



**New Fairfield Public Schools  
Increasing Educator Diversity Plan  
(CT PA 23-167, Sec 10a)  
Spring, 2024**

**Mission**

The mission of New Fairfield Public Schools is to engage students, staff, and the community in a partnership to provide a collaborative, innovative, encouraging and safe environment where all members take an active role in supporting each other's learning while also helping students pursue their own passions.

**Vision**

New Fairfield Public Schools aspires to a vision of a school community, inclusive of students, staff, and families, that fosters a sense of belonging and high expectations for all students and staff and prepares students to be engaged, global citizens who recognize and consider perspectives, understandings, and experiences beyond our community.

**Related Policy**

**[Personnel \(4111.3/4211.3\) - Certified/Non-Certified: Minority Recruitment Plan](#)**

Public Act 23-167, Section 10(a) provides: "Not later than March 15, 2024, each local and regional board of education shall submit the increasing educator diversity plan described in subsection (a) of section 10-220 of the general statutes, as amended by this act, to the Commissioner of Education for review and approval." In relevant part, Public Act 23-167, §10 specifically repealed the preexisting statutory language that school boards "develop and implement a written plan for minority educator recruitment" in C.G.S. §10-220(a) and substituted "shall develop and implement a written increasing educator diversity plan."

**Theory of Action**

If we commit to ensuring that our systems recognize, value, and affirm diverse backgrounds and experiences through our educator recruitment, hiring, and retention policies and practices, then we will strive to expand the diversity of our staff and support the retention of this staff. This in turn will enhance and enrich the learning community and experiences for all students aligned to

our Vision of the Learner as an engaged, global citizen, knowledgeable scholar, effective communicator, and critical thinker.

## Procedures and Strategies: Recruitment

**Goal:** Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, we will strive to increase the number of applicants for positions and diversify the educator workforce in New Fairfield Public Schools through the review, revision, and implementation of recruitment policies, processes, and practices.

**Who Manages the Goal:**

Director of Human Resources  
 Dr. Kristine Woleck, Assistant Superintendent  
 Dr. Kenneth Craw, Superintendent of Schools

**Key Strategies:**

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Participate in recruitment fairs / career fairs, including those targeted towards underrepresented populations, specifically educators of color and bilingual educators.	Director of Human Resources,	1. Recruitment fairs / job fairs <b>Complete by: April, 2025</b>
2. Research job boards and social media outlets that have distribution to diverse populations and beyond local proximity for recruitment and advertising of vacancies.	Central Office administrators,	2. Job Boards / Social media outlets <b>Complete by: March, 2025</b>
3. Expand our outreach network, specifically to include those organizations (colleges / universities; educator preparation programs) that have a record of preparing educators from a diverse background.	Building administrators	3 & 4. Expand outreach network / contact HEI re: internships <b>Complete by: February, 2025</b>
4. Explore internships, program partnerships with higher education institutions, alternate certification programs, fellowships, and teacher residency programs to provide pathways for non-certified staff (paraeducators, supervisory aides) to consider certification and to bring aspiring educators to our schools.		5. Audit job descriptions and job postings <b>Complete by: January, 2025</b>
5. Review, audit, and revise job descriptions and job postings to ensure language invites diverse candidates and affirms commitment to diversifying the workforce.		6. Educate recruitment staff <b>Complete by: October, 2024</b>
6. Educate recruitment staff (HR, CO administrators, and building administrators) using the <a href="#">CSDE Diversity Training Module</a> .		7. Utilize EdSight Secure Educator Diversity Dashboard <b>Ongoing</b>
7. Utilize the <a href="#">EdSight Secure Educator Diversity Dashboard</a> resources and tools to analyze district data and inform ongoing recruitment planning and processes.		

**Indicators of Progress** (*baseline, 2023-24*):

- Increase in number of applicants of diverse backgrounds or bilingual educators.
- Increase number and range of career / job fairs attended or scheduled and job boards / social media outlets used for postings.
- Increase in contact and partnerships with higher education institutions and certification programs, resulting in increase in interns in schools and/or current non-certified staff enrolling in teacher certification programs.

**Resources:**

- Higher education outreach lead
- Budgetary support: participation in fairs, conferences, sponsoring job posts, internships
- [EdSight Secure Educator Diversity Dashboard](#) and [Diversity Training Module](#) access
- HR staffing to allow for review of job descriptions and to research career fairs, job boards, etc.

**Risks and Mitigations:**

- Budget reductions could impact participation in internships, career fairs, job boards.  
*- Continue to advocate for a budget that addresses the scope of needs of NFPS.*
- Teacher shortages and lack of applicants overall could hinder efforts to attract a more diverse educator pool.  
*- Expand networking with universities and explore other alternate route certification programs.*

**Consultation and Communication:**

- Communication with BOE, HR and district / building administrators to ensure understanding of vision, goals, and action steps.
- Communication with university contacts and job fairs.
- Communication with association leaders for NFEA and paraprofessional association to share vision and encourage outreach / recruitment.
- Communication to BOE Policy Subcommittee as needed regarding related employee policies and procedures / regulations.

**Procedures and Strategies: Hiring and Selecting**

**Goal:** Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, we will strive to diversify the certified educator workforce in New Fairfield Public Schools through the review, revision, and implementation of hiring policies, processes, and practices to ensure that they are equitable towards educators of diverse backgrounds and bilingual educators.

**Who Manages the Goal:**

Director of Human Resources  
Dr. Kristine Woleck, Assistant Superintendent  
Dr. Kenneth Craw, Superintendent of Schools

**Key Strategies:**

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
<p>1. Review application forms and processes to ensure a candidate's range of leadership and employment with diverse groups is recognized.</p> <p>2. Research and establish a consistent and equitable protocol for interview and selection processes.</p> <p>3. Implement Administrative Council training for building administrators and CO staff to develop and share protocols for calibration / training of interview committees led by administrators at the building-level.</p> <p>4. To the extent possible, ensure diversity in the composition of interviewing committees.</p> <p>5. Implement a system for tracking progress of applicants to analyze trends in data and bring forward any data patterns that suggest a point in the process at which diverse candidates do not proceed.</p> <p>6. Collect feedback from applicants, new hires, and those on hiring committees regarding the hiring process.</p>	<p>Director of Human Resources,</p> <p>Central Office administrators,</p> <p>Building administrators</p>	<p>1. Review application forms and processes <b>Complete by: End of calendar year 2024</b></p> <p>2. Interview and selection protocol <b>Complete by: Spring, 2025</b></p> <p>3. Administrative Council training <b>Complete by: Spring 2025</b></p> <p>4. Consider diversity in interviewing committees <b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>5. Implement a system for tracking progress of applicants <b>Complete by: Spring 2025</b></p> <p>6. Collect feedback <b>Ongoing</b></p>

**Indicators of Progress:**

- Administrative Council training held by Spring 2025.
- Analyze data collected to determine the proportions of individuals falling out of the hiring funnel. Review data / trends of candidate progress.

**Resources:**

- Administrator and HR staffing and time allotted to research and review interview best practices.
- Time allotted in Administrative Council meetings to provide training opportunities for administrative team members.
- Consultants currently supporting school climate, collaborative discourse, and restorative practices in our schools can be a resource for review of interview processes, questions, hiring practices, etc.
- HR/Legal consult for feedback regarding appropriate and permissible application / interview questions.

**Risks and Mitigations:**

- Budget reductions could impact staffing levels and hiring.  
- *Continue to advocate for a budget that addresses the scope of needs of NFPS.*

- Teacher shortages and lack of applicants overall could hinder efforts to hire a more diverse staff.
  - *Expand networking with universities and explore other alternate route certification programs (as noted in recruitment strategies).*
- Applicants may not be progressing in the hiring process. Mitigation strategies could include:
  - *Monitor Applitrack system for applications that have been initiated but "not submitted"; reach out to candidates to support completion of application.*
  - *Review application pipeline and address areas of fall off.*

**Consultation and Communication:**

- Communication with BOE and all NFPS staff to ensure awareness of vision, goals, and action steps.
- Communication with district and building administrators as well as NFEA leadership to ensure understanding of hiring processes.
- Communication to BOE Policy Subcommittee as needed regarding related employee policies and procedures / regulations.

**Procedures and Strategies: Retention**

**Goal:** Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, we will strive to diversify the educator workforce in New Fairfield Public Schools through educator retention practices and strategies that build and sustain school communities where all students and staff are valued, feel safe, and experience a sense of belonging in NFPS.

**Who Manages the Goal:**

Director of Human Resources  
 Dr. Kristine Woleck, Assistant Superintendent  
 Dr. Kenneth Craw, Superintendent of Schools

**Key Strategies:**

Strategy	Responsibility	Time Frame
1. Conduct voluntary listening sessions / interviews specifically with first-year and non-tenured staff, as well as all staff of diverse backgrounds or bilingual educators, to gain insights and understanding of their experience in NFPS to inform further refinement of induction processes and supports.  2. Informal check-ins with certified and non-supervisory staff,	Dr. Kristine Woleck, Assistant Superintendent  Dr. Kenneth Craw, Superintendent of Schools	1. Listening sessions for first year, non-tenured, and staff of diverse backgrounds or bilingual  <b>Complete by: End of January 2025</b>

<p>specifically staff of diverse backgrounds and/or bilingual staff members to the extent possible, regarding their experience in NFPS and supports needed.</p> <p>3. Review induction / New Teacher Orientation programming and ongoing differentiated first-year professional learning sessions for staff new to NFPS to ensure support and opportunities to connect to colleagues across the district (and when possible, network with other districts).</p> <p>4. Ensure TEAM or build-based mentor for all new / non-tenured staff to support transition to NFPS.</p> <p>5. Explore the possibility of partnerships with neighboring districts to consider communities of practice that bring together educators of diverse backgrounds and bilingual educators to share experiences and practices.</p> <p>6. Attend to student stakeholders in support of school climate and culture: Expand student leadership experiences K-12; maintain student and staff training with consultants re:restorative practices and collaborative discourse experiences for all students.</p> <p>7. Ongoing professional learning and training for all staff to foster supportive learning environments, connections with and across students, restorative practices in the classroom, and civil discourse.</p>	<p>Mr. James D'Amico, NFHS Principal</p> <p>Ms. Karen Gruetzner, NFMS Principal</p> <p>Ms. Allyson Story, CONS/MHHS Principal</p> <p>Building-based school climate committees and district professional learning / training with consultants will provide shared ownership of this work.</p>	<p>2. Informal check-ins <b>Ongoing - Bi-monthly</b></p> <p>3. Review of Induction / New Teacher orientation and professional learning <b>Complete by April, 2025 (with feedback gathered from staff)</b></p> <p>4. Complete matching of TEAM mentors to mentees <b>by November 2024; ongoing recruitment of TEAM mentors</b></p> <p>5. Partnerships with districts <b>Complete by: Spring 2025</b></p> <p>6. Student experiences and impact <b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>7. Professional learning and training <b>Ongoing</b></p>
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**Indicators of Progress:**

- Analyze trends in qualitative data from listening sessions and check-ins; baseline data gathered 24-25; compare to future years' data.
- Examine feedback from NTO sessions and track attendance at school-year ongoing professional learning sessions for new staff.

**ALSO**

- Comparison of number of staff of diverse backgrounds, and bilingual staff at beginning-of- school-year to end-of-school-year and year-to-year data (baseline, 2023-24).
- School Climate survey results (families, students, staff)

**Resources:**

- Time allotted for listening sessions and ongoing first-year teacher listening sessions, professional learning, etc.

- Staffing and Budgetary support for NTO and TEAM (including TEAM Facilitator)
- Budgetary support for consultants for student leadership groups and school climate / related professional learning

**Risks and Mitigations:**

- Budget reductions could impact staffing levels and hiring.
  - *Continue to advocate for a budget that addresses the scope of needs of NFPS.*
- Budget reductions could impact funding of TEAM facilitator, NTO, and professional learning.
  - *Continue to advocate for a budget that addresses the scope of needs of NFPS.*
- Risk of students and staff of diverse backgrounds or bilingual students and staff feeling further isolated as this work unfolds and/or reluctant to participate in listening sessions or provide feedback.
  - *Monitor sensitive discussions, create trust and relationship prior to listening session, ensure confidentiality and respect anonymity*
- Limited professional learning time and multiple district initiatives.
  - *Examine professional learning needs with PDEC committee to identify connections and themes that can allow for this focus to be embedded into professional learning calendar across the year.*

**Consultation and Communication:**

- Communicate vision, goals, and action steps re: retention strategies to BOE, district and building administrators, and staff.
- Dialogue with PDEC committee to plan professional learning to support the plan.

**Annual Review**

New Fairfield Public Schools will review this plan and related data on a periodic basis to monitor effectiveness and update strategies as needed.