



# EQUITABLE & INCLUSIVE HIRING PRACTICES

A REFERENCE GUIDE OF  
STRATEGIES TO GROW & DIVERSIFY  
THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE



**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education

**CCNETWORK**  
Comprehensive Center Network



REGION 2  
Connecticut  
New York  
Rhode Island

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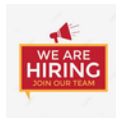
This guidance was developed on behalf of the Rhode Island Department of Education in the Office of Educator Excellence.

# INTRODUCTION

As researchers and experts work to understand and predict educator vacancies, emergent research shows that educator staffing challenges are often highly localized and dependent upon local context. Rhode Island conducts all hiring of teachers and personnel at the local level by school districts. With these considerations, the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE) 2021- 2027 Strategic Plan commits to supporting LEAs in the development of strategies to attract, recruit, and retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce that reflects Rhode Island's students. The following guidance was created to support statewide efforts to grow an effective and diverse educator workforce. This guidance will address the following key areas:



## Addressing educator workforce diversity



## Recruitment & Hiring



## Onboarding & Retention

This guidance is a compilation of promising recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices developed for school and district leaders, HR professionals, and school-based hiring teams. These practices should be explored and implemented to grow and diversify the educator workforce across Rhode Island.

In accordance with the RIDE's Strategic Plan, the Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services has set a goal to increase the percentage of teachers of color from 7 percent to 14 percent by 2027.

**As a state, we strive to increase the percentage of teachers of color from 7% to 14% by 2027.**

# PART I: RECRUITMENT

Schools do critical work to nurture and prepare youth for their lives as global citizens and successful members of society. It is vital to hire educators and professionals who create joyous and meaningful experiences for students. Robust recruitment processes are an essential part of the overall hiring process. Before candidate recruitment begins, proper planning and creation of tools are recommended to streamline the process and find talented, promising educators.



## Teacher Recruitment: A "Quest for the Very Best"

Harvard Graduate School of Education

Educator recruitment efforts have gained attention nationally; however, there are several themes that have emerged:

- Building administrators must take an active role in recruitment activities.
- Recruitment must be deliberate, tailored, and promote active outreach efforts to promising candidates.
- With district support, principals must attend to the culture and climate of their school community in order to create a strong foundation for recruitment.

## Setting the Stage

### Identify the Need: Forecasting and Goal Setting

Forecasting hiring needs, or anticipating vacancies based on retirements, resignations, transfers, non-renewals, and leave requests, is likely already part of your district's recruitment and hiring process. Consider utilizing Census data to forecast long-term educator needs based on birthrates in your municipality.

As your team works to forecast vacancies and hiring needs for the upcoming school year, it's important to set targeted goals that will inform the overall development of your recruitment plan. The following set of questions can inform your goals.

### Recruitment Goal-Setting Questions

1. What is the total amount of recruitment dollars spent per teacher vacancy yearly over the past three years?
2. What are the top 3 sources or channels for candidates/ new hires at time of application?
3. What are the number of recruitment touchpoints that take place annually?  
Quarterly?
4. How has your organization leveraged search engine optimization to boost online recruitment efforts?
5. Which recruitment touchpoints or strategies targeted diverse candidates?

Having a strong vision for the kind of candidates your team hopes to attract is key to articulate an organizational identity and to develop targeted recruitment materials. As this vision begins to take shape, a keen focus on diversity should be centered in the recruitment process. From the Harvard University Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Terms, "diversity can be defined as the condition of being different or having differences. Differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, health, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, religion, physical size, education level, job and function, personality traits, and other human differences."

When considering Rhode Island's goal to recruit and retain more educators of color, mapping your school's or district's diversity profile and setting intentional goals regarding the recruitment of educators of color is a critical first step.

\*See Appendices A-D for templates to track your district's current diversity profile, examine the trajectory of candidates of color throughout your hiring process, and to forecast hiring needs.

The recruitment and hiring team can utilize Affirmative Action Reports (AAR) provided by human resources to review current data.

Recruiting and hiring an educator workforce that is representative of the students that they serve is found to be a successful strategy to improve outcomes for all students.

To continue setting the stage for successful recruitment efforts, we recommend the following process that will help your school community communicate the opportunity.

## Preparing to Communicate the Opportunity



## Developing a Recruitment Plan

The development of a recruitment plan will support hiring teams to strategize, implement, and assess effectiveness from year to year. The recruitment plan should consider the following topics adapted from the [TNTP Teacher Talent Toolbox](#).

- Application Season Launch
- University Recruitment
- Job site Recruitment Campaign
- Social Media Campaign
- Marketing strategy
- Recruitment Incentive Strategy
- Vacancy Management Processes
- Recruitment Budget (swag)
- Candidate Cultivation
- Communications Strategy
- Recruitment Touchpoints

The potential recruitment plan areas listed are not meant to be an exhaustive list and one should consider additional processes and strategies that are specific to your district.

Tools to track your goals and work should be developed and implemented. Please visit the [TNTP Talent Toolbox](#) for recruitment tracker examples.

# The Recruitment and Hiring Team: Essential Roles



**Human  
Resources**



**School  
Improvement  
Team  
Members**



**Principal**



**Students**



**Family  
Members**

## The Recruitment and Hiring Team

Assembling the right team is key. Having people with differing perspectives and backgrounds can support successful recruitment and hiring efforts. Inviting multiple perspectives into the process allows the hiring team to more holistically evaluate a candidate.

Utilize educators within the school as members of the team, as they offer insight into the school community. Students and family members offer another valuable perspective that should be included during the hiring process.

## Developing Selection Criteria for Ideal Candidates

The attraction and hiring of learner-ready teachers is essential to successful student outcomes. The learner-ready teacher is culturally responsive and can foster critical thinking and creativity in students so that they are able to apply content and solve real-world problems (Warner & Duncan, 2019). Learner-ready teachers have deep content knowledge, take ownership of their own continuous learning, and collaborate with colleagues. Holding students to high expectations, actively engaging them in learning, and understanding their differing needs

are essential components of a learner-ready teacher. They should be able to collect, interpret, and use student assessment data to evaluate progress and inform instruction. The learner-ready teacher demonstrates a drive to continuously improve and enhance their professional practice.

\*Appendix E outlines the competencies of learner-ready teachers through an interview protocol.

When posting open positions online, remove screening filters so you can see all applicants.

## Develop a Strong Value Proposition

A value proposition can be defined as the collective factors that shape educators' experiences. These include the mission of the organization, working conditions, total compensation and rewards, and opportunities for professional growth. Understanding a school's value proposition provides candidates with the information to

make informed decisions about employment. In the planning template below, four major focus areas are presented with aligned questions for recruitment and hiring teams to answer collaboratively. Additionally, as you develop your value proposition, consider what other schools offer that differ from yours.

What could you change to bring your offerings into alignment with other schools/LEAs? Providing opportunities for those in greatest need -- teachers early in their careers who have not reached higher salary steps -- will differentiate your school from others.

### Value Proposition Development: Planning Template

<p><b>MISSION:</b> Why should teachers be invested in your mission? How do they experience and contribute to the mission? In their daily work, how do teachers further the mission and vision and how are they acknowledged and rewarded for these efforts? How are teacher goals, feedback, and evaluation aligned to the mission and vision?</p>	<p><b>WORKING ENVIRONMENT:</b> What kind of staff culture and workplace can teachers expect? What leader actions do school and system leaders take to ensure this culture is built and maintained? How do leaders ensure teachers know they are valued? How do school operations contribute to safe and supportive working conditions? What flexibility exists for teachers and how do teachers take advantage of this flexibility?</p>
<p><b>PROFESSIONAL GROWTH:</b> What career and development opportunities are available to teachers? How do teachers pursue these opportunities? What support and coaching do they receive? How are they made accessible to all teachers? What can this look like for teachers at various stages of their careers?</p>	<p><b>TOTAL COMPENSATION AND REWARDS:</b> What is the benefits package? What emotional well-being and mental health benefits are available? What family benefits are available? How are teachers recognized and compensated for their contributions? What opportunities are there for teachers to increase their compensation? How does your system ensure that compensation is fair, equitable, transparent, and competitive?</p>
<p><b>TIE IT ALL TOGETHER:</b> How would you summarize your teaching value proposition into a few headlines for potential and current teachers?</p>	

[From teacher Talent Toolbox (2020) by TNTP]

# DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT



## High School Math Teacher (2022-2023)

### Tracking Code

389-753

### Job Description

BVP is an **intentionally diverse** network of tuition-free public charter schools. As a founding member of the [National Coalition of Diverse Charter Schools](#), BVP offers a high-quality school choice to the families of Central Falls, Cumberland, Lincoln, and Pawtucket.

We believe firmly that all scholars can achieve success in college and the world beyond, so we proactively work to foster a college prep culture. Apart from academics, we believe that preparing scholars for the world beyond also means experiencing the diversity of the world we live in today. Our network is designed to be diverse, accepting students from two traditionally higher-income communities of Cumberland and Lincoln and two from predominantly lower-income communities of Pawtucket and Central Falls. We seek to create a staff with a similarly diverse set of backgrounds and experiences that reflect the diversity of our students, families, and communities. Blackstone Valley Prep (BVP) Mayoral Academy is now hiring **rockstar team members** who are willing to do whatever it takes to put all scholars on a path to college. Successful candidates should understand and advocate for the importance of diversity in classrooms, curricula, and throughout school systems.

Learn more about [why BVP is different](#).

### Expectations of a BVP Team Member include (but are not limited to):

- Acts on the belief that 100% of scholars can be successful in college and the world beyond
- Embraces the diversity of the BVP community by fostering an environment of respect and inclusion while actively working to build an equitable school community
- Cultivates positive identity formation for scholars and prepares them to live and work together in a diverse world
- Is results driven, with excellent planning and organizing skills, and a "do whatever it takes" attitude and work ethic
- Engages meaningfully in school and network professional growth opportunities and enhances professional growth by giving and seeking assistance from other team members
- Acts ethically and with integrity while following all school, network, and state policies
- Engages families as partners in scholar success while recognizing and respecting differences in family backgrounds, structures, and cultures

## Writing the Job Description

Utilize the learner-ready criteria mentioned earlier and found in Appendix E to write your job description. Allow candidates to see themselves in the role by painting a picture of what your teachers do and how they do it.

In the District Spotlight above, Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy highlights their school values boldly and communicates the competencies of an ideal candidate in the job description.

Examples of this are seen in the following:

- **Planning and Organization**

"is results driven with excellent planning and organization skills"

- **Caring and Inclusiveness**

"Embraces the diversity of the BVP community by fostering an environment of respect and inclusion"

- **Collaboration and Teamwork**

"Enhances professional growth by giving and seeking assistance from other team members"

- **Family Communication**

"Engages families as partners in scholar success while recognizing and respecting differences in family backgrounds, structures, and cultures"

- **Ethics and Integrity**

"Acts ethically and with integrity while following all school, network, and state policies."

Consider also including the following within your job description to attract and provide applicants with vital information:

- Salary - list the range
- Benefits package
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Expectations and responsibilities

Beyond the job description, selection criteria should be embedded in hiring materials, which will be covered in Part II of this guidance.

## Socialize Developed Materials for Feedback Ahead of Posting

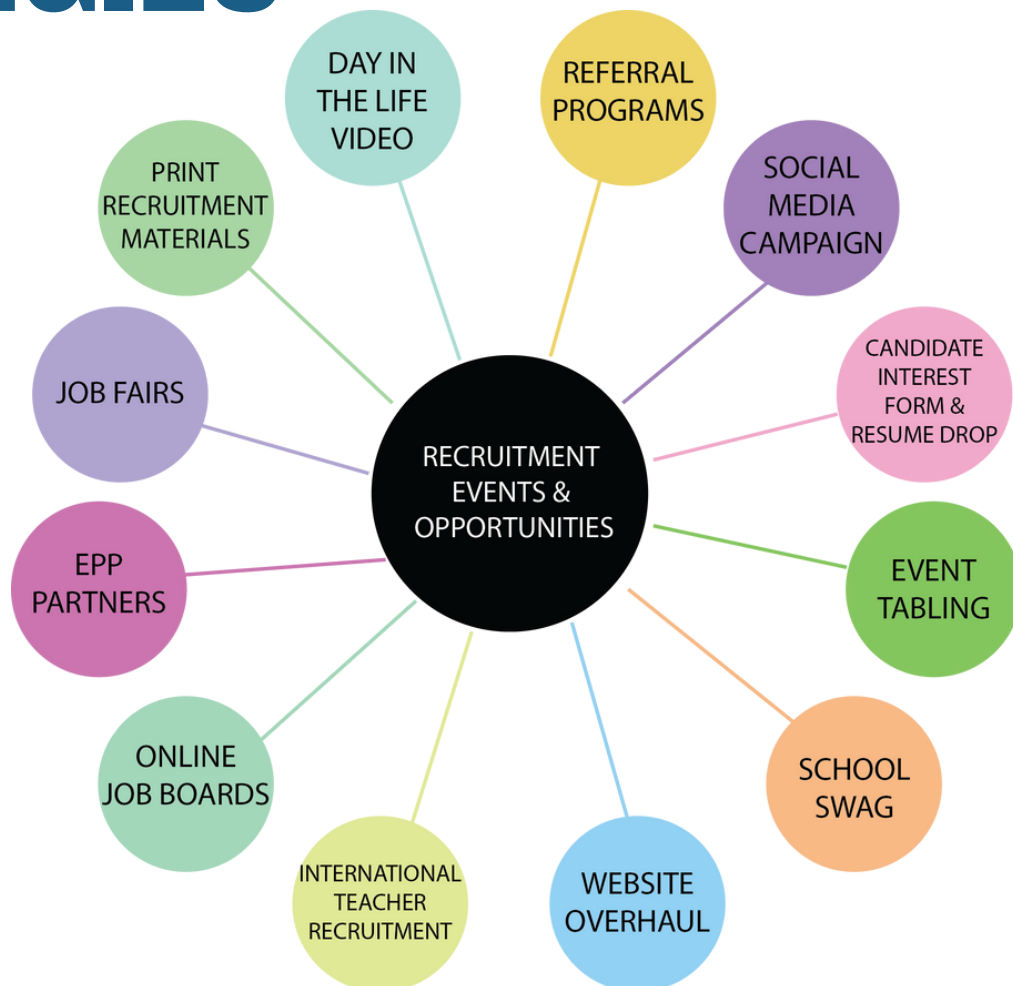
Recruitment and hiring materials that communicate school values, ideal candidate competencies, and highlight the school's value proposition should be shared widely ahead of official posting. Instead of focusing on feedback questions like "how does this look," consider asking the following:

1. Is the wording well-organized and coherent?
2. What message does this send to candidates? Is the value proposition clear?
3. After reading this, would you be excited about working here?



# RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

High-impact recruitment strategies lead to a stronger candidate pool. Robust recruitment efforts also increase the likelihood of selecting a highly-qualified and talented educator for every classroom.



Recruiting talented and passionate candidates into the teaching profession will require creative and innovative thinking as the job market becomes increasingly competitive and the teacher attrition rate increases across the nation.

As stated earlier in this guidance, developing your recruitment plan to include traditionally successful recruitment strategies as well as more innovative strategies will lead to greater success.

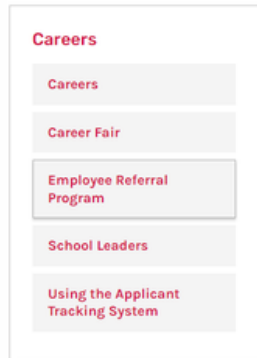
In the image above, a selection of recruitment events and opportunities are presented that can and should be implemented in your organization's recruitment plan. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, and you should strive to include creative and innovative strategies in your plan.

\*Job fairs may be in-person or virtual events.

## Recruitment Spotlight

Districts should consider developing an Aspiring Teacher professional learning opportunity as a part of the district value proposition for candidates. This opportunity could be implemented as a concluding experience for candidates after their interviews with the hiring team and could cover topics such as the district's approach to teaching and learning, classroom management, and elements of curriculum and instruction.

*Providence's referral campaign incentivizes employees to recruit on behalf of the district. Rather than having a small recruitment team doing all the work, this system rewards hundreds of people for doing their part to recruit great candidates with financial incentives.*



We're committed to hiring the highest quality team members that represent the students and communities we serve.

### Employee Referral Program

PPSD is committed to hiring the highest quality team members that represent the students and communities we serve. We are looking for teachers, specialized service providers, district and school based leaders, teaching assistants, bus drivers, custodians and more. We want to make it easy for you to share opportunities and information with your networks - and to reward you for doing so!

[Online referral form](#)

[Job Postings](#)

#### How does the program work?

Simply refer a friend or former colleague and if the person you refer is hired, you will receive a \$500 bonus for each referral.\*

The position must be a permanent teacher or school leader candidate that is subsequently employed within the school system, full-time. This program applies to the current or upcoming school year and there is no cap on the number of referral bonuses that one can receive - we want to reward you for finding us as many great people as possible!

## Referral Programs

By having established referral programs, your district can tap into multiple pools of potential candidates. In order to best leverage these, it is important for them to be well-known by your staff and community. To set up your referral program, consider the following:

- Will there be a financial incentive for making referrals? If so, how much?
- If a hire is made based on the referral, at what point will the incentive be given to the person making the initial referral?
- How will your organization publicize the referral program and for how long?
- Can referrals be current or returning employees?
- If more than one person refers the same candidate and the candidate is hired, who will receive the incentive?

## Start the Process Early

Districts may consider offering incentives for teachers to announce their resignation, retirement, and transfer intentions in early spring so that they can recruit new hires earlier in the season. Offer early employment contracts to top candidates. These early offers can come in the form of "open job offers," or employment contracts given to new hires without a named school assignment early in the recruitment and hiring season before vacancy forecasts are complete. By offering "open job offers" early in the hiring season, districts can begin guaranteeing employment to quality candidates. For some candidates, this is an attractive proposition, however, consider what stipulations could be put in place to discourage candidates from declining positions at the last minute.

## Open Up Hiring Pools

In many districts, tenured teachers already employed in the district get first choice of open positions. While this is meant to incentivize top teachers to stay in the district, this also limits early hiring efforts, unless your district also uses the "open job offer" approach.

In an analysis conducted by the Annenberg Institute they found that in four years more than 100 additional Black and Hispanic teachers were hired in Boston Public Schools due to their district-wide full open hiring policy. Successfully doing this may require looking at and potentially amending Collective Bargaining Agreements in order to remove barriers for new candidates.

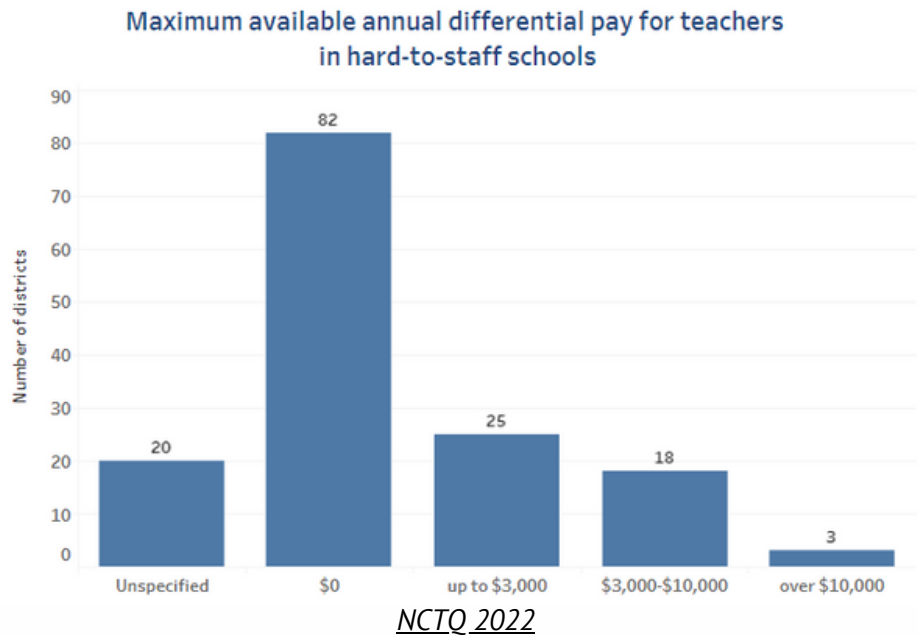
*The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) outlines the need for districts to think strategically about the use of differential pay to fill vacancies. "At an average of \$5,000/year among the 66 large districts that offer it, the amount of differentiated pay for teachers in hard-to-staff schools tends to be larger but less prevalent than that for teachers in hard-to-staff subjects."*

### Differential Pay

As the economic landscape of the nation continues to fluctuate, it's important for districts to continue to consider and implement financial incentives such as differentiated pay for hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff subjects. These incentives can take several forms, such as "signing bonuses, improved work conditions, teacher compensation or housing subsidies," as outlined by NCTQ. Ensure that these programs are well-advertised and known by potential employees.

Further, they state, "a district's compensation strategy is one of its main levers to attract teachers and to build a diverse teacher workforce, so districts ought to evaluate that strategy regularly against the district's goals and needs."

Offering test vouchers for required exams and providing funds for certification fees for new employees are other financial incentives.



### Partnering with Educator Preparation Programs

Partnering with educator preparation programs could be a mutually beneficial strategy to expand and diversify district talent pipelines. Specifically partnering with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) can increase your pipeline to teachers of color. According to Education First (2018), the following recommendations should be considered when approaching higher education institutions for partnership:

- Districts should understand their talent pipeline and discuss these needs with teacher preparation programs.
- Partners should set the initial vision and goals together, with a focus on relationship-building and trust.
- Partners should align on rubrics and key expectations for partnership participants.
- Partners should commit to sharing and looking at data together to drive action.

### Diverse School Leaders & Alternative Pathways

An evidence-based practice to increase diversity in school communities is to hire a school leader from a diverse background. Many principals hire from within their networks and some studies show that hiring more diverse leaders into the principal's office can increase the diversity of school staff. This, in turn, has a positive effect on students from all backgrounds, as they are exposed to talented and competent leaders from diverse backgrounds and heritages. Additionally, research indicates that many diverse candidates pursue alternative certification programs due to barriers to obtaining traditional certification; consider recruiting candidates from these programs.

# Leveraging Organizational Online Identity and Social Media to Support Recruitment

## The District Webpage

As candidates begin their search to determine the best employment fit for their needs, the first place they often visit is an organization’s webpage. To ensure that your district and school communities are creating a strong first impression with candidates, consider how your district webpage is addressing the following:

- Clearly articulated mission and vision
- New and innovative programs
- Supports for both new and veteran educators
- Action-oriented commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Incentives that make your district a great place to work
- Engaging videos that highlight all of the above
- A simple form to express interest or a resume drop

### Sample Budget

The flexibility of digital marketing allows advertisers to affordably test and refine ads over time, maximizing return on investment by pushing the top performing ads during the most critical phases of a campaign (e.g., an approaching application deadline). The table below outlines how to use your budget to guarantee that the majority of precious marketing dollars go to ads that are effectively meeting campaign objectives.

<b>TESTING (20% OF BUDGET)</b>	At the beginning of your campaign, test your content by spreading <b>the first 20% of your budget</b> equally among a variety of ads, measuring the results over the course of a week or two.	<b>Sample \$3,000 campaign budget:</b> Put \$60 behind each of 10 ads, monitoring for a week or two.
<b>REFINING (30% OF BUDGET)</b>	Based on those results, <b>focus the next 30% of your budget</b> on the best performing ads, tweaking ad copy or design.	<b>Sample \$3,000 campaign budget:</b> Put \$180 behind your top five performing ads, letting each run for a week.
<b>INVESTING (50% OF BUDGET)</b>	After identifying and refining your top performing ads, <b>spend the remaining 50% of your budget on your top three performing ads</b> , boosting them strategically around campaign priorities and deadlines.	<b>Sample \$3,000 campaign budget:</b> Put \$500 behind each of your top three performing ads, boosting them strategically around campaign priorities and deadlines.

*[TNTP Talent Toolbox 2021](#)*

The image above highlights guidance for developing a budget for social media and paid advertisements as a part of your recruitment strategy. As your organization works to boost its online presence, the amount of financial resources needed will likely increase.

Successful social media and advertisement campaigns have an intentional focus on the message to candidates. Testimonials, endorsements from community partners, and highlights of potential benefits and supports for candidates should all be included.

## Spotlight: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Recruitment and Hiring

As mentioned earlier in this guide, ensuring that the culture and climate of your school community is one that is positive, inviting, supportive, and collaborative should lead the work of recruitment and hiring. Research shows that when new teachers feel supported and valued, the chances of them leaving their position fall by up to 48%. To accomplish the task of building and maintaining a positive, supportive, and collaborative work environment, school leaders can

begin to lead by example. Taking into account the values of your school community, begin to orient recruitment and hiring team members to embody the values of the school community not only in words, but in actions. This is particularly relevant as it relates to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives (DEIB). DEIB should be a guiding principle informing the work of your recruitment and hiring and should also be offered as a training for

team members. Training focus areas should consider the following:

- What is the role of the district, the school leader, and the hiring team in ensuring a diverse and inclusive school community?
- What are some common recruitment barriers for diverse populations?
- What recruitment strategies have worked best for building diverse and inclusive school communities?

# PART II: HIRING

Hiring excellent educators should be the goal of every school-based hiring team, and this can be achieved with increased collaboration and intentionality. A hiring process should provide candidates with a preview of job expectations, an understanding of their role, and insight on what it will be like to work with respective team members in the school community.

In this section, we encourage hiring teams to standardize their hiring processes by focusing on the following:

- Auditing, updating, and standardizing the hiring process to provide a clear and predictable sequence of hiring events
- Developing a structured interview process that aligns ideal candidate competencies with interview questions and screening rubrics
- Calibrating hiring tools with all hiring team members to check for understanding, minimize bias, and ensure a fair and similar candidate experience for all interviewees

## Note about Mid-Year Hiring

It is critical to maintain your developed hiring practices, ensuring you hire learner-ready teachers. Utilize your hiring committee during hiring season to write job descriptions and create interview protocols for each role in your school. Having these ready allows you to jump into the process without compromising quality.



***"Without multiple agreed-upon data points used in hiring processes, hiring decision-makers tend to rely on 'gut' decisions to determine how well candidates fit with the position. Such processes can disadvantage teachers of color and short-circuit efforts to improve the diversity of the teaching workforce" (Papay & Qazilbash, 2021).***

## Standardizing the Hiring Process

Standardizing the hiring process refers to creating a clearly mapped out set of tasks for candidates as well as hiring teams to ensure that all involved understand what to expect throughout the hiring cycle.

Many districts already have a clearly defined and standardized process for hiring; however RIDE encourages annual audits of hiring processes and related materials to ensure the most positive candidate experience. To audit current district or school hiring processes, consider the following question:

- What is the current hiring process and how/where is it communicated for prospective candidates?

RIDE recommends creating images or verbiage that communicate the process placed prominently on the District Careers page.

Additionally, creating internal efficiencies in the hiring process should be considered and managed through the use of automated emails, hiring trackers, and/or HR software. To create efficiency in the hiring process, RIDE strongly recommends developing a hiring process timeline and aligned tracker that maps the entire hiring process both internally and externally. Ownership of this should be decided upon by the Building Administrator in collaboration with District hiring personnel based on team capacity.

Key considerations for standardizing the hiring process timeline and aligned progress monitoring trackers are:

- Hiring activity name
- Responsible personnel
- Length of time required for the hiring activity and when it occurs in the process.

# STRUCTURED HIRING PROCESSES



## Hiring Process and Timeline

### Suggested Process and Timeline

Activity	How Long	What Day	Who?
Candidate Referred		1	HR
Referral Reviewed	10 min	2	AP
Resume Review	15 min	2	AP
Candidate contacted for phone interview		2	Admin. Assistant
Phone interview conducted	30 min	4	AP
Candidate contacted for school-site interview		4	Admin. Assistant
Student data exercise reviewed and evaluated	15 min	7	AP
School tour	20 min	7	AP
Demo lesson completed and evaluated	30 min	7	Hiring Team
Interview conducted and evaluated	60 min	7	Hiring Team
Candidate is rejected or offered position		8	Principal

## Develop Interview Protocols and Materials

Attention to interview protocols was mentioned earlier in this guidance. Protocols should be based on the criteria developed based on the learner-ready teacher or other criteria developed by your hiring team.

Developing aligned interview protocols and materials that consistently screen for candidate competencies through the use of questioning, candidate assessments, and candidate response "look-fors" should be prioritized.

Consider creating aligned materials for the following hiring activities:

- Resume screening look-fors
- Phone interview questions and look-fors
- Competency-aligned interview questions and look-fors
- Performance task rubrics

Development of the suggested protocols and materials should be done collaboratively and updated annually. Asking members of the hiring team to create initial versions of each document is great way to encourage shared responsibility.

\*See Appendix E for a sample interview protocol and scoring guide.

RIDE recognizes that there are often additional considerations when it comes making changes to hiring materials and processes. Working with school committees and unions to determine how and when changes can be made should be top of mind for all school leaders to ensure that outlined policies within district contracts are followed and that changes are approved.

While it might be a larger task to make changes to district and union contracts, highlighting the need for identified changes to the hiring process to ensure that excellent educators are recruited and hired into the district should not be shied away from.

Proposed changes to interview protocols and materials should also be mindful of candidate experience. How are educator candidates engaging with materials and team members throughout the process and what could support a positive experience?

Some experimental hiring process strategies to support a positive candidate experience include:

- Providing candidates with the interview questions 24-48 hours in advance to allow for better preparation
- Using Calendly or other scheduling software to support flexible interview scheduling

# Sample Performance-Based Tasks

## Sample Task #1- Review of Student Data

Provide candidates with a sample data set that's aligned to their subject/ grade band in advance of the interview. Ask them to make 2-3 recommendations on how they might act on the data.

Follow-up questions include:

- What trends do you see in the data?
- What additional questions do you have based on the data?
- What additional data, if any, would you want to collect to further inform you about student performance?

## Sample Task #2 Portfolio Review

Ask candidates to submit a professional portfolio showcasing their work and career highlights. This option is most suitable for candidates with prior education experience. Potential items for inclusion are:

- Evidence of collaboration or team teaching
- Evidence of supporting school initiatives and programs
- Evidence of demonstrating leadership
- Evidence of student growth
- Evidence of cultural competence

## Sample Task #3 Teach a Lesson

Plan for candidates to teach a mini-lesson or request a video of a lesson they have taught. Consider:

- How does the candidate demonstrate cultural competence, i.e., encourage students to relate content to their own cultural context?
- How does the candidate communicate the lesson objective?
- How does the candidate meet the needs of diverse learners?
- How effectively do they establish rapport with students?
- How do they engage the students in learning?
- Is the onus for learning on the teacher or the students?

## Candidate Visit Day:

### 1.5 Hours

- Welcome candidates to your school and go over the day's agenda (10 minutes)
- Facilitate a tour of the building for candidates to visit classrooms and discuss the school's practices, initiatives, and goals (20 minutes)
- Performance task (20 minutes)
- Performance task debrief and interview panel Questions (30 minutes)
- Closing and next steps (10 minutes)

Performance-based assessments are a great way to gauge candidate strengths and areas for improvement ahead of making final hiring decisions. While they require more of a time commitment from all parties involved, performance-based assessments can support the increased likelihood of successfully hiring a strong candidate and can minimize opportunities for bias to impact hiring decisions as they focus more on demonstrated competencies.

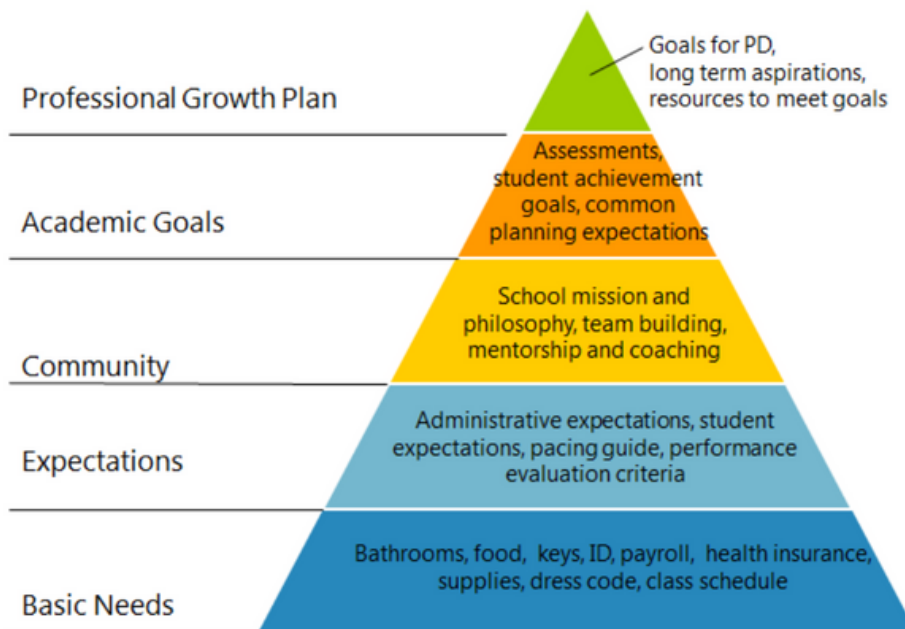
In the images above, several sample performance tasks are presented that candidates could choose from to best showcase their candidacy.

To facilitate high-volume hiring events that interview and assess several candidates at a time, consider creating candidate interview events that occur twice a month. By coordinating interview events, your team could maximize staff member time and limit requests for interviews to more predictable and pre-scheduled times along with interacting with multiple candidates at a time.

Performance-based tasks should be debriefed with candidates as a part of the interview process to provide a moment of reflection and an opportunity to discuss how they would address the task if given the opportunity to do the task again.

# PART III: ONBOARDING & RETENTION

Understanding and designing an onboarding process for all employees is a key lever in retention and employee satisfaction. This section focuses on developing onboarding plans that are thoughtful, ongoing, and considerate of a wide range of needs for new hires.



TNTP 2021

## The Onboarding Plan

Key considerations for developing an onboarding plan for ALL staff members can be addressed with the following questions:

- Is there an onboarding plan for all building-based educators (Classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, support professionals, administrators, SPED/MLL teachers, All Grades teachers- Art, PE, Music, etc.)?
- What are the differentiated needs for each group of educators and school staff members?
- What onboarding items should look the same across all groups of educators? (HR systems, etc.) ?

There will be a great deal of variation in the onboarding needs of new hires, but there are several universal topics that should be covered in the plan for everyone from the start. The figure above from TNTP outlines several key onboarding topic areas that should be covered in teacher onboarding plans.

By setting clear job expectations, providing role-specific information, and sharing knowledge about resources, your new hires will feel set up for success, allowing them to feel satisfied and supported and leading to a higher likelihood of retention.

## Mentoring

A review of the literature has pointed to the success of mentoring and induction coaching as a promising evidence-based practice. Mentoring programs help to reduce isolation felt by some new teachers, and provide them with on-going opportunities for inquiry, self-reflection, and professional development. While there are many mentoring programs and models available for schools and districts to implement, RIDE advocates for robust mentoring programs that are not limited in terms of time and scope and do not place mentors in evaluative roles so that trust can be built in a supportive way. It is critical that mentoring programs are accessible and advertised to all team members.



# DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT



*Chariho's New Teacher Orientation illustrates how the district is working to meet the immediate needs of new teachers, share expectations, and orient them to their new school community and associated networks*

*Frontline Education shares that comprehensive onboarding activities often cover compliance related activities, clarify expectations of new team members, communicate the values of the school community, and foster connections between new staff members and their colleagues, .*

8:00 AM	WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS	Michael Comella - Assistant Superintendent
	<a href="#">Go to this Google Form to sign in for the day.</a>	
8:30 AM	DISTRICT Overview - Gina Picard – Superintendent	
8:45 AM	TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT/ RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY POLICY; <a href="#">DISTRICT WEBSITE</a>	Shawn Cole – Director of Educational Technology and Information Systems
9:15 AM	Powerschool Presentation	Dorothy Fitzgerald - Data Manager
9:45 AM	<a href="#">SPECIAL EDUCATION</a> Including SECTION 504 PRESENTATION	Jennifer Durkin – Dir. of Special Education
10:15 AM	Break	
10:30 AM	<a href="#">ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS</a>	Kristen Merritt –Human Resources Administrator
11:15 AM	SENIORITY LOTTERY NEA Welcome <a href="#">NEA Chariho Information</a>	Kristen Merritt – Human Resources Administrator, Michele Bassett - NEA/Chariho Treasurer
11:45 AM	ADMINISTRATION INTRODUCTIONS	
12:00 PM	LUNCH BREAK ( <i>Lunch will be provided</i> )	
12:45 PM	GRADUATION PORTFOLIO -	Andrea Spas- High School Principal; Jean Bradanini - Assistant Principal
1:15 PM	<a href="#">NEW TEACHER INDUCTION</a>	Martha Dion – Induction Coach
2:15 - 2:30 PM	Questions & Answers	

## Unpacking the New Hire Orientation and Checklist

### Compliance & Clarification

Ensuring that compliance needs such as background checks, employee handbook review and acknowledgement, and benefits overview and enrollment are standard parts of the onboarding process. Additionally, the following should be areas of focus during the onboarding process:

- Facilities tours
- Technology systems training
- Approach to teaching and learning, curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Employee evaluation processes

### Shared Culture

The onboarding process is a great way to highlight the values of the school community and begin to orient new hires to opportunities to collaborate with other staff members.

This stage is also the moment to model the kinds of positive interactions and prosocial norms that are present in your school community. Consider the following strategies to highlight a positive shared culture:

- School-wide behavior and discipline systems review
- Welcome packet distribution with free school swag

### Connection

Relationships are key at all levels of onboarding. Fostering connections between new hires and current staff members should be prioritized so that a welcoming and supportive atmosphere is created. To foster stronger connections for new hires, consider the following:

- Explanation of the organization chart and how to contact key personnel
- Team member introductions and welcoming activities
- Committee sign-up to encourage participation in school-wide programs
- Affinity groups

## Retention

Teacher retention efforts should be featured prominently in all district strategic planning efforts in order to realize the return on investment from intensive recruitment and hiring processes. To support teacher retention, there are several opportunities to focus on supportive elements that could lead to lower educator turnover rates.

In the figure to the right, several elements of teacher retention are described to attempt to answer the following question "How might we design more effective systems for teacher retention?" The need for a systemic approach to teacher retention is highlighted and encouraged.

While not a fully comprehensive list, these eight elements are a great starting place for determining strengths and growth areas when auditing current retention efforts.

Additionally, the listed elements of teacher retention are meant to be practiced together to strengthen school and district efforts and begin the conversation with educators about what it would take to retain them from year to year.

As districts across the country are working to retain educators, an emergent practice called Pulse Check Surveys are being used to proactively monitor educator well-being.

## Elements of Teacher Retention



*Education Elements 2022*

These short surveys, often delivered by email, only ask a small number of questions such as these from a large district located in Texas:

- How are you feeling about your work?
- Is there anything you'd like to share about how you're feeling or how your work is going?
- What supports/resources would make work easier for you?

By monitoring employee well-being and work perceptions, districts can better intervene throughout the year and be responsive to ongoing and real-time educator feedback to reduce turnover rates.

## Mentoring & Coaching

In addition to combatting isolation felt by new teachers, mentoring also reduces attrition rates. Brill and McCartney (2008) found that high quality induction and mentoring programs in California schools reduced attrition by twenty-six percent in just two years.

Coaching is another effective strategy to promote teacher retention. Early career teachers are twice as likely to leave the profession without coaching. Coaching has been linked to significant improvement in retention for states like Tennessee and Louisiana.

# PART IV: ANTI-BIAS STRATEGIES

Recruitment and hiring practices that are truly equitable are also grounded in an anti-biased approach. While parts 1, 2, & 3 of this guidance focus on equitable recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices, this section explicitly focuses on anti-bias strategies to reduce and mitigate bias throughout recruitment and hiring processes.

Bias stems from a need to categorize individuals while making decisions. This mental processing happens both consciously and unconsciously. Through repeated interactions, this categorization creates schemas for the brain to reference when facing new encounters.

## Bias

A majority of bias occurs unconsciously, or implicitly. Implicit bias refers to the subconscious feelings, beliefs, and stereotypes that form from prior experiences.

When informed by negative associations or incorrect perceptions, implicit bias can become problematic.

Explicit bias occurs when individuals are aware of their dispositions and actions toward certain groups. These perceptions may be positive or negative. Examples of explicit bias may include hate speech or blatant racism.

It is important that all hiring teams work to understand their biases and identify strategies to manage them.

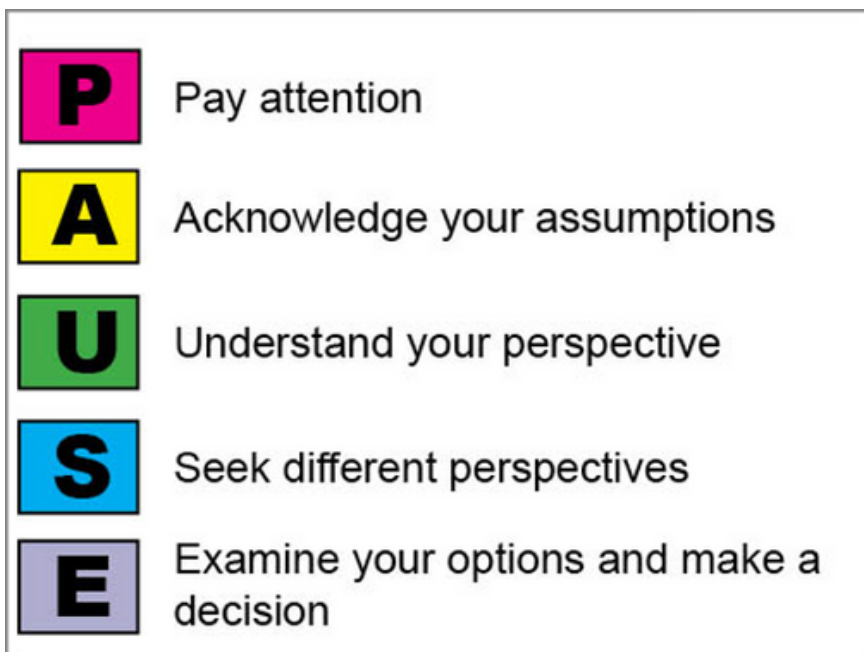
## Interrupting Bias

While research indicates that most bias occurs unconsciously, there are still ways that individuals and teams can work to surface any areas within themselves and their processes that might be negatively or positively biased towards groups of people.

One of the most well-known measures to surface unconscious bias is the Harvard Implicit Association Test, which offers tests for participants that measure their attitudes and beliefs across a range of topics including race, age, weight, disability, religion, and sexuality. Measures such as the Implicit Association Tests are meant to be a starting point for individuals and teams as they begin or continue their efforts to interrupt bias.

Project Implicit (2011) states that "if you want to durably change implicit preferences, a quick five-minute intervention may not be enough. Instead, you may have to become more selective about the types of information you consume in your daily life. In addition, you can work to learn more about systemic barriers that can serve to perpetuate stereotypes, biases, and inequalities in our society."

The adoption of a framework, such as the PAUSE framework developed by Vanderbilt University, can encourage critical self-reflection and interrupt the effects of unchecked biases. Applying the PAUSE framework to recruitment and hiring decisions can reveal the ways in which bias might be manifesting in the process.



## Bias in the Workplace

Williams and Mihaylo (2019), outline "four distinct ways bias plays out in everyday work interactions: (1) Prove it again: Some groups have to prove themselves more than others do; (2) Tightrope: A narrower range of behaviors is accepted from some groups than from others; (3) Maternal wall: Women with children see their commitment and competence questioned or face disapproval for being too career focused; (4) Tug-of-war: Disadvantaged groups find themselves pitted against one another because of differing strategies for assimilating—or refusing to do so."

When considering the ways in which bias might manifest in work interactions as well as recruitment and hiring processes, it is important to note that the four ways shared previously are not an exhaustive list, nor is there a one-size-fits-all approach to interrupting these biases.

While there is no one approach that will work for all individuals and teams to interrupt bias, Williams and Mihaylo (2019) outline the following steps that should be considered and ultimately taken to interrupt bias:

### Insist on a Diverse Pool

Studies demonstrate that if at least two women and two candidates of color are in the finalist pool, the odds of hiring a woman or a candidate of color are 79 and 194 times greater, respectively.

## Establish Objective Criteria

According to Williams and Mihaylo (2019), "objective rules tend to be applied rigorously to out-groups, but leniently to in-groups." To interrupt bias, hiring teams should establish ideal candidate criteria based on skills and competencies as previously shared in this guidance, and keep track of all instances in which rules are waived for candidates to ensure equity in the process.

Consider removing filters from hiring platforms to prevent unintentional bias.

### Expand Referral Hiring

Referral programs are highlighted as an equitable practice in Part I of this guidance; however, if your school community is homogeneous, consider expanding your referral efforts to organizations with a focus on diverse groups of people.

## Interrupting Day-to-Day Bias as a Retention Strategy

While bias can manifest in the recruitment and hiring process, it can also impact day-to-day work, having serious consequences for the morale and culture of a school community or district office. Interrupting bias as a retention strategy should be given close consideration and changes should be made as needed based on your current context.

The following strategies can be used to mitigate bias as a retention strategy:

### Rotations

To support a reduction in perceived over-reliance on one group of people to do what might be considered "low value" tasks within the school or office, consider creating a rotating schedule so that responsibilities are shared and feel like a team effort. Doing this communicates that everyone is expected to contribute and removes perceived bias as a more "all hands on deck" approach is taken.

### High-Value Projects

Opportunities to affirm and celebrate the skills of all team members should be intentionally created. This reduces bias by allowing team members from diverse backgrounds to demonstrate their talents and, depending on the opportunity, trains more people to be able to accomplish a broader range of tasks.

### Acknowledge Importance

In some instances, "diversity" hires are given additional tasks within the school community such as discipline tasks or liaising with parents. However, because of the focus on academic results, sometimes these contributions are not considered when it comes time for incentives to be distributed or promotions to be made.

By tangibly acknowledging these contributions, your school community might see higher retention rates and interrupt bias that might only prioritize certain groups of people.

### **Respond to Stereotyping**

Williams and Mihaylo (2019) encourage leaders to "pay close attention to the way people on your team talk about their peers and how they behave in group settings."

Interrupting bias that manifests as stereotypes and double standards begins by first paying attention, but then addressing stereotypes and harmful beliefs about others directly. Policies and aligned action steps should be developed and put in place to address these situations as they arise. Courageous conversations

### **Ask People to Weigh-In**

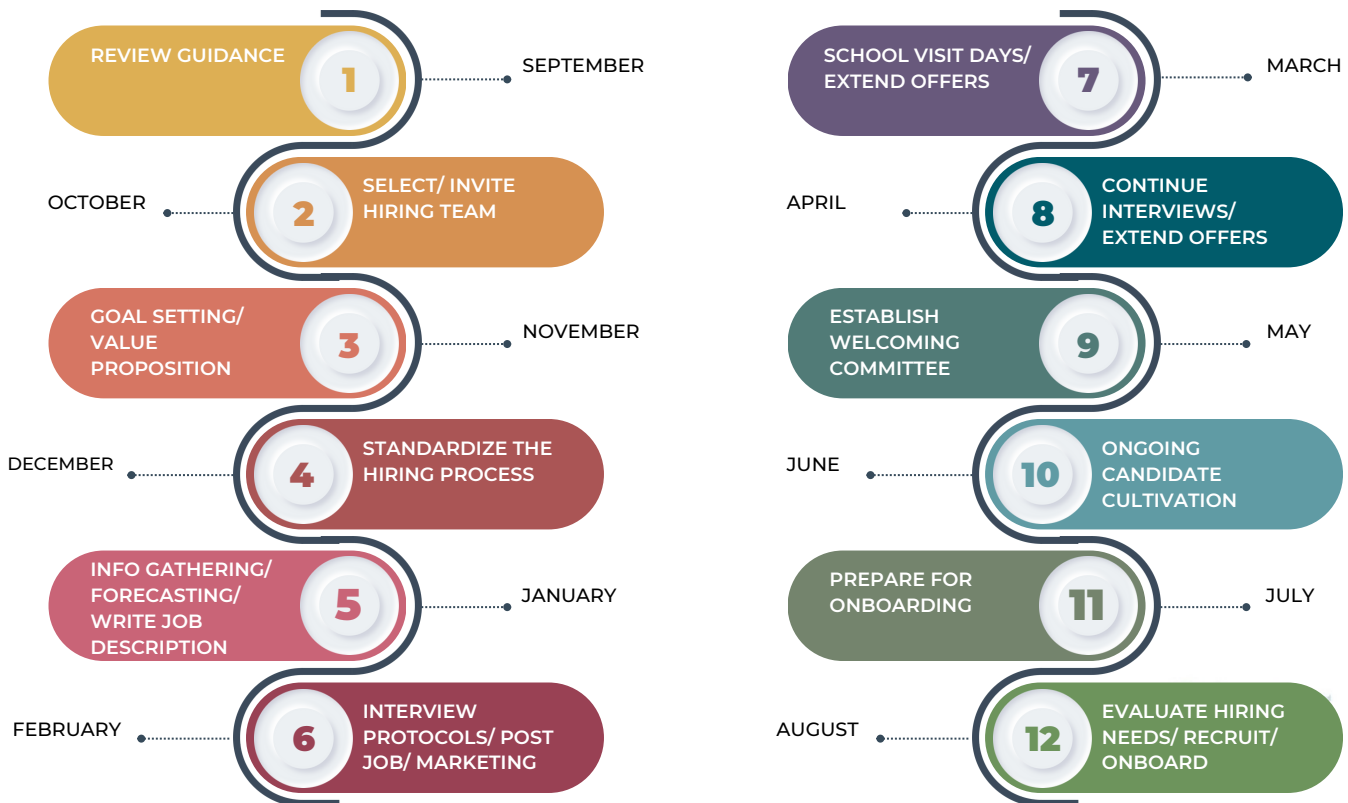
Seeking perspective from all team members is an anti-bias strategy that invites everyone into conversations and supports the development of a sense of belonging as people begin to feel as though their perspective is valued. A high-impact scenario in which input could be solicited is on how training, promotion, and pay decisions will be made. This could go a long way to support diversity and retention efforts.

# CONCLUSION

Illustrated in this guidance are best practices for recruitment, hiring, and onboarding for all educators. This was written through an equity lens, as our current educator workforce does not mirror the diversity of Rhode Island students, and we all need to work to rectify this disparity. In addition to the former sections, we have included several appendices that can aid recruiting and hiring efforts. We encourage schools and districts to implement policies and procedures that align to the best practices highlighted in this guidance.

## USING THE GUIDANCE

In an effort to support hiring teams and HR Professionals, this guidance includes a sample timeline during a typical year for implementing recruitment, hiring, and onboarding activities.



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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A: District Demographic Diversity Profile

With your hiring team, complete the table below entering the disaggregated racial data for employees by position. You may then convert the totals into percentages. Utilize the chart on the following page to compile totals that you can then use to analyze your overall district diversity profile.

	American Indian or Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Hispanic or Latino		Pacific Islander		Two or More		White		Non-White	Non-White Goal
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	%	%
District Level Admin.																
School Level Admin.																
General Education Teachers District Coaches																
General Education Teachers (PK-5)																
General Education Teachers (6-8)																
General Education Teachers (9-12)																
Support Staff																
Non-Certified Staff																

## Appendix A: District Demographic Diversity Profile

	Position Total	Educators of Color Total	No Race Data
District Level Administrators			
School Level Administrators			
General Education Teachers (All Grades)			
General Education Teachers (PK-5)			
General Education Teachers (6-8)			
General Education Teachers (9-12)			
Support Professionals			
Non-Certified Staff			

[CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION]



## Appendix C: Survey for Mapping District Hiring Process

Survey Question	Number	Percentage
How many candidates submitted applications for teaching vacancies across the district last year?		
Of that number, how many candidates of color submitted applications for teaching vacancies in the district last year?		
How many candidates who applied for teaching vacancies passed the school's/district's initial application screening?		
Of that number, how many candidates of color passed the school's/district's initial application screening?		
How many teacher candidates participated in a school or district interview?		
Of that number, how many candidates of color participated in a school or district interview?		
How many teacher candidates were selected to fill a teaching vacancy in the district?		
How many candidates of color were selected for a teaching vacancy in the district?		
How many teaching candidates accepted a formal offer of hire?		
How many candidates of color accepted a formal offer of hire?		

[CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION]

## Appendix D: Determining Hiring Needs for the Upcoming School Year

1. What are your known needs? (e.g., people who are leaving or moving?)
2. What next steps do you need to take with any of these known hiring needs to confirm them? What conversations do you need to have and with whom to firm up your number above?
3. What positions will you have available based on school growth, schedule changes, teacher you know are being let go, parental leaves, etc.?
4. When you look at your known hiring needs for the upcoming school year, which positions need experienced, strong lead teachers? Which departments or grade-levels can support newer teachers who need more training?
5. What were your hiring needs over the last three years?
6. When you look at the last three years of data, how many more teachers did you end up hiring than you originally predicted? When you look at the average number of hires over the past three years, how does that compare to your predictions for this year?
7. Add the totals from questions 1 and 3 and compare that to the average total from question 5. Use this data to determine your projected number of hires for the upcoming school year.
8. Return to question 4. When you look at your total number of predicted hires, which specific grade levels or departments need an experienced teacher? Which can support a new teacher?

	How many teachers I predicted I'd need to hire	Actual # of openings	How many teachers I had to hire in the summer/start of the school/mid-year	Total # of teacher hires made during the school year
Last year				
Two years ago				
Three years ago				
Averages				

[TEACHER TALENT TOOLBOX (2021) BY TNTP]

## Appendix E: Learner-Ready Interview Protocol

Question	Learner-Ready Criteria	Score			
<p>Students in your class may possess different background knowledge and may be at various skill levels. Tell us how you would build your knowledge of their differing needs. What types of scaffolds would you put into place to ensure all students can access materials and are engaged in and completing rigorous coursework?</p>	<p>Understands different needs of students</p> <p>Holds students to high expectations</p> <p>Motivates and actively engages students in learning</p>	1	2	3	4
<p>Tell us about a time you ran into a problem of practice and needed the help of others. How did you approach the situation? How did you work with others to solve the problem? What was the outcome?</p>	<p>Collaboratively problem-solve</p>	1	2	3	4
<p>Tell us about a lesson you've taught that demonstrates students engaging in productive struggle. How did you facilitate their learning, allowing the cognitive lift to remain on them?</p>	<p>Enable students to take ownership of their learning</p> <p>Hold students to high expectations</p> <p>Facilitate students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills</p>	1	2	3	4
<p>What types of assessments do you use to monitor ongoing student progress?</p> <p>Follow-up: How do you use data to differentiate and inform instruction?</p>	<p>Collects, interprets, and uses student assessment data to drive instruction</p> <p>Possesses deep content knowledge</p> <p>Understands differing needs of students</p>	1	2	3	4



## Appendix E: Learner-Ready Interview Protocol

Question	Learner-Ready Criteria	Score			
<p>This position requires that you work with students from diverse communities, backgrounds, identities, and abilities. Tell us what you will do to teach to this diversity by reflecting students in the curriculum, teaching students with exceptionalities and learning styles.</p>	<p>Culturally responsive</p> <p>Understand the differing needs of students</p>	1	2	3	4
<p>Reflect on a time when you had to acclimate to a new environment or experience. What challenges did you face? How did you overcome these challenges? What did you learn from the experience?</p>	<p>Reflective practitioner and strives for continuous improvement</p>	1	2	3	4

### Scoring Guide

1	2	3	4
<p>Candidate does not answer the question, or the answer is contrary to best practice.</p>	<p>Candidate's response begins to answer the question, but does not go into depth, or the answer is contrary to best practice.</p>	<p>Candidate's response illustrates elements of a learner-ready teacher or the potential for growth.</p>	<p>Candidate's response fully demonstrates attributes of a learner-ready teacher. Candidate embodies learner-ready characteristics and illustrates their practice and mind-set fully.</p>

## Appendix F: Marketing Plan

Reflect on the following aspects of your marketing strategy:

What information about my school, leadership, community, and vision will be relevant for interested candidates?	
Who can help me with this process?	
What information will best invest candidates in my school?	
What expectations should I set early?	
How can I ensure my strategy is inclusive and welcoming to all eligible candidates	

[TEACHER TALENT TOOLBOX (2021) BY TNTP]

## Appendix G: Using Title Funds

Title II funds can be used to provide supplemental strategies and activities that strengthen the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

One purpose of Title II grants is to increase the number of teachers, principals, and other school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement in schools. They are also used to provide low-income and minority students greater access to effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

Districts can use Title II funds to develop and implement initiatives to assist in recruiting, hiring, and retaining effective teachers to improve within-district equity, such as:

- Expert help in screening candidates and enabling early hiring
- Differential and incentive pay for educators in high-need schools
- Differential and incentive pay for teachers in high-need academic subject areas and specialty areas (e.g., serving English language learners and children with disabilities), which may include performance-based compensation systems
- Educator advancement and professional growth and an emphasis on leadership opportunities, which may include hybrid teacher/leader and leadership positions, multiple career paths, pay differentiation
- Incentives for effective educators to receive additional certifications in high-needs areas
- Co-teacher of classes, especially co-teaching by an experienced effective teacher and a novice teacher
- Develop feedback mechanisms to improve working conditions

You may also braid other federal funds to support the recruitment, hiring, and retention of effective teachers.

The Edunomics Lab developed the following resource to help districts think about ways to address staffing challenges. Federal funds can be part of the equation for addressing these challenges. For instance, LEAs with Title I-A CSI or TSI schools may reserve Title I-A funds to provide awards and incentives to teachers at these schools.

### ACROSS THE BOARD PAYMENTS

**Flat dollar raises** to more evenly distribute funds among junior/senior teachers

**Non-recurring stipends or bonuses** to avoid future obligations

### TARGETED PAY

Targeted sums to **fill shortage areas** and address specific labor needs

Private sector type strategies, like moving costs or signing bonuses to **attract and retain new talent**

### PAY TIED TO OTHER PRIORITIES

Stipends tied to **extra work**, e.g., to add more learning time for students

Pay tied to **non-traditional factors** such as enrollment or vaccination

## Appendix H: Sample Email Templates

### Requesting an interview:

Dear [NAME],

Thank you for submitting your application materials for the [JOB TITLE] position at [SCHOOL NAME].

We are excited to offer you an opportunity to visit our school, meet with our staff and students, and speak with us about the position. [INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT EXCITING INITIATIVES AT YOUR SCHOOL].

We know that scheduling can be a barrier, so we have proposed a few dates and times we can host you. [INSERT OPTIONS]. Please respond, letting us know which works best for you. Please plan to spend [AMOUNT OF TIME EXPECTED] at [SCHOOL NAME].

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. We look forward to hearing from you soon and showcasing the wonderful things we are doing at our school.

Best,

[YOUR NAME]

### When you're still considering a candidate and need to check in:

Dear [NAME],

Thank you for coming in to learn more about the [JOB TITLE] position at [SCHOOL NAME]. The team really enjoyed meeting you.

We want to make the best hiring decision and are currently completing interviews with multiple candidates. We are aiming to have all interviews completed by [DATE] and to make a decision by [DATE]. I will notify you about any next steps as soon as possible.

Please feel free to stay in touch or reach out with any questions.

Best,

[YOUR NAME]

### When you're extending the job offer:

A phone call is recommended for this stage in the hiring process.

### When a candidate isn't right for the role:

Dear [NAME],

Thank you for coming in to learn more about the [JOB TITLE] position at [SCHOOL NAME].

After conducting several interviews, we have decided to offer the position to another candidate with experience that is better aligned to the role. As you progress in your career, please stay in touch and apply for future openings.

Best,

[YOUR NAME]