

**\*\* DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED \*\***

**Burlington School District  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Meeting Minutes  
Sustainability Academy  
March 11th, 2025**

**Commissioners Present:** [REDACTED]

**Guests:** [REDACTED]

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**1. Call meeting to Order**

A. Meeting Called to Order 6:39pm

**2. Approval of Agenda**

A. Motion to approve agenda - agenda approved & Robert's rules suspended

**3. Public Comment -** [REDACTED]: Annual Sankofa Trip, Washington DC's National Museum of African American History and Culture, during April spring break: **seeking youth participants; still spots available to go on the trip!** For info email [REDACTED]: [REDACTED][r.org](#)


**4. Discussion of Business by the Committee**

1. Pan African Choir of Uganda 2025 Tour Planning with Simon Yiga, Executive Director of PACU.

Intro Recap: North American Cultural Arts Education; choir is dedicated to fostering cross-cultural understanding through music and education. Proposed tour includes interactive workshops, school engagements, and public performances, allowing students and residents to explore African musical traditions, values, and perspectives.<https://panafricanchoir.org>; 20 people in choir and two mentors on the upcoming tour.



- **Seeking venues to be hosted; as many public schools as possible.** Having commitment from venues is an essential part of the visa application process.

- *Please share the Booking Form* - needs to be filled out for workshops and performances:

 PACU FALL 2025 TOUR BOOKING FORM\_UPDATED.docx

- Start in Burlington; aiming for third week in September
- 4 weeks in Vermont; 2 weeks Chittenden County.
- Next Steps - Ask superintendent Flanagan to talk to other superintendents; check the BSD school calendar to solidify dates in September

## 2. Discussion of Priority Area #4, Educators who look like our students, with PA#4 lead.

- 13% of directors in BSD of the Global Majority; 6%, teachers and principals (school year 23-24).
- What has been done since inception of priority area number four?
- West Ed report; housed in Human Resource
- Main focus has been on retention
- Exit interviews of global majority employees
- HR staff completed trainings to conduct exit interviews
- Progress has been made to support, nurture and grow opportunities for Global majority employees including, but not limited to, groups of cultural relevance, (formerly known as “affinity groups”), Professional development strands.
- Developing ways to support African-American and New Americans staff - acknowledging different needs/support.
- “Grow our own” Educators, creating/fostering opportunities for para-educators, multilingual Liaisons.
- Director of HR,  developing a mentor program
- Exploring options for provisional license, 2 years to get license;  working with Roland Foundation, creating a partnership, garnering support.
- Other Partnerships: Great Schools partnership from Maine, Vermont AOE, Superintendents Association

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- Considering Federal Cuts, will this work get implemented?

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- Identify the barriers: Recruitment and what does it look like?
- What to do if there's only one person of the global majority at a school?
- pool hiring
- unconscious bias training is happening but the training needs to be improved.
- licensing and finding alternative pathways
- supporting GM's navigating the AOE as part of seeking licensure
- translation of transcripts is another barrier

- representation matters!

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- If we put money towards PA # area number four, what aspect would be best to invest in?

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- Believes HR would be best with the idea to have a dedicated person to do this work, especially in developing the Partnerships that would support alternative pathways to licensure.
- Group conversation about the former "Coming Home Program," working with local colleges; Tuition reimbursement/forgiveness; Teach America; working with VSAC re: grants and aide; TAP. Possibly there's other programs. It would be that person's job to research what's out there.

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- Reminder: Bachelor's degree, Vermont residents, CCV is free; possible to complete required courses before applying as a transfer student.

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- What did we learn from the West Ed report that we didn't already know?
- Nobody could think of anything.


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- Disappointed that West Ed didn't provide information for scholarship opportunities, National programs & initiatives with tuition reimbursement, etc. No concrete leads or lists.

### 3. Finalize Commissioner's Compensation Letter To City Council

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- ████████ created a new doc.; edited former letter down to one page; added BSD student demographics.

 Copy of DEICrecommendation-CityCouncilLetter-CommissionerCompensat...

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- In BSD, equity is everyone's responsibility
- Supports efforts to to diversify the board
- board members need to be able to afford to serve - people need to pay baby sitters, pay for gas, etc.

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- though bolstering representation through compensation is the main goal, additionally, compensation will influence a mindset change.
- Volunteering gives the impression that doing board work is "out of the kindness of one's heart." There's a fine line between this and patronising.
- Compensation thwarts real or perceived concerns of "White Savior."

- We know that volunteerism has historically led to boards being predominantly occupied by people with privileges. This has led to inequitable practices/policies, upholding white supremacy culture
- With that being said, we know that people who can afford to serve on boards are championing equity and in no way patronizing but we need to acknowledge that if the members mostly represent an advantaged demographic, that in itself can be alienating.

**5. Adjournment**

A. Motion to Adjourn at 8:06pm

Respectfully submitted by 