

Promising Practices and Implementation Tools

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3. District(s) Where Implemented: Sharon Public Schools

4. Lever Addressed and Title of Promising Practice: Recruitment and Hiring

5. How This Practice Reflects District's Mission and Core Values:

Sharon Public Schools' vision and mission were re-crafted in 2011-2012.

One important shift was to a stronger focus on and commitment to diversifying the district's workforce in all areas, including teachers, administrators, administrative support staff, cafeteria staff, and custodians. The district values diversity in the demographics of its staff. As a result, a wide spectrum of backgrounds, sensibilities, styles and interests is reflected across the educators in the district. The leadership also considers it important to have the demographics of teachers mirror the demographics of students as much as possible.

6. Goals of This Practice:

Some areas and departments have greater diversity than others and the goal is to move towards a closer match of the employees and the demographic composition of its students at all venues of the district's work. Sharon is a highly diverse community.

7. Description of the Practice and how it Addresses Criteria for this

Lever:

Administrators attend as many job fairs as they can find that promote a diversity of candidates. They visit at least five different job fairs a year including the MTDE, and the Lesley College and Simmons College fairs. They advertise in Teachers of Color Magazine, El Mundo, The Bay State Banner, and also more traditional sources like Education Week and SchoolSpring. The idea is to continue to tap traditional avenues for recruitment of teachers, but also add sources that are more likely to diversify the applicants' pool.

Sharon's Superintendent, Mr. Timothy, Farmer, considers hiring one of the most critical components of the responsibilities of leaders in education. This is reflected in several facets of the hiring process:

- (1) Mr. Farmer and the Human Resources Department meet every single candidate before any hiring is official and confirmed.
- (2) A mandatory component of the hiring process is that any teacher being considered for a position must be observed teaching. It is critical to see a teacher-in-action, and some of the best insights into candidates' skills come from students.
- (3) The hiring process begins in the winter to try to ensure recruiting from the best possible pool of candidates.
- (4) State regulations regarding certification have become more stringent and while this is important, search and interview teams prioritize passion for teaching and for children, and how they present and interact around students. High-quality teaching cannot

be legislated by certification.

(5) Documentation of all phases of the hiring process is essential, for protection, should any hiring decision made be questioned from a legal standpoint.

(6) The search and interview process is multi-faceted and involves several steps. Interview teams are typically 5–7 people. They are comprised of department members, grade level members, team member, students and parents. Composition of each interview committee obviously depends on the particular position involved. School Policy dictates involving parents where possible and appropriate.

(7) No stage of the process is pre-determined. Everyone involved reviews all applications and the team determines whom to select for initial interviews. Following the interviews, members of the search team use a rubric to evaluate each candidate. A collaborative conversation follows to determine which candidates to move forward to the next phase in the process.

Criteria Addressed within this Practice:

The district develops hiring timelines to try to ensure the recruitment of high-quality candidates in a competitive time frame.

The district develops a comprehensive recruitment plan that taps into state and regional organizations and higher education institutions to assist in their recruitment efforts.

The district includes teacher and other stakeholder input, as appropriate, in the hiring process – for example, parents, students, administrators and department heads.

The district provides adequate resources, support and protection to new hires, as evidenced in the high retention rate of new teachers and other staff. The high rate of retention is also considered a product of carefully considered, well planned, and rigorous recruitment and interviewing processes.

The Common Core of Professional Knowledge informs recruitment and hiring practices.

8. Applicable Grade Levels: PreK–12

9. How This Practice Changed the District or School:

The impact of efforts to diversify the Sharon Public Schools workforce is not evident at this time because the district is just one year into the process. No data is available at this time other than a slight increase in hiring of staff of Asian descent. Leaders in Sharon are confident that their commitment and efforts will pay off. Overall results in the hiring process reflect a high level of retention of personnel hired.

10. Resources (time, money, materials) Required for Successful Implementation:

Largely human resources from all levels of the district's operations

11. Tools You Used to Implement or Advance this Practice (surveys, needs assessments, technology tools, rubrics, feedback forms, etc.)

Hiring Committee Forms

Hiring Process

Hiring Purple Forms

Posting Forms

Reference Check Forms

Teacher Interview Questions