third speak a language other than English at home, and 50 percent receive free or reduced-price lunch. What do you see as the most challenging aspect of leading in such a diverse community? How has your lived experience prepared you for these challenges?</li> <li>• Tell me about a time where you had to build relationships with a racially diverse group of parents and community members. What strategies did you find effective in building strong relationships?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community and Collaboration</b></p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows evidence of being able to contribute to a school's effectiveness by working collaboratively with others</li> <li>• Speaks of students, teachers and community with respect</li> <li>• Aware of how one's own background &amp; assumptions can influence one's perspective &amp; interactions with others</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to effectively &amp; appropriately interact with students and others in the school community</li> <li>• Recognizes that families are important partners in driving student achievement</li> <li>• Demonstrates willingness to receive feedback and modify approach</li> <li>• Communicates clear, logical and organized thoughts with all stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you create a climate of collaboration and accessibility for your students and parents?</li> <li>• Tell me about a specific instance when you have had a challenging encounter with a parent. How did you respond in the moment? In hindsight, is there anything you would have done differently?</li> <li>• Describe the strategies you used to ensure that the parents of your last group of students were aware of their child's progress.</li> <li>• How do you create a climate of collaboration and accessibility for your students, parents, and colleagues?</li> <li>• Tell me about a time that you had a disagreement with a principal, administrator or past manager. How did you address the situation?</li> <li>• How often do you expect to be observed/receive feedback on your teaching?</li> <li>• How can I, as the principal, best support you as a teacher?</li> <li>• What kind of teachers do you work best with? What kind of teachers are you challenged by?</li> </ul>

	<p>Questions for candidates with limited experience (e.g., new teachers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think of a time you had to lead a group of individuals you just met to achieve a common goal. How did you get to know your peers and how did you use your knowledge of them to successfully achieve your common goal?</li> <li>• Aside from teaching, in what other ways would you hope to be involved within our school (i.e. coaching, sponsoring clubs, tutoring, etc.)?</li> <li>• Follow-up: What previous experience do you have that would make you well-suited for an additional role within the school?</li> </ul>
<p><b>High Academic Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulates high expectations for potential and performance of all students (in theory and through scenario examples)</li> <li>• Indicates confidence that all students should be held to high standards</li> <li>• Maintains high expectations and continues to focus on the students' academic success when confronted with setbacks in scenario questions</li> <li>• Demonstrates accountability and resilience in pursuit of building trusting relationships with students and driving achievement</li> <li>• Ability to plan effectively to cover gaps without remediating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you measure success as a teacher?</li> <li>• Briefly describe the variation in performance levels within one of your classes at the beginning of the last school year you taught. What goals did you set for your students in that class? How did you track progress toward those goals?</li> <li>• What examples of student success can you discuss/provide?</li> <li>• Describe a failure you've had in your classroom such as an ineffective lesson or low mastery on a unit assessment. What factors contributed to that failure? What do you think was the primary cause of that failure?</li> <li>• Some students perform at a basic or below basic academic level, in your opinion and from your experience, why do you think students struggle to meet academic standards?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Teaching Ability</b></p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates a safe and welcoming learning environment where students feel able and willing to learn</li> <li>• Provides reasonable examples of effective lesson-planning, instructional strategies, and/or student assessment</li> <li>• Sets ambitious and concrete goals for teaching performance and/or student success</li> <li>• Addresses the multiple and varied needs of students in the classroom</li> <li>• Makes content meaningful to all students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflecting on your own teaching ability, what are your areas of strength? Areas of weakness? How would you go about improving in your development areas?</li> <li>• What instructional strategies do you find most successful in increasing all students' achievement?</li> <li>• How do you create a culture, and how would you respond when there's a breach of that culture?</li> <li>• How do you promote positive interactions between students?</li> <li>• Explain how you build trusting relationships with students.</li> <li>• How do you promote respect for student diversity in your lessons?</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assumes accountability for classroom management and culture</li> <li>• Persists in offering viable and realistic strategies to deal with classroom management challenges</li> <li>• Seeks and welcomes feedback from others</li> <li>• Conveys willingness to try multiple strategies or something new when things</li> <li>• Reflects regularly on performance to identify areas for improvement</li> <li>• Displays willingness to adapt classroom management style to meet the particular needs of the school, culture, and students</li> <li>• Holds self-accountable for student learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you strategically reinforce students for positive behavior?</li> <li>• How would you describe your classroom management style?</li> <li>• How do students know the behavioral expectation in your class?</li> <li>• What steps have you taken to work with a student who has demonstrated challenging behavior?</li> <li>• Describe a time when a student was not successful. What was your approach to supporting that student?</li> <li>• How do you use student data and other information to drive your lessons?</li> <li>• How do you monitor progress towards your year-end goals? How have your students monitored their own progress?</li> <li>• What strategies have you used in the past to improve yourself as a teacher</li> <li>• Imagine that you have three students: one who showed tremendous gains on a standard, one who showed losses on a standard, and one who consistently falls asleep in class. Who would you communicate each of these developments to and with what means of communication?</li> </ul>
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## Cambridge Public Schools Racial Equity Bank of Questions

Note: This resource was created by and for Cambridge Public Schools. It should be modified to fit your district's individual circumstances and needs.

Note from Cambridge Public Schools' Director of Diversity Development:

*Below is a list of questions that although not exhaustive, can help you assess and probe for an understanding/commitment to racial equity during candidate interviews. Not all of the questions are specific to classroom roles, as some are better suited to building and department leadership opportunities. However, all can be modified to be role appropriate. As we move forward in becoming an antiracist district, it will be important to not only ensure that our students receive competent instruction, but that candidates for roles in our schools also bring an understanding of race, power, and privilege. I will continue to update these questions in hopes of providing you with multiple options and encourage you to email me suggestions on how this document can be improved.*

*In preparing to use these questions, take some time to think about what would constitute a strong answer, how candidate responses affirm the communities we serve, and how these questions also communicate what we as a district find to be important. Given our district commitment to racial equity, the Office of Human Resources expects that you will take the time to explore the themes highlighted in the questions below with candidates, asking at least one of these questions during the course of the interview. Happy to hold virtual meetings with you to discuss these questions or any other matters related to facilitating interviews that allow you to explore candidate understandings of*

### Alignment with CPSD Values/Mission

- Please comment on how you envision yourself contributing to our commitment of culturally responsive teaching and learning.
- What does it mean for you to have a commitment to racial equity? How have you demonstrated that commitment and what opportunities do you see to demonstrate it in this role?
- 60 percent of our students across the district identify as POC, a third speak a language other than English at home, and 50 percent receive free or reduced price lunch. What do you see as the most challenging aspect of leading in such a diverse community? How has your lived experience prepared you for these challenges?
- Describe your experience(s) working in an urban setting. What experience have you had with students from socio-economic and culturally diverse backgrounds? What opportunities have you had to bring cultural proficiency into your classroom?
- Culturally responsive teaching and racial equity are goals of CPS. Presently, how do you engage in continuous learning around culturally responsive teaching practices? What resources, texts or professional development experiences have been of most value to you?
- Tell me about a time where you had to build relationships with a racially diverse group of parents and community members. What strategies did you find effective in building strong relationships?

### Reflective Disposition

- Please give an example that illustrates how you walk in the shoes of the communities we serve.
- In what ways have you integrated racial equity issues as part of your professional development?
- How does your own identity impact your work with a diverse staff and student body?

- How does your race/ethnicity present itself in the classroom?
- How does your culture present itself in the classroom?
- What do you see as your own areas of personal growth in terms of equity and inclusion? What's something you're working on learning?

### **Racial Equity Leadership**

- What does equity look like in your classroom?
- Please tell us about how you have worked with people to create or foster racial equity in the workplace (or classroom).
- What strategies have you found successful in educating students about diversity?
- Please provide an example of a time when you had to expend social capital to champion social justice.
- How have you addressed challenges faced by members of historically underrepresented groups in the workplace? What leadership strategies have you found successful?
- What efforts have you made, or been involved with, to foster culturally responsive teaching and/or equitable environments?
- In your experience, what are the key factors that contribute to the success of students from marginalized backgrounds?
- Please describe how you would work to create a school environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and increasingly embraces diversity?
- Please provide an example of a time you were asked to compromise on your ethics. Describe the situation, what you did, and what you might do differently in the future.

### **Culturally Responsive Instruction**

- How have you modified or adapted lessons to meet the needs of your students? Please describe an instance involving students on IEPs or English Language Learners?
- Tell us about how you have worked to create climates that are supportive, respectful, and that value differing perspectives and experiences? How have you measured the success of these efforts?
- Tell us about how you have worked to ensure that the materials you use in your classroom reflect and affirm the voices, stories, and perspectives of students and families from marginalized backgrounds.
- How have you or how will you allow for student voice to change what you teach and how you teach?
- How will (or give an example of) the teaching and learning experience in your classroom engage African American and Latino students rigorously?

## Somerville Public Schools Teacher Selection Survey

Note: This resource was created by and for Somerville Public Schools. It should be modified to fit your district's individual circumstances and needs.

The sample survey questions below can be customized and shared with applicants to gauge how inclusive your selection process felt and how clear your district's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion was communicated. Questions can be adapted or added to include applicants who were not ultimately hired to provide a wider range of feedback and experience data.

CULTURAL PROFICIENCY	
<b>Somerville's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion was clear...</b>	
Throughout the recruitment process (recruitment events, marketing materials, website, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
Throughout the selection process (application, phone screen, in-person interview, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
I felt that my background and/or identity was represented by one or more members of the hiring committee (hiring managers, school leaders, panel interviewers, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
I felt welcomed and safe to be myself throughout the interview process.	6-point agreement scale
Throughout the recruitment process (recruitment events, marketing materials, website, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
Throughout the selection process (application, phone screen, in-person interview, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
I felt that my background and/or identity was represented by one or more members of the hiring committee (hiring managers, school leaders, panel interviewers, etc.)	6-point agreement scale
	Multiple choice

What was the MOST important factor in your decision to accept your current position?

- ☐ It was my preferred subject/grade level
- ☐ I supported the district/school mission
- ☐ I felt committed to Somerville schools/students
- ☐ I was impressed with/had positive interactions with the leadership of the school (principal and administration)
- ☐ I was impressed with/had positive interactions with the people who would be my colleagues at the school (teachers, department/grade level cohort, department/grade level chair, etc.)
- ☐ I was impressed with/had positive interactions with district staff I encountered throughout the interview process
- ☐ I feel compelled by Somerville's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- ☐ The school location was convenient
- ☐ This was the only position I was offered
- ☐ N/A, I am a TFA corps member
- Other, please specify: (Open text box)

What were your primary reasons for choosing to apply to Somerville?

Choose up to three (3) options.

- ☐ I wanted to relocate to the Somerville area.
- ☐ I wanted to work at a specific school in Somerville
- ☐ I wanted to work with Somerville's diverse student population
- ☐ I am a former student of Somerville
- ☐ I believe in the Somerville mission
- ☐ My children attend Somerville
- ☐ Somerville had openings in my subject area/preferred grade level
- ☐ Somerville is located near my home
- ☐ Teach For America placed me in Somerville
- ☐ I was a student teacher in Somerville
- ☐ I was a paraprofessional in Somerville
- ☐ I couldn't find a position in another district

Other, please specify: (Open text box)

(Optional) Are you:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

(Optional) Are you Hispanic/Latino?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

(Optional) How would you describe your race? Please check all that apply.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaska Native</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Asian Indian</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Black or African American</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Middle Eastern/Arabic</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Asian</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Pacific Islanders</li> <li><input type="radio"/> White</li> </ul>	
<p>(Optional) Please share any additional comments you have for Human Capital related to your hiring process.</p>	<p>Short answer</p>

## Education Empathy Interviews

Note: This resource was adapted from the High Tech High Graduate School of Education.

**Goal:** To gain a deeper understanding of a user's experience of the issue you are working on.

### Norms for Empathy Interviews:

- Seek to understand, not confirm
- Ask once, clearly
- Ask questions that elicit stories and feelings
- PROBE: "Tell me more..." "What was that like for you?"

### Prep for Interviews (15 min):

What questions could you ask a student/practitioner/stakeholder to understand their experience of your group's problem/issue, and the factors contributing to it?

- *Question Selection/Brainstorm* (3 min): Individually, review the questions below. Adapt these or generate a few questions of your own.
- *Share & Organize* (5-10 min): As a group, identify/organize your top 5-6 questions. Will they help you understand what makes X challenging, or when students experience success (i.e. the root causes you need to address)?
- *Predict & Plan* (3 min): Each person shares one thing they think they will hear. If you are doing the interview with a partner, decide who will interview and who will take notes.

### Consider these possible Empathy Interview Questions (ones in bold highly recommended!):

- What is **one word** you would use to describe how you feel about X?
- Tell me about a **time when you felt successful** in X...
  - What happened? What made this a success? (What did you do? What did others do?)
- Tell me about a **time when you X was hard**...
  - What happened? How did that feel? Why was that hard? What do you wish would have happened?
- What advice would you give another student/person about X?
- What advice would you give to me about X?
- What do you wish others knew about X?
- Suppose you could have **three wishes** to make X the best it could be. What would they be, and why?
- What do you wonder about X, or wish you knew?
- Draw me a picture of what you think about when you hear X... (then "Tell me about what you drew.")

### Your questions:

**Conduct Interviews (20 minutes)** *Your notes:*

**Reflect (5 minutes):**

**Content:** What did we hear? What are we learning about the root causes that contribute to the issue?

**Process:** Are there questions we wish we would have asked? Are there questions that were particularly fruitful? Did we probe effectively?

## Data for Equity Protocol

Note: This resource was adapted from the High Tech High Graduate School of Education.

**Purpose:** To identify equity gaps in our system, reflect on the conditions that create and perpetuate them, and move forward with concrete steps for understanding and interrupting inequities. You can use this protocol with multiple small groups, each unpacking a different piece of data, and then sharing out to the group. Or you can use this protocol to have everyone unpack the same piece of data (in this case, modify Stage 3).

### Questions to ask before engaging in this protocol:

- What data do we need to look at? Who decides?
- How can we display the data to illuminate and understand disproportionate experiences and/or outcomes?
- What is the purpose of looking at this data? (To identify gaps, to check progress, to identify bright spots, etc.)
- What are the data's blind spots? What/whose perspectives are missing?
- Who needs to be in the room to ensure multiple perspectives are considered and movement is made?

### Roles:

- Facilitator guides the group through the process and ensures that the protocol and norms are upheld.
- Notetaker captures notes from the discussion and is prepared to share out for the group.

**Norms:** Conversations about data and equity issues can make people feel vulnerable. This is not a bad thing. A structured protocol helps maintain focus and constructive dialogue.

- **Share the air...** step up, step back, invite others in
- **Lean into discomfort...** we can't improve what we do not face
- **Own your Intent and Impact...** resist defensiveness/blaming/avoidance, and seek to understand
- **Stick to the Protocol...** it helps people be in their brave space and move forward

### Phase 1: Getting Oriented (10 minutes)

Participants take 5 minutes to review the data individually or in pairs. The facilitator then leads a quick check-in: *Does everyone understand what is being presented? What clarifying questions do we need to ask so that we can make sense of the data?*

Clarifying questions:



## Phase 2: Discussion Rounds (25-30 minutes)

### Round 1: Equity Observations (*share around*)

- Each person shares **one thing they noticed that illuminates an equity issue/gap** (i.e. disproportionate experiences and/or outcomes). During this portion it is important to just describe what you see as objectively as possible. (e.g. "I notice that Latino boys are twice as likely to be suspended as White boys.")
- Resist the urge to interpret or pose questions. Helpful sentence frame: **I notice....**

I notice:

### Round 2: Questions (*share other direction, start with a different person*)

- Each person shares a question that emerges for them from the data.
- Helpful sentence frame: **I wonder...**

I wonder:

### Round 3: Hypotheses (*facilitator leads a discussion*)

- Participants share possible hypotheses or explanations for the equity issues/gaps they identified, *trying to identify multiple alternative explanations.*
- Helpful sentence frames: This could be because... Or it could be because...

This could be because:

### EQUITY PAUSE

Take a moment to consider: Where are we making assumptions, engaging in deficit thinking, or blaming others rather than taking a critical eye to our system and our own practices? Remember, every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets. What forces in our system may be contributing to the inequities we see? How might our current processes/practices/beliefs be contributing to inequity? Bravely focusing on the system and our own contributions helps us identify what is in our locus of control/influence and where we can target our improvement efforts.

*Round 4: Next Steps (facilitator facilitates a discussion)*

- Participants share what they might do next to address the equity issues/gaps given their understanding of the data.
- Helpful sentence frames: **One thing we could do next is...**

One next step:

**Phase 3: Share out** (optional, but recommended if you have multiple small groups or groups looking at different data\*)

The notetaker from each group has **1 minute** to share highlights from their group's discussion of the data. Please focus on sharing:

- 1-2 equity observations
- 1-2 questions/hypothesis that emerged
- 1 potential implication/next step

If groups are looking at different data, you may find it helpful to build in time for a jigsaw discussion. Have people get in groups of 3-4 where each person has looked at a different piece of data. Then each person has 1-2 minutes to share highlights from their group's data conversation. The group can then discuss: What themes are we noticing across our data conversations?

#### **Phase 4: Process Debrief (5-10 minutes, with your team)**

The facilitator leads the group in reflecting on this process. Resist the urge to return the conversation to the data.

#### **Helpful Guiding Questions:**

- What was this process like for you?
- How did it feel to look at data through an equity lens?
- Where did we get stuck, or unstuck?
- What adjustments would you make, and why?
- What are we learning about how to display data so that we can engage in productive conversations about equity gaps in our system?

## Sample Exit Survey

This is an example of a survey that can be given to teachers who are leaving the district/school. It should be carefully reviewed and adjusted to fit the unique context of your school, district, and community.

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your service to the students of <DISTRICT/SCHOOL>. Please complete this short survey so we may learn from your experience. **Your responses are confidential.**

1. **How would you describe your race/ethnicity?**
  - a. What is your race/ethnicity? (Optional)
  - b. Black or African American
  - c. American Indian or Native Alaskan
  - d. Asian
  - e. Hispanic or Latinx
  - f. White or Caucasian
  - g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - h. Other
  - i. Decline to state
2. **Which statement best describes your departure from <DISTRICT/SCHOOL>?**
  - a. I resigned
  - b. I retired from the workforce
  - c. I was terminated/non-reelected
  - d. My position was eliminated.
  - e. I lost my position due to lack of proper certification
  - f. Other (please specify)

### TYPE OF REASON FOR LEAVING

3. **We know that some teachers leave for personal reasons, while others leave for reasons that are within the control of <DISTRICT/SCHOOL>. Why would you say you left <DISTRICT/SCHOOL>?**
  - a. I left for reasons unrelated to DISTRICT/SCHOOL (i.e., personal reasons) [skip to PLANS]
  - b. I left for reasons related to or within the control of DISTRICT/SCHOOL

### DISTRICT-RELATED REASONS

4. **If you left for reasons within the control of DISTRICT/SCHOOL, what, if anything could DISTRICT/SCHOOL or your school have done to make you stay?**  
[Open-ended comment box]
5. **Which of the following reasons led to your decision to leave your position? (Check all that apply)**
  - a. I did not have access to curriculum materials and other resources
  - b. I was dissatisfied with my school leadership

- c. I was dissatisfied with my workload
- d. I did not feel valued
- e. I was dissatisfied with benefits
- f. I was dissatisfied with salary
- g. I was dissatisfied with other workplace conditions
- h. I saw limited opportunities for development or advancement
- i. I was dissatisfied with school climate and culture
- j. I was dissatisfied with how student misbehaviors were addressed
- k. I did not like working with the student population at my school
- l. Not applicable; I was satisfied with my experience
- m. Other (please specify) *[text box]*

6. **Which of the following was the SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT reason that led to your decision to leave the district?**

*[same list as above]*

## PLANS

7. **Which of the following best describes your plans for next school year?**

- a. Continue to work for DISTRICT/SCHOOL but in a non-teaching capacity
- b. Work in a different school district, charter school, or private school in another teaching role (lateral move)
- c. Work in a different school district, charter school, or private school in a higher role (such as administrator)
- d. Obtain further education (e.g., work toward certification or advanced degree)
- e. Work in K-12 education but outside of a school or district
- f. Work outside the field of K-12 education
- g. Not planning to take another job at this time
- h. Other (please specify) *[text box]*

## ADMINISTRATOR EFFECTIVENESS

8. We know school administrators have a large impact on teachers' experiences in their building. How would you rate the effectiveness of your most recent school's administration?

- a. Highly Effective
- b. Somewhat Effective
- c. Somewhat Ineffective
- d. Highly Ineffective

## THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey – your responses are greatly appreciated.