

Racial Equity Initiative Advisory Committee-Report Out to the Board: August 1, 2018

The Racial Equity Initiative Advisory Committee (REIAC) thanks Superintendent Rice for attending our recent meeting of July 24th, 2018, and for providing the committee with feedback on requested information as well as sharing additional details about the district's hiring practices, providing pending budget data from last year and this year from Rick Linden, as well as an example incident timeline to help review and improve bias incident reporting. After speaking with our two REIAC hiring committee parents, we spent a bit of time trying to piece together how the district ended up with their final candidates for the Middle School Assistant Principal position. No one on the committee had the expertise to fill this knowledge gap, so we are reaching out to you to fill the gap with questions and recommendations for the BOE and Supt. Rice. Further, since the inception of the REIAC, we have witnessed the swift appointment and search of two new administrators in the Middle School, with a Duzine building leader to fill soon. We have the following immediate questions:

- What are the District-wide administrative practices for recruiting, selecting and hiring personnel (i.e., <https://hr.ucr.edu/recruitment/guidelines/process.html>)? The Hiring Protocols memo does not give a clear picture of how the recruitment and selection process is conducted. (It would be helpful to know that a diverse set of candidates were selected prior to the selection of the final four candidates of the MS AP.)
- Is racial equity/diversity part of the recruitment parameters?
- The current Hiring Protocol memo states that the OLAS sorting tool filters out by certification and years of experience; do the parameters also include a minimum amount of years of experience in the position that is open? Since most teachers of color will be new to the profession, filtering for years of experience will not be fruitful, what other parameters are being used to recruit candidates?
- What other automated criteria on OLAS does the District include in screening?
- Who is responsible for the task of narrowing down the resumes from OLAS - just one administrator, or does that part of the process vary?
- Are the hiring parameters provided to the administrator(s) in a document that is consistently used depending on the position (one hiring parameters document for teacher hires, one for principals, etc), or is it a more fluid, non-formalized description of needs?
- What recruitment efforts are currently employed other than posting in OLAS and on the website? How does the District currently address the task of attracting/encouraging applicants of color?

Overall questions: on reviewing the District's [Action Plan for Racial Equity](#), it appears that hiring a diverse school staff is not an action item for creating a more culturally proficient district. According to the "Cultural Proficiency, A Manual for School Leaders" book provided to the committee, hiring racially proficient staff members that are not part of the dominant culture is considered the easiest way to start growing a culturally proficient district.

Recommendations:

- Add "hiring for racial equity" to the Action Plan.
- Establish a communications protocol for institutionally engaging the District community in participating in search opportunities:
 - paper/mail-based communication for those who do not use or are without regular access to the internet,
 - Email, Robocalls, NPCSD website, etc. (The district has several methods of contacting all families for announcements such as emergency closings, school-wide announcements and urgent issues that arise. The methods such as district webpage posting, text blasts, social media pages, school announcements can be easily utilized and open a more inclusive parent pool.)
- Review District-recognized organizations for equity (i.e., beyond the PTA) Considering that the hiring, retaining, and supporting of people of color is one of our immediate priorities, how can the REIAC committee be a part of the hiring process now?

- Review the structure of the interview process to include an integrated gathering of parents and professional staff to reinforce shared values to candidate and to each other.
- Consider bias embedded in the hiring process:
 - <https://work.qz.com/1095637/diversity-and-inclusion-a-guide-to-unbiased-hiring-from-quartz-at-work/>
 - <https://medium.com/inclusion-insights/raising-the-bar-how-to-be-a-less-biased-interviewer-eeda0892f8f5>
 - Structured Interviews: <http://resources.workable.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/workable-structured-interviews-101-ebook.pdf>

Overall Initiative questions:

In an attempt to align the work of the committee with the work of the district, it would be helpful to see milestones and metrics included in the Action Plan. This would provide direction and allow us to evaluate progress towards the 2021 culturally proficient district target date. As far as the committee can glean with its limited knowledge, racial equity action items are:

- Annual Discipline and Reporting Incident Data (and other data tracked on the annual District Equity Report Card, which is not explicitly mentioned in the current Action Plan.)
- Racial Equity Community Forums (Possibility for extracting milestones from the questions provided by parents)
- Climate Surveys
 - If this is a yearly survey, it could provide metrics.
 - Note: current Action Plan notes all students to be included in surveys; the currently proposed
 - Climate Survey covers only MS and HS.
 - Note: current Action Plan includes a survey for staff.

Recommendation: The District consider the delivery of any Climate Survey for effectiveness (i.e., reading aloud).

Please provide any additional action items, so that we can build out a logical model for racial equity. The committee realizes that while the goal of racial equity is well known, the steps to get there is not going to be straightforward.

******Request: Confidentiality Clarity**

The REIAC appreciates the need for discretion and for respect of a job candidate's reasonable expectation of privacy (respect which should also extend to a family's right to privacy). The committee is also attuned to the ways in which systems and bureaucracies can use confidentiality as a way to head off scrutiny.

The REIAC requests a clear understanding of what is statutory, what is board-approved policy and what is simply practice, so that we can have a much better understanding of what our confidentiality responsibility is. We can also potentially question any issues that are simply practice (and perhaps policy too, if it has the effect of stifling equity) in service to the District.

Finally, in order for the REIAC to continue to tighten up our process and ensure that we are making inroads, what is the appropriate process for sharing information with the BOE between BOE meetings, and any other criteria or guidelines to help us increase our efficiency and progress?

-- REIAC Members