

DEI HIRING IN K-12 SCHOOLS

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Contents

- Summary3**
- Featured Examples3**
- School Districts7**
 - Arizona7
 - California7
 - Colorado..... 9
 - Connecticut..... 9
 - Illinois.....10
 - Kentucky 11
 - Maine 12
 - Maryland 12
 - Massachusetts 12
 - Michigan 13
 - Minnesota..... 13
 - Missouri14
 - New York..... 15
 - North Carolina 16
 - Ohio 17
 - Pennsylvania..... 17
 - Rhode Island18
 - Washington18
- Resources for Parents.....19**

DEI Hiring in K-12 Schools

04/17/2024

Summary

K-12 school districts across the country have implemented policies or plans that base the hiring and retention of teachers and staff on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This report features over twenty school districts from around the country that use ideological screening and race-based preferences in the hiring and retention processes. We obtained the non-public information needed to compile the list through public records requests.

Featured Examples

The La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District (CA) states in its equity policy that “by June 2024, district and site staff shall fully implement the LHPUSD hiring policy and achieve an increase in the diversity of the workforce in at least 75% of new hires.” The district states that it will include a “diversity liaison” who is “tasked to pay attention to equity and inclusion throughout the search,” using “redacted statements of contributions to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion for the first round of screening” with the intent to “hire more faculty who would continue to contribute to diversity and inclusion efforts.”

San Rafael City Schools’ (CA) Together 2024 Blueprint sets a goal of increasing “the numbers of teachers, administrators and classified staff of color by 10% for all groups.”

Poudre School District’s (CO) hiring process mandates that the interview team include a minimum of two DEI focused questions such as “What does anti-racism mean to you?” and “Tell about a time when someone at work said something that is either a microaggression or was discriminatory/biased . [sic] What did you do to address this?”

The Connecticut State Department of Education suggests districts offer “incentives (e.g. gift cards, one-time stipends) for referrals of racially, ethnically, and

linguistically diverse candidates leading to a successful hire” and offer “incentives (e.g., pay increases, stipends, housing assistance, affinity groups) likely to attract racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse candidates to seek employment in the district.”

Community Unit School District 300 (IL) includes “Culturally Relevant Teaching” questions in the interview process such as asking applicants how they define diversity, how they create equity in the classroom, and “When was the last time you shared your pronouns? Why do you think it is essential to share your pronouns?”

Illinois Math and Science Academy (IL) implements a modified “Rooney Rule” in which the school requires “that every faculty opening requires interviewing at least two candidates who identify as a Black, Indigenous Person of Color.” The school also states that it will “incorporate best practices on diversity, equity and inclusion” in the hiring process which includes “critical race theory.”

Jefferson County Public Schools (KY) states that it will “attract, recruit, hire, and retain staff and leadership” that reflects the “diversity of the student body.” The district defines “diverse” as “pertaining to any and all cultures that are NOT heterosexual, male-centered, white, Western, and/or Christian.”

Orange County Schools (NC) states that by 2026, “100% of staff of color and LGBTQ+ staff will report feeling that Orange County Schools is a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive environment.”

Lower Merion School District (PA) intentionally selects candidates “who have an aptitude for diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve the school’s racial climate.”

University Place School District (WA) declares that the district will “actively recruit support staff of color,” but if the district is “unable to hire educators of color to open positions” it “still plans to emphasize cultural responsiveness and competence in the people we do hire.”

Hiring staff who are Culturally Competent

When we are unable to hire educators of color to open positions, we still plan to emphasize cultural responsiveness and competence in the people we do hire. We continue to review the relevant experience of candidates and look for individuals who have successful experience working in diverse environments. We also recently engaged our District Equity Advisory Team in reviewing both our job postings and interview questions to make sure that our commitment to racial equity, inclusivity and cultural responsiveness is reflected in both places. This review resulted in changes to both postings and interviews that will help identify staff members who are ready to work effectively with our diverse student population.

These common hiring priorities, often referred to as “culturally competency” or “cultural proficiency,” are used to justify the elimination of applicants who do not adhere to DEI and or social justice ideology.

Many of the districts surveyed claim in policy and/or in district literature that these measures are necessary to ensure a “bias free” process, while simultaneously using DEI language, DEI focused questions, and/or requiring that applicants provide a diversity statement. Brighton Central Schools (NY), for instance, requires that a diversity statement be provided that shows an applicant’s “past and current efforts, as well as, future plans to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion” in the district.

3. The Environment: Efforts include:

- **Updating Job Posting to include - Commitment to Diversity**

Brighton Central School District seeks candidates for faculty and staff positions that are eager to make Brighton an even more diverse and inclusive district for its students to thrive within. A range of backgrounds and perspectives leads to a variety of ideas, knowledge, and approaches, and we believe that a deep understanding and valuing of differences is necessary to our overall mission.

- **Requiring a Diversity Statement with Application**

A statement that shows your past and current efforts, as well as, future plans to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the Brighton Central School District.

Below is a copy of the interview questions in the Poudre School District in Colorado.

DEI Centered HR and Interview Best Practices

PSD's DEI Bank of Questions

[Glossary of DEI terms for reference:](#)

Interview Questions

1. What are some ways you have integrated equity and inclusion into your professional work? What metrics did you use and what was the result?
2. What was the last thing you did to challenge your own cultural self-awareness? Please share an example of something that you did.
3. Provide an example of how you address implicit biases of your own in your work or personal life?
4. What does anti-racism mean to you? How does that show up in your work?
5. Describe your understanding of equity vs. equality? Give us an example of how we would see equity in your work.
6. What is your philosophy for teaching and learning, especially in regards to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?
7. Describe a time you made a mistake that caused unintentional harm to someone. How did you repair the harm? What did you learn from this?
8. Tell about a time when someone at work said something that is either a microaggression or was discriminatory/biased. What did you do to address this?
9. Our mission at PSD is to educate **every** child, **every** day. What obstacles do you imagine exist to that being our current reality? How do you see your work moving us closer to that goal?
 - a. **Note:** This one is a great one to contextualize to your school or department:
 - i. E.g. for a McKinney Advocate:
 1. Within a district level McKinney program, what do you imagine might be the challenges to providing truly equitable services so that **all** students in the McKinney program can find success in their education? How do you see your work moving us closer to that goal of equity and inclusion in the McKinney department?

Of the districts reviewed, many mention that its hiring goals regarding the racial makeup of its staff should reflect that of the student population. Some districts even include set numerical targets to ensure adherence to its policies or goals.

For example, [Rochester City School District \(NY\)](#) states in its Racial Equity Action Plan that it will work to ensure its staff “reflect the racial composition of the student population.” The district’s action plan establishes a goal of a “10 percent year-over-year improvement in number of Staff of color hired.”

A third component is the implementation of DEI focused professional development and racial affinity groups aimed at improving the retention of teachers. In general, districts involve new hires in mentoring programming for onboarding and professional development purposes. Yet, many districts profiled in this report, like Orange County, North Carolina, offer new hires additional support and training based on minority status.

Equity Goal 4: Recruit, hire, support, and retain teacher and staff that reflect the racial and language diversity of the student population

By 2026, OCS will actively recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of the district and mirrors the demographics of the OCS student population.

Alignment to Strategic Plan and Equity Emphasis:

Goal 3 Exemplary Staff: Recruit, hire, support, and retain culturally proficient and high-quality staff committed to providing all students with an excellent education in a welcoming environment.

Equity Emphasis: Hire and retain staff that reflects the diversity of the district and mirrors the demographics of the OCS student population and who are committed to becoming culturally proficient.

Baseline Measure:

- OCS Demographic Report 20-21
- Staff of color focus group data

Key Measures:

- Each year through 2026, the Orange County Schools staff turnover rate (attrition + mobility) for African American staff and teachers will decrease by 3% and the gap between the demographic makeup of the school system's Latino and bilingual staff to Latino and bilingual students will decrease by 4%
- By 2026, 100% of staff of color and LGBTQ+ staff will report feeling that Orange County Schools is a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive work environment

Key Strategy: By 2022, OCS will assess the EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) organizational culture and racial climate of the district and identify strategies for developing a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive work environment

Measures: What data will be analyzed?

- Staff focus group perception data
- Disaggregated OCS staff demographic data
- Disaggregated OCS staff attrition data

School Districts

Arizona

FLAGSTAFF UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Flagstaff Unified School District strategic plan [document](#) focused on equity and inclusion states that the district will “strive for staff demographics that reflect the student body and, specifically, increase staff (including leadership positions, cabinet, etc.) diversity each year in each staffing category by 2%.”

Other goals include increasing “retention of diverse staff by 10% over current rates,” “match every new hire to FUSD with a mentor who has similar background/identity characteristics,” and “create affinity groups for faculty and staff to share experiences and provide support to one another.”

California

LA HONDA-PESCADERO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

On October 12, 2023, the La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District board [reviewed](#) and updated its district [equity policy](#) to state that “it is imperative that our workforce – our teachers, administrators, and other staff – represent the diversity of our students and families.” It continues: “By June 2024, district and site staff shall fully implement the LHPUSD hiring policy and achieve an increase in the diversity of the workforce in at least 75% of new hires.”

In a December 2023 presentation titled [Hiring and Retaining a Diverse Staff 2024-2025](#), it states that the district should “prioritize messaging that centers diversity/POC” and to “capitalize racial/ethnic categories in a consistent manner.”

On April 27, 2021, the district [approved](#) a \$19,500 contract with Insight Education to perform an [equity audit](#) of the district. The final report [recommendations](#) include to “build on existing recruitment practices by developing meaningful partnerships with local universities to actively recruit teachers of color and bilingual teachers into teaching and administrative roles,” “create conditions for district leaders to take time for deep reflection on their personal biases and their institution’s history with race and how these factors may be impacting their decisions regarding recruitment, retention, and advancement of staff of color,” and “review hiring practices to ensure interview questions identify candidates’ experience and skills in working with diverse populations.”

A district document from April 2021 titled [Inclusive Hiring & Retention Practices at La Honda Pescadero Unified School District](#) states that “one of our key goals at LHPUSD is to improve our hiring practices to create a staff that better reflects the student body of our school.”

Key district strategies include hiring practices that “elevate a commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion from job inception.” To meet this strategy, the district states that it will “ensure the interview process is shaped with equity as a central design principle” by including a “diversity liaison” who is “tasked to pay attention to equity and inclusion throughout the search,” using “redacted statements of contributions to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion for the first round of screening” with the intent to “hire more faculty who would continue to contribute to diversity and inclusion efforts,” “implement holistic selection review process” such as “demonstrating culturally-responsive teaching practices,” and shifting “hiring timelines as early as is practical” because “research suggests in-demand candidates of color may be more likely to be available for hire earlier in the year.”

The plan also includes retention strategies such as offering “comprehensive induction to support beginning teachers of color in their first years of teaching” and creating “culturally affirming school environments” that dedicates “resources and time for professional learning on advancing racial equity in schools.”

SAN RAFAEL CITY SCHOOLS

On November 15, 2021, San Rafael City Schools adopted its **Together 2024 Blueprint** which serves as the district’s “strategic plan” and “Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).” As part of the Blueprint, the district set a strategic goal titled “Goal 2: Staff Success” which states that it is “dedicated to attracting, developing and retaining culturally responsive teachers and staff that purposefully serve every student.”

In order to achieve this goal, the district commits to hiring “more teachers of color and bilingual teachers and staff.” This includes the Elementary School District (ESD) and High School District (HSD) increasing “the numbers of teachers, administrators and classified staff of color by 10% for all groups.”

A November 14, 2022, Blueprint update to the board titled **Hiring Teachers of Color & Bilingual Staff** states that its “Smart Goal” is that by June 2023, it will “increase the number of employees of color by 5%.” This includes increasing “administrators of color from 17% to 22% (ESD & HSD),” increasing “teachers of color by from [sic] 17% to 22% (ESD) and from 9% to 14% (HSD).” The presentation also lists “strategic actions” the district is taking such as to “hire a coordinator; recruit and select 24 diverse candidates and mentors for the Teacher Residency program for the 2023-24 school year,” “continue outreach efforts to local schools of education (Dominican, Sonoma State, etc.) and educational organizations (CALSA, AASPA, CABE, etc.) to recruit teachers of color,” and “provide at least quarterly opportunities for teachers of color to meet in affinity groups in San Rafael.”

Included in the presentation is Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) data showing district staffing demographics. The data from the years 2020 and 2022 reveal that the district increased its ESD percentage of non-white new hires by 21%, with an overall non-white staff increase of 6%. Data in the presentation show that the HSD increased its percentage of non-white new hires by 27% but had an overall decrease of 3% in non-white staff. The district as a whole had an increase in new non-white hires of 24% and an overall increase in non-white staff of 2%.

According to the district’s **Together 2024 update** from February 2024, it notes progress toward Goal 2.2 stating that it has increased the percentage of administrators of color on staff at ESD and HSD from 17% to 31%, and increased teachers of color at ESD from 17% to 19% and HSD from 9% to 13%.

SANTA BARBARA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A 2023 **Anti-Blackness and Racial Climate Assessment and Analysis** completed for the Santa Barbara Unified School District by Insight Education Group states that a “racially diverse educator workforce represents a district’s dedication to creating equitable access to excellent educational opportunities for all students, as well as its commitment to eliminating barriers to entry and providing equitable career advancement opportunities for educators of color.”

Recommendations from the consultant include building partnerships to “actively recruit teachers of color and bilingual teachers into teaching and administrative roles,” “develop a ‘career ladder pathway model’ to ensure opportunities for career growth for staff of color,” and “cultivate racial affinity groups for staff to support participants in learning how to navigate their workplaces as staff members of color, unpack racial and racist issues, and combat racial battle-fatigue.”

Colorado

POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Documents obtained from a Freedom of Information Act request reveal Poudre School District's hiring practices prioritize a "diverse workforce" and interview questions that focus on equity and antiracism.

According to Poudre School District's "Recruiting & Retaining A Diverse & Talented Workforce" document, its mission is to "strategically attract, grow, and retain high-quality team members with a human first lens." The district's vision is to "cultivate a diverse workforce, reflecting the intersectional identities and needs" of its students.

As part of the district's hiring process, interviewers are provided with a "DEI Bank of Questions" to center diversity, equity, and inclusion. Listed questions include asking job candidates "What are some ways you have integrated equity and inclusion into your professional work? What metrics did you use and what was the result," "Provide an example of how you address implicit biases of your own in your work or personal life," "What does anti-racism mean to you? How does it show up in your work," and "Tell about a time when someone at work said something that is either a microaggression or was discriminatory/biased . [sic] What did you do to address this?"

Also provided to interviewers is a scoring rubric for candidate answers. Under "exceptional answer," an applicant "shows experience having actually implemented equity work in the past...or answer shows great introspection and self-awareness as evidence that they are ready to dive deeper into equity work."

A slide presentation from January 24, 2023, makes the case for "diversification" in the workforce by stating that "students of color who are taught by teachers of color" have "improved academic outcomes," "higher graduation rates," "fewer unexcused absences," and "more likely to attend college." The following slide claims that "white students had positive perceptions of teachers of color" by helping "break down negative stereotypes," helps "students understand and confront racism," and "prepare all students to live a multicultural society and workforce."

Connecticut

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Connecticut State Department of Education's document [Creating a District Plan to Increase the Racial, Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity of Your Educator Work](#) states that the guidebooks are intended to aid in the development and implementation of a Minority Teacher Recruitment (MTR) plan. These documents are meant to assist districts in complying with [Public Act 18-34](#) (Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention).

The document's appendices include a self-assessment tool for "recruitment, hiring and selection" which prompts districts to evaluate how much the professional staff "reflects the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of students served." "Sample evidence" states the "ratio of students of color to teacher/administrators/ central office staff of color; percentage of teachers/administrators/central office personnel who live in town compared with out of town; number of languages spoken by professional staff"

The self-assessment tool also suggests districts have a "visible profile that articulates goals for increasing the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the workforce." It then provides "sample evidence" that suggests the district use "specific short- and long-term goals for hiring and selecting a diverse educator workforce; data showing hiring funnel and percentage of diverse applicants who apply, interview and are hired vs. non-White applicants."

The same section also suggests that districts offer "incentives (e.g. gift cards, one-time stipends) for referrals of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse candidates leading to a successful hire" and offer "incentives (e.g., pay

increases, stipends, housing assistance, affinity groups) likely to attract racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse candidates to seek employment in the district.”

Another self-assessment section titled “Selecting and Hiring” suggests that districts utilize “resume and interview procedures, checklists, and/or protocols that assess cultural responsiveness, and promote an equity mindset” and “adopts policies and procedures that ensure hiring practices prioritize candidates who demonstrate high levels of cultural responsiveness.”

The document also provides districts a tool titled “Six Domains for Culturally Responsive Hiring Strategies At A Glance” which promotes the use of Peggy McIntosh’s *White Privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack* and a video titled *Implicit bias and microaggressions*.

Illinois

COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 300

Community Unit School District 300 in Illinois prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion in its hiring process. For example, a bank of interview questions obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request reveal a focus on “Culturally Relevant Teaching” which includes questions such as:

- “Have you ever taken part in a conversation centered on race in an educational setting? If yes, describe that conversation and how did it make you feel? If no, how comfortable would you be talking about race and its impact on education?”
- “How do you create equity in the classroom?”
- “Is there an example of how you have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in a prior situation?”
- “How would you define diversity? How do you encourage people to honor the uniqueness of each individual? How do you challenge stereotypes and promote sensitivity and inclusion?”
- “How would you address racial tension among students in your classroom?”
- “Describe your experience or explain how you have been educated to understand the history of African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans and other historically marginalized communities in the USA.”
- “At (enter school), we are committed to racial and gender equity. How would you create and maintain an inclusive learning environment for all of your students? In your response, please speak directly about how you would support your transgender students.”
- “When was the last time you shared your pronouns? Why do you think it is essential to share your pronouns?”
- “At (insert school), our White students have exceeded the performance of our Students of Color in the area of Reading/Math. According to (——— data), our White students are performing at the —th percentile, and our students of color are performing at the —th percentile on average. As a newly hired (insert subject) teacher, how do you plan to assist us in addressing this problem? How will you help us to rectify this discrepancy in student performance?”

The district states as part of its [2022-2027 Strategic Plan](#) that it will “develop an overall plan to attract and retain diverse, high quality candidates.”

According to a 2022 equity audit “Needs Assessment,” the “Employment & Retainment” component states that the district has “implemented practices to attract and retain highly qualified, diverse teachers and administrators.” The audit claims that the district needs to “develop [sic] culturally responsive interviewing process” and that district staff “does not mirror” its student population.”

“Suggestions for Next Steps” include:

- “Develop hiring practices and professional development for recruitment and hiring of a more diverse workforce.”
- “Attracting African American teachers. Need to identify this practice. How do we look within and incentivize them to go back to school as well? Students who want to get into Education. Title II dollars? Train our own! Recruitment ideas are needed.”
- “The interview process has item banks of questions for candidates to get a pulse of cultural responsiveness and inclusion, however, this needs to expand on all staff instead of just teachers.”

ILLINOIS MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY

Illinois Math and Science Academy states in its **E2: Equity and Excellence Framework** that it will implement “strategies based on the **Equity and Excellence Model** to recruit, support and retain staff, including faculty, as well as board members and external partners.” Interventions to achieve the plan’s outcomes includes the implementation of a modified version of the “Rooney Rule, in that every faculty opening requires interviewing at least two candidates who identify as a Black, Indigenous Person of Color.” It also states that the school will engage in a process of “cluster hiring’ to recruit diverse candidates with interdisciplinary backgrounds.”

According to the school’s E2 framework, it states that when it comes to recruitment it will “provide ongoing professional learning for search committee members, for incorporating best practices (implicit bias, critical race theory, cultural competence) on diversity, equity and inclusion in the hiring and advancement of staff, including faculty.”

Kentucky

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

According to the Jefferson County Public Schools’ **Racial Equity Policy**, the district shall “Attract, recruit, hire, and retain staff and leadership that more closely reflect the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the student body of the District.” The policy continues by stating that the district will “Provide training to District and school administrators and school-based decision making [sic] councils regarding the importance of and strategies for increasing staff racial diversity in an urban school district, where a majority of students are Students of Color.”

The district also features a **Diversity Hiring Specialist** who “provides support and guidance to minority recruitment and retention in JCPS.” The specialist collaborates with “Human Resources, the JCPS Recruiting Team, all hiring supervisors, and all principals to ensure a fair, inclusive, and equitable hiring process.”

Maine

GORHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

Gorham School District’s (ME) [Diversity Hiring Practices](#) state that it is “committed to attracting and retaining a diverse staff.” The district strives to embed equity in its “practices through a commitment to high outcomes, excellence, and fairness for all.”

According to a document titled [Diversity Hiring Toolkit](#), it is “designed to help mitigate gender, racial and other hidden biases in our recruitment and hiring processes as a district.” Under “General Guidelines For An Inclusive Hiring Process,” it states that committee members “need to be aware of the tendency to favor or downgrade candidates based on race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, geography, and perceived prestige.” It then offers an example: “if a committee is giving a white male candidate a pass (e.g., a gap in the résumé or frequent job changes), all other candidates should be cut the same slack.”

The toolkit also links to a [list](#) of sample DEI questions to use during the interview process. Questions include “Our school is committed to providing an inclusive environment for a wide range of students, families, and employees. What recent experiences have you participated in or led that have helped deepen your understanding around the nuances of diversity, equity, and inclusion?” and “How does your commitment to DEI show up in your personal and professional life?”

Maryland

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), in partnership with the Baltimore County Government and the Education Foundation of Baltimore County Public Schools, Inc, is offering students who are “black, indigenous, a person of color (BIPOC), and/or women pursuing a teaching certificate in science, technology, engineering, and/or math (STEM)” the opportunity to apply for scholarships towards teacher certification.

The Baltimore County Government has [granted](#) the district’s foundation \$1 million dollars to fund the [Growing Our Own for BCPS](#) program. Eligibility requirements state that applicants “must be a college student in the Junior or Senior year, a BCPS para-educator, and/or a career changer studying education between June 1, 2024 and June 30, 2026,” “must be a student who is black, indigenous, a person of color (BIPOC), and/or a women [sic] pursuing a teaching certificate in science, technology, engineering, and/or math (STEM),” and “must personally write the *Growing Our Own for BCPS* Scholarship Application Essay.”

The program is intended to “support the efforts of the BCPS Department of Human Resources in recruiting, training, and retaining BIPOC teachers and women in STEM fields to teach in BCPS.”

Massachusetts

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [document](#) titled “Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Schools and Classrooms Profile Series,” it highlights Cambridge Public School’s efforts to recruit, hire, and retain teachers of color.

District staff state that not having a staff that identifies with the majority of the student population is a “concern for achieving equitable outcomes and culturally responsive schools.” Therefore, the district reformed its recruitment and hiring practices such as looking at “job postings to identify language that unintentionally signaled a white, male-dominated culture.”

The profile also shares that district administrators worked with “school-level leaders” to “help them understand the implicit biases that were often at play in hiring decisions.” The [former] diversity administrator interviewed in the document states that “It is essential for school leaders who make the final decisions to understand that we’re all biased and operate within systemic racism, but also that systemic racism is created by individuals who enact and design policies that make our organization unwelcoming, centering whiteness and marginalizing others.” They continue: “One big piece was disrupting the notion of culture fit – if you have an organization that is 76 percent white, then whiteness is part of the culture and not being white means you’re not a cultural fit.”

As part of its retention programming, the district also operates “Employee Resource Groups” or “affinity groups,” for staff.

As part of the district’s 2017 approved three-year **plan**, objectives include the implementation of the “Dynamic Diversity program to recruit, hire, and retain a CPS workforce that reflects the diversity of Cambridge.”

Additionally, district **outcomes** include increasing the “percentage of teachers of color by 7 percentage points to 30%.” Strategic initiatives involve embedding “ongoing cultural proficiency professional learning for all CPS educators” and implementing the “Dynamic Diversity program to recruit, hire, and retain a CPS workforce that reflects the diversity of Cambridge.”

Michigan

MASON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mason Public Schools’ equity plan policies and procedures include establishing “hiring and training practices that are instructional and consistently reflective of the type of diverse representation of the student population by percentage.” Supporting activities include a “commitment statement and requirement in all hiring materials for district positions.” The district will “recruit and retain a diverse work force, especially teachers and administrators,” “develop a talent pipeline for teachers and leaders of color for leadership positions,” and “include questions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in interview questions.”

The **equity plan** calls for the establishment of “programs to recruit, retain, and support educators of minority communities” and also “include interview questions for prospective staff related to their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

Minnesota

SCHOOL DISTRICT 622 – NORTH ST. PAUL-MAPLEWOOD-OAKDALE

The North Saint Paul – Maplewood – Oakdale School District states in the district’s **racial equity policy** that it will “recruit, employ, support and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent staff” and shall “actively strive to have the teacher and administrator workforce reflect the diversity of the student body.”

The policy also states that it will “create environments that intentionally educate all stakeholders on critical race consciousness including understanding one’s racial identity and the impact of their racial identity on others.”

As part of its **2021–2023 Labor Agreement**, the district and union entered into an MOU “for the purpose of guidance on Assignment and Reassignment and supporting ISD 622 BOE policy 430.” The agreement includes the continuation of a “Quality Steering Committee (QSC) meeting to review, discuss and recommend improved district policies and procedures to support BOE policy 430.”

The MOU highlights the following from policy 430: “The District shall recruit, employ, support and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent staff...The District shall actively strive to have the teacher and administrator workforce reflect the diversity of the student body.”

Missouri

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF CLAYTON

The School District of Clayton states in its **Equity and Excellence** framework that it will use a “racial equity framework to design and implement processes for recruiting, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce capable of ensuring and sustaining academic progress for a racially, ethnically and socially diverse student body.”

It continues: “The human resource priority is a diverse and culturally responsive/effective staff that understands issues of equity while providing our students with rich and rigorous instruction.”

According to the district’s **2019–2020 Equity and Excellence Summary Report**, the district states that it will “continue to examine the hiring process to make sure they are not biased” and “have ensured that in the initial, assured interview, all candidates are asked about their background and experience with diversity.” The document also states that the district’s goal is to “increase our staff population diversity to better represent our student population.”

The report also states that as part of the district’s Diversity Recruitment & Networking Fair, “all participants interviewed with an administrator from Clayton and also spent time networking with members of Clayton’s Affinity Group.” It also adds that “candidates that attended the event received personal invitations to apply for positions as they were posted.”

On January 6, 2024, the district offered a **Diversity Recruitment and Networking Fair** with a goal to “recruit and build a faculty that improves staff diversity in our schools.”

The school district’s **Anti-Bias Antiracist (ABAR) Presuppositions** framework states that it is “impossible to deny that injustice and inequity are ingrained in our systems” and that it is urgent to “dismantle inequities and systemic policies and procedures that have historically and persistently harmed Black students and other students of color.”

According to the framework, the district strives to have equity literacy, which is “having the knowledge and skills to disrupt and dismantle inequities within our own spheres of influence for the betterment of our students, staff and greater community.”

The district states that being literate in equity includes the following:

- “recognize and disrupt white supremacy that results in layers of systemic racism.”
- “seek out fair redistribution of opportunity and access that have previously and presently been denied.”
- “believe that affirming a student’s culture, history and identity is more important than relying solely on numerical data.”
- “affirm students’ intersectional identities and experiences.”
- “believe equity-centered curricula balance the truth about injustice and oppression with the resilience, joy, and resistance of all kinds of humans; past and present.”

- “constantly review and revise our practices and curricula based on **nationally-recognized**
- **antiracist/anti bias standards** at every grade level.” [Learning for Justice standards]

WEBSTER GROVES SCHOOL DISTRICT

According to Webster Groves School District’s **Equity Policy**, the district “shall address racism and bias” by recruiting, employing, supporting, retaining and continuously developing “a workforce of racially conscious and culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel.”

In district’s **Strategic Plan 2023-2026**, the district states that it “must maintain flexible structures and systems which attract and retain the highest quality staff.” As part of its objectives to meet one of its strategic goals, the districts will strive “to attract, support, and retain exceptionally talented staff who at minimum reflect the diversity of our student population.”

One of the strategies listed in the document states that the district will “provide multiple opportunities to interact with candidates of color by hosting events, strategic advertisement of positions, etc.” which will be evaluated by “increasing the number of qualified applicants of color and increasing our number and percentage in hiring staff of color.”

Webster Groves School **District’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Interim Report** of 2021 provides staffing data and new hires pertaining to “staff of color.”

New York

BRIGHTON CENTRAL SCHOOLS

Brighton Central Schools states that it was worked to update its **hiring practices** in order to “attract, hire and retain staff who are representative of our student body and the Brighton community as a whole.”

District efforts include improving retention through “Antiracist/Antibias (ABAR) training for all staff,” include a “commitment to diversity” in job postings, and “requiring a diversity statement with application” that asks applicants to show “past and current efforts, as well as, future plans to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Brighton Central School District.”

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Rochester City School District presentation titled “Staff Diversity & Staffing Update: Building a workforce our students need” states that the district will “develop and implement a race and class consciousness rubric for recruitment to ensure we build a workforce our students need.”

According to a draft of the district’s Racial Equity Advocacy Leadership (REAL) Team Vision Statement, “RCSD will be a thoroughly anti-racist institution that ensures equitable opportunities for all.” The “**Racial Equity Action Plan**” states that the district will “work toward ensuring that staffing of the RCSD will reflect the racial composition of the student population.”

Under “District and Community Goals,” it states that it will “recruit and retain significantly greater numbers of qualified, appropriately credentialed, underrepresented race and class-conscious staff of color: African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American” and “implement systemic, equitable hiring practices.”

To achieve these goals, the action plan set a “10 percent year-over-year improvement in number of Staff of color hired.” The district will also “use characteristics of race and class conscious [sic] teachers as recruitment tool to attract mission-driven teachers.”

North Carolina

ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOLS

In 2019, the Orange County Board of Education approved its **Equity in Education** policy which states that “equity” is “an interruption of systems, structures, policies, and practices which privilege some students while discriminating against other students.” One of the strategies listed to promote equity includes the “Negotiating, re-allocating, and sometimes re-imagining resources, opportunities, and supports when equal distribution of these things (one size fits all) results in inequitable outcomes that do not adequately meet specific needs and interests of all groups of students.”

As part of the board’s commitment to the equity policy, it set “a series of expectations” and “active measures” in which the district will “actively recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce.”

The district outlines in its 2021-2022 **Equity Plan Working Document** how the different “active measures” will be achieved. The document states that “by 2026, OCS will actively recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity and mirrors the demographics of the OCS student population.”

Under “key measures,” the district sets a goal for 2026 where “Orange County Schools staff turnover rate (attrition + mobility) for African American staff and teachers will decrease by 3% and the gap between the demographic makeup of the school system’s Latino and bilingual staff to Latino and bilingual students will decrease by 4%.” Also, by 2026, “100% of staff of color and LGBTQ+ staff will report feeling that Orange County Schools is a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive work environment.”

Action steps to achieve the goal include defining an “EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) organizational culture and why an EDI organizational culture and a positive racial climate are essential component of a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive work environment and recruiting and retaining diverse staff,” “conduct focus groups with racially diverse teachers, district leaders, school administrators, and staff as a means of assessing the EDI and racial climate of the district,” and “conduct employee resource and affinity groups.”

The district’s **OCS Strategic Plan for Increasing Staff Diversity** states that “research supports that all students benefit from having teachers that reflect their culture, racial and linguistic background,” that “research suggests that students of color who have at least one teacher of color may do better on tests and be less likely to have disciplinary issues,” and that “teachers of color boost the academic performance of students of color, including improved reading and math test scores, improved graduation rates, and increases in aspirations to attend college.”

According to the “Framework for Diversity in the Workplace” slide, the district offered “invitation only recruitment events for identified minority candidates and hard to fill positions,” “identify hiring teams that represent student population,” offer “affinity groups,” and “provide training to hiring teams around implicit biases.”

Orange County Schools’ **Human Capital Recruitment and Retention Update for 2024-2025 School Year** presentation shows the district’s progress toward its hiring goals.

Ohio

HILLIARD CITY SCHOOLS

As part of the Hilliard City Schools' [Equity & Diversity 3-Year Strategic Action Plan](#), the district states that its goal is to “increase the number of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) teachers and teachers from underrepresented groups so that the employees of Hilliard City Schools are representative of the students and families in Hilliard City Schools.”

Listed “Action Steps” include “tuition reimbursement,” “mentoring for HCSD BIPOC students and students from underrepresented groups,” “develop a statement of Hiring that is visible to all that Hilliard is inclusive and values diversity,” and “audit current hiring application & process looking through the lens of diversity & inclusivity.” Evidence of the district’s progress includes an “inclusive hiring statement, questions candidates are asked” and offering “specific sessions for new BIPOC hires.”

Pennsylvania

LOWER MERION SCHOOL DISTRICT

A document titled [Exploring workforce diversity and hiring practices in Lower Merion School District](#), a part of [Lower Merion School District Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Continuous Improvement Project Research Brief](#) study, states that the district “interviewees noted the importance of intentionally selecting candidates who have an aptitude for diversity, equity, and inclusion to improve the school’s racial climate.” It continues by stating that the district “had made progress toward intentionally screening for educators with equity skills.”

According to the report, interviewees experienced “microaggressions within the interview process” and that the “researchers have documented the lack of support, microaggressions, and biases present in a predominantly white profession.”

In a section titled “Cultural taxation,” it shares that “BIPOC educators are tasked with an overwhelming amount of racialized labor by the district and other staff members” and that “racialized labor” is “imposed on BIPOC educators” through “school activities related to diversity and anti-racism.”

Recommendations from the consultant include administrators “reaching out to recruit candidates of color,” support for “educators of color throughout the hiring process,” and “develop affinity groups for educators of color.”

NORRISTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

In 2018, the Norristown Area School District Board approved the district’s [Diversity Strategic Plan](#) (later titled *Diversity Cultural Proficiency and Diversity Plan*) which established a Cultural Proficiency Planning Committee to develop district goals. Those goals included a focus on “hiring and retention of staff” and states that the district is to “increase the hiring and retention of professional staff members that are more reflective of our multicultural and diverse student and family demographics as measured by application, hiring, and retention statistics to increase the percentage of diverse staff members by 1% per year for five years.”

Actions for achieving this goal include analyzing and reviewing “hiring practices annually to ensure that they support goals linked to creating a more diverse staff,” “include questions related to cultural proficiency in all interview processes,” “establish internal and external networking/mentoring system to support racially and ethnically diverse personnel,” and “develop a process of selecting diverse staff to serve on all district and school committees.”

Rhode Island

SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT

South Kingstown School District's policy [5415: Appointments and Promotions](#) states that the "recruitment, hiring, and retaining teachers, staff, administrators, and coaches who identify as BIPOC shall be one of the District's top priorities."

It continues: "The School Committee is dedicated to creating an inclusive community that promotes and values diversity in its hiring and strives for its employee workforce to be diverse in age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, and perspective."

Washington

SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Images obtained from an anonymous source reveal Seattle Public Schools asking concerning ideological questions on a professional references survey such as whether the job applicant "engages in racial identity work" and their "culturally responsive and anti-racist" practices.

One of the questions in the survey asks if the candidate "engages in racial identity work to explore and interrupt their implicit biases."

Another question asks the respondent about the "culturally responsive and anti-racist" practices of the applicant. "To your knowledge, in what ways has this candidate built their understanding of their own racial and cultural identity and the racial and cultural identities of others?"

UNIVERSITY PLACE SCHOOL DISTRICT

University Place School District's Racial Equity Initiative – [Workforce Diversity & Cultural Competence](#) – states that "increasing the diversity of our workforce is another key component to achieving racial equity for students in UPSD." According to the district, it has an "affirmative action plan" in place with the "specific goal of diversifying our workforce for better reflect our community."

The district states that it will "actively recruit teachers and support staff of color," "review hiring practices to ensure that they are non-discriminatory," and "review hiring practices to ensure that they help to identify and select qualified candidates of color."

Additionally, it states that when the district is "unable to hire educators of color to open positions," it "still plans to emphasize cultural responsiveness and competence in the people we do hire." The district has also engaged its "District Equity Advisory Team in reviewing" both "job postings and interview questions" to ensure that the district's "commitment to racial equity, inclusivity and cultural responsiveness is reflected in both places."

A document titled [Staff Hiring, Treatment, Compensation and Evaluation](#) states that the district worked with the "district equity advisory team" to create a "set of equity/diversity focused questions" which "have been added to the process to better assess the commitment level and knowledge of prospective employees around racial equity, social justice and anti-racism."

Resources for Parents

Questions to Ask Your School About Their DEI & Hiring Practices

- Does the school district have Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policies? If so, how are they integrated into all stages of the hiring practices?
- Does the district have specific DEI-based or demographic quotas they seek to meet while recruiting and hiring?
- What practices or policies to ensure transparency during the recruiting and hiring process are in place in the district?
- How does the district evaluate and measure the effectiveness of the DEI initiatives integrated into the recruiting and hiring process?
- How much does the district spend on DEI initiatives/hires and programs? Which are the most costly and what is the dollar amount?
- How does the district define “diversity” and does it include diversity of viewpoint?
- Does the district prioritize “equitable hiring” over experience and proven track record of candidates?
- What specific questions are asked to applicants to determine their commitment to equity?
- How does the district define “equity?”
- Do you offer professional development opportunities that are limited to certain staff on the basis of their race?
- How do you vet “DEI Professionals?” What qualifications do you require of them?
- Do you factor in “commitment to equity” when determining compensation?

