

East Lyme Public Schools Increasing Educator Diversity Plan 2024

Vision:

East Lyme Public Schools maintains an inclusive environment where all students, staff, community members, and stakeholders feel welcome and safe. We are committed to empowering our educators and students to become independent thinkers and engaged citizens.

Theory of Action:

If we expand efforts and connections with varied institutions, agencies, and stakeholders, while continuing to strengthen internal relationships and belonging in district, then we will see more candidates successfully navigate our hiring process and establish their professional home within the East Lyme Public Schools.

**Committee
Members:**

Jeffrey Newton, Superintendent
Claudine Kelly, Building Principal
Stacey Muscarella, Data Analyst & Systems Operations
Sarah Zielinski, Teacher
Esteban Garcia, BOE Member
Gretchen Osodipe, LEARN Education Consultant



Recruitment

Goal	(1) Increase the number of practices that our district is engaged in to advance recruitment efforts	(2) Further data analysis of our applicant pipeline to establish baselines and trends around recruitment efforts	(3) Identify and support high school students who are interested in teaching as a career	(4) Increase community connections and collaboration	(5) Increase the number of diverse candidates in our pipeline by 5%
Who	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals	HS Administration/ HS Counselor	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals
What	(1a) Upgrade Information Systems for candidate tracking (1b) Increase college fair representation (1c) Create "East Lyme Ambassadors" role to facilitate more educators and community members participating in recruitment efforts (1d) Expand community outreach and partnerships	(2a) Monitor metrics at various stages of the recruitment process (applicant, interview, offer, onboarding)	Establish a future teachers' club at the high school and/or work through Pathways program development for classroom internship opportunities	(4a) Expand community connections in East Lyme and with surrounding towns (4b) Connect community partners to current school clubs and family group initiatives	(5a) Participate in more college career fairs (5b) increase employee referrals via the East Lyme Ambassadors role
Who owns this	Administration & HR	Administration & HR	HS Administration & Teacher Mentors	Building Principals/ Counselors, School Staff	Administration & HR
By when	Expansion of practices by January '25	Data Analysis and baselines will be collected by summer '24	Research & survey students to establish interest SY 24-25	Create a list of additional new partners to reach out to (SY23-25)	Ongoing
Indicators of progress	(1a) Track the overall diversity within the candidate pool and compare it to established goals (1b) Increase in the number of candidates of color with whom we connect with at recruitment events (1c/d) Track the source of hires and assess the effectiveness of recruitment initiatives	We will have baseline numbers about our applicant pool, and applicant experience information as they move through the recruitment process	Development of a future teachers' club with a faculty sponsor Recruit a diverse group of students to participate in the club and/or demonstrate an increase in Pathways internship classroom opportunities for students of color	An increase in community partnerships in our town and local towns - at least one partnership per town	Increase in the number of candidates of color with whom we connect at recruitment events Increase in the number of candidates of color who submit applications to East Lyme Increase the number of candidates who advance from the screen process to the interview/selection process
Resources Required	Administration, HR, faculty and staff, and development of stipends and/or release time for individuals to engage in the work	HR and Central Office Staff. Applicant tracking system representative	Grant funds, revenue dollars or operating money to support a club advisor or any associated internship costs	Costs associated with marketing	East Lyme administration and ambassador staff will attend recruitment events Monitor website traffic, particularly after recruitment events
Risks and Mitigation	Scheduling and time impede connecting with community partners. Prioritize and maintain additional supports to ensure progression occurs	N/A	Trouble funding the program(s), difficulty getting faculty support and minimal student engagement or interest. We will research funding opportunities, engage LEARN for potential support in facilitation in case of low faculty interest and advertise the club and internship opportunities	N/A	Low turnout at recruitment events Need to be proactive and communicate information about the dates and times of the events via social media, on college notice boards, and on our websites to generate interest
Communication & Engagement Efforts	ELPS Website and Information Technologist Directors of Student Teaching and Schools of Education Local community organizations	HR Office Staff, Systems & Operations Specialist	HR Office Staff, HS Administration/ Pathways Coordinator, HS Staff & Counselors	Community agencies, private industry, non-profits, workforce boards, post-secondary institutions, etc Communicate our sincere desire to be partners Learn how we can benefit from their organizations as well as have them help us spread the word about district opportunities and achievements	HR Staff & Administration

Hiring & Selection

Goal	(1) East Lyme Public Schools will improve hiring practices to increase our ability to recruit and attract diverse candidates for employment	(2) Increase the number of diverse candidates hired by at least 5% per year to reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of students
Who	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration, Building Principals
What	<p>(1a) East Lyme Public Schools will ensure all hiring committee members are aware of best practices as it pertains to fostering inclusivity</p> <p>(1b) In addition, we will ensure any/all candidates applying for employment with us feel welcomed and are aware of our ongoing focus and commitment to educator diversity</p> <p>(1c) Work with Frontline hiring system to add descriptive and inclusive language to the application forms</p> <p>(1d) Anti-bias training will occur for hiring committee members prior to interviews</p> <p>(1e) Evaluation of the hiring process will occur to monitor the success of our recruitment efforts</p>	<p>(2a) Collect applicant data to establish a baseline for diverse candidates in East Lyme hiring pipeline</p> <p>(2b) Conduct stay-interviews and check-ins with newly hired staff and people of color to better understand what made East Lyme a good choice for them</p>
Who owns this	HR Staff and Administration	HR Staff and Administration
By when	Yearly, based on the number of open positions, we will establish baseline by June 30, 2024	Ongoing
Indicators of progress	Increased number of candidates of color being interviewed	Increased number of candidates of color are offered employment and are accepting positions in East Lyme
Resources Required	<p>(1a) Continued time and sub coverage for anti-bias training</p> <p>(1b) Feedback surveys for applicants going through the hiring process</p>	<p>(2a) HR staff and time to collect and reflect on data about applicant pool</p> <p>(2b) Process and time to conduct interviews with current employees to learn about the effectiveness of current practices as well as what we can improve</p>
Risks and Mitigation	(1b/1c) Candidates may not opt to identify their race or ethnic background. This was only the case for less than 10% of individuals we hired last year. We will work with Frontline to be more clear about why we are asking the question, so candidates will feel safe to self-identify	Lack of buy-in by newly hired staff or wanting to engage in dialogue about process
Communication & Engagement Efforts	<p>(1a) District Administration, all School and Department Hiring Managers, anyone who has completed the CSDE Anti-Bias Interview Training and will serve on an interview committee</p> <p>We need to communicate the importance of hiring diverse candidates and the necessity of having our hiring and selection process feel respectful, affirming and kind</p> <p>(1c) Ongoing collaboration with Frontline staff. Communicate how we would like to personalize the application slightly so that it better reflects the districts mission and values</p>	HR Office Staff and Administration taking careful steps to appropriately engage new hires through questioning and feedback collection

Retention

Goal	(1) Educators and employees of the East Lyme Public Schools will feel supported and part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring an equitable environment for all	(2)Expand initiatives to retain educators of color	(3)Support non-certified staff in advancing their education and becoming certified staff
Who	Central Office Administration, HR Office Staff and Building Administration	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration and Building Administration	HR Office Staff, Central Office Administration and Building Administration
What	(1a) Continuing equity collaborative cohort with LEARN to build internal capacity for fostering more inclusive work environments (1b) Continue district and school-based DEI committee work (1c) Partner with community members and organizations to provide professional development to increase employee feeling of belonging (1d) Continue to foster a work environment and culture/climate of inclusivity (1e) Administer new hire surveys (1f) Revise exit interview data collection process, questions and format	(2a) Promote expanded participation in the LEARN Interdistrict Educators of Color Affinity group (2b) Interview staff of color to learn more about their experiences in the district (2c) Expand opportunities for employees to broaden the influence they have across the district/community	(3a) Integrate career conversations into midyear/end of year evaluation (ex., potential to participate in alternate route to certification such as Teacher Residency Program (3b) Development of 'Building Buddies' or mentors which would allow current teachers to support and engage with non-certified staff about advancing careers
Who owns this	HR Office Staff, Administration	HR Office Staff, Administration	HR Office Staff, Administration
By when	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Indicators of progress	80% or more new hires participate in 'check-ins with administration Response and participation rates are 80% or higher 100% of identified staff engage in stay interviews	(2a) 5% increase in staff of color participating in LEARN affinity groups (2b-c) Increased discussions, feedback, and identified/planned opportunities for employees of color to share about experiences	Gather baseline data during the 2024-2025 school year
Resources Required	HR Staff, Building Administrators and Department Leaders will need time to analyze and discuss applicant tracking data HR will need to generate reports that list staff at 30-60-90-days of hire We will also need staff culture and climate data - disaggregated by race and tenure	HR Staff and Administration time to engage in planned meetings/discussions	HR Staff and Administration time to engage in planned meetings/discussions
Risks and Mitigation	Low response rate for surveys Low participation in exit interviews, so we don't have reliable data about ex-employees' experiences We will imbed surveys into daily school activities so as not to ask staff to do them on their own time	Planned involvement, feedback meetings/discussions do not progress or continue on an ongoing basis	N/A
Communication & Engagement Efforts	HR Staff, Building Administrator and identified new hires based on the goal and in the strategies listed Share the importance of gathering this survey feedback and enlist the support of leaders to ensure staff are able to participate	Current Learn employees and educators, HR Staff, Building Administration, LEARN consultants	Conversations with Union Presidents, Building Administration, Case Managers, and Special Education Coordinators