

Office of Diversity, Equity and Community Partnership
Strategic Plan for Diversity and Equity
2014-2017
(Adopted November 4, 2014)

Introduction

The Burlington School District, led by its Office of Diversity, Equity, and Community Partnership, embraces its role in establishing a long-term mission and vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion.¹ It is our mission to value differences and to actively promote inclusion and equity. We will not passively accept an unwelcoming and unsafe environment for our students and staff.

We envision a district where every student is encouraged to achieve to her or his highest potential and we will maximize our differences to achieve excellence. We will fully embrace our rich, diverse community as expressed through race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, immigration status, language background, language proficiency, and family structure.

We recognize that it will take growth, change, hard work and vigilance to achieve and maintain this vision. We are prepared to do that work and we implement this Strategic Plan for Diversity and Equity to provide guidance and a clearer path for the work of the District, Superintendent, Board and community to achieve this noble vision.

This Plan is a living document. As such, periodic adjustments will be necessary to capture progress and improvements as well as the need for redirection to ensure a deliberate course toward our goals for diversity, equity and inclusion.

Diversity and Equity Mission Statement

- The mission of the Burlington School District for diversity, equity and inclusion is to actively include and value all students and to meet their unique learning needs while developing their understanding and respect of difference, thus preparing them to live in an inclusive, global community and world.

Diversity and Equity Core Beliefs

- We believe our schools should be a safe and welcoming environment that supports learning for all students. (Goal 1)
- We believe all students will learn and be successful and we recognize that students have different learning styles and we must provide equitable supports (Goal 3, 5, 6)

¹ The terms diverse and/or diversity as used in this Plan shall include, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, national origin, immigration status, language background, language proficiency, and family structure. The term “inclusion” shall mean the inclusivity of all of the aforementioned.

- We believe in meeting the needs of a growing and diverse student population and understand that by valuing and supporting our multicultural and multilingual students and their families, students will be more successful. (Goal 2, 4, 10)
- We believe in inclusive curriculum, instruction and assessment that is learner-centered and based on high standards and expectations. (Goal 3, 5, 6)
- We believe in promoting positive self-esteem, self-discipline, and mutual respect. (Goal 2, 3)
- We believe that in order to achieve academic excellence, students, teachers, parents and community members must be active partners. (Goal 3, 10)
- We believe the affirmative recruitment and retention of a diverse and culturally competent faculty and staff is essential for meeting the needs of all our students. (Goal 7, 8, 9)
- We believe that District policies and procedures must support our ability to achieve our diversity and equity goals.(Goal 8)
- We believe that we each have a responsibility to combat racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice, discrimination and harassment for the betterment of our schools and society. (Goal 1)

Diversity and Equity Vision Statement

The Burlington School District will:

- Provide a welcoming, safe and equitable school community that is affirming and inclusive, including schools and classrooms that are a reflection of our global community.
- Commit to a culture that reflects, respects and embraces the voices, perspectives and differences arising from our diverse community.
- See each student as unique and seek to empower all students to achieve their highest potential.
- Eliminate educational inequities by providing equitable access to services, school resources, and other learning opportunities.
- Provide linguistically responsive instruction and supports to ensure ELL students' academic achievement in mainstream classrooms
- Develop and implement ELL programming to further develop students' English language proficiency
- Develop a diverse and inclusive curriculum that reflects the wide range of voices, perspectives, and experiences of the students and families in our community and the world.
- Build trusting relationships with all students and their families

- Recruit and retain culturally competent and diverse administrators, faculty and staff.
- Provide regular professional development to assist educators and staff as they increase their understanding of inclusiveness and cultural proficiency.
- Ensure policies and procedures are consistent with our goals of diversity, equity and inclusion and that they do not act as barriers to our success.
- Ensure equitable outcomes for all students by encouraging parents and the community to be active partners in the learning process.

Goal, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1: Ensure a welcoming, safe, inclusive and equitable school community

Subgoal 1.1: Regular review and assessment of school and district climate

Person(s) Responsible: Dir. of Diversity Education

Timeline: Ongoing

Measures of Success: Number of meetings, minutes and completion of climate survey.

Strategies:

- Convene EIRC as a year-round committee
- Review all data collected for EIDR within District
- Implement annual climate survey
- Include climate survey data in EIDR
- Expand data collected for EIDR

Subgoal 1.2: Regular review of discipline and suspension data

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity

Timeline: Ongoing

Measures of Success: Decrease in suspension differentials, more equity in suspensions

Strategies:

- Review discipline and suspension data by Equity Team
- Review of discipline policies toward developing consistent policies across the District
- Meet monthly with planning room staff
- Collaborate with community Restorative Justice (RJ) program to implement RJ practices district wide.
- Use of PBIS and SWIS data

Subgoal 1.3: Assess and improve facilities, hallways and classrooms to ensure they are welcoming and inclusive

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity, Dir. of Diversity of Education.

Timeline: Ongoing

Measure of Success: Inclusive language and images evident in all buildings, signage, wall hangings, classroom, curriculum and library materials. .

Strategies:

- Development and completion of assessment tools
- Install multicultural/multilingual signage in schools
- Create gender-neutral bathroom facilities
- Develop a tool to assess inclusiveness in schools

Subgoal 1.4: Expand Equity Team

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Increase number of staff available to handle bullying and harassment complaints.

Strategies:

- Use additional designated employees to serve as backup investigators

Subgoal 1.5: Ensure that Designated Employees are well trained to address bullying and harassment.

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity

Timeline: Ongoing

Measure of Success: Reduced incidents of bullying and harassment in all buildings.

Strategies:

- Continue trainings for Equity Team and District personnel
- Broaden range of trained individuals that students can safely go to for assistance
- Include more students in conflict resolution that prevents bullying and harassment (Peer Mediation Program)

Subgoal 1.6: Provide training for parents on bullying and harassment and information on all aspects of the process

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity

Timeline: Ongoing

Measure of Success: parents know how to report, what to report, and to whom to report bullying and harassment, and parents gain more faith and trust in our process

Strategies:

- Hold 3 meetings a year for parents

Subgoal 1.7: Ensure a welcoming school community for District personnel

Person(s) Responsible: Senior Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs; Director of Diversity of Education

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Welcoming and improved climate for District Personnel

Strategies:

- Improve climate as evidenced by survey results

- Improve response from HR to adult harassment complaints
- Update Personnel Policy to include Employee Code of Conduct
- Implement cultural competency training policy for all new employees to receive before the end of their probationary period
- Train HR Staff in conflict resolution
- Train HR Staff in harassment investigations

Goal 2: Respect and value diversity

Subgoal 2.1: Cultural Celebrations and Monthly Recognitions

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 1-3

- **Measure of Success:** Calendar of celebrations and monthly recognitions.

Strategies:

- Hold “I Have A Dream” School Opening
- Hold Martin Luther King, Jr. Convocation
- Plan building based cultural sharing and celebrations

Subgoal 2.2: Expand Equity Council

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity, Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Increase number of staff knowledgeable and capable of facilitating conversations and supporting building administrators and new teachers

Strategies:

- Work with Building Administrators to provide activities and programming to address climate issues
- Support new teachers and teachers of color

Subgoal 2.3: Continue Equity Conversations

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Ongoing

Measure of Success: Library of equity conversations

Strategies:

- Develop additional equity conversations to address the varied conversation needs of the schools
- Offer additional conversations to include Central Office

Subgoal 2.4: Explore Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Ongoing

Measure of Success: Increased participation in diversity and equity activities and opportunities

Strategies:

- Develop Larry McCrorey and John Tucker Leadership in Diversity Speaker Series

- Develop Dan Balon Diversity Literature Series
- Continue and Expand Reading to End Racism Series

Subgoal 2.5: Increase Disability Awareness

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Increased participation district-wide in disability awareness trainings and improved climate as evidence by climate survey data; Greater representation of differently-abled students in leadership roles.

Strategies:

- Expanding Reading for Inclusion across the District
- Professional Development on Inclusion for all District Personnel
- Differently abled student-led summit with Diversity and Equity Leadership

Goal 3: Empower all students to achieve excellence

Subgoal 3.1: Provide leadership opportunities to students, especially marginalized students.

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Equity,

Timeline: ongoing

Measure of Success: Greater representation of marginalized students in leadership roles

Strategies:

- Continue African & African American Male Support Group to develop leadership skills
- Continue African & African American Female Support Group to develop leadership skills
- Create student leadership groups and opportunities for marginalized students
- Continue existing Support Groups

Subgoal 3.2: Develop opportunities for cross-cultural conversations for students

Person(s) Responsible: 9th grade academy; DECP

Timeline: Ongoing; Year 2

Measure of Success: Continuation of “Let’s Get Real About Race,” Annual Student Summit

Strategies:

- Continue “Let’s Get Real About Race” (grade 9)
- Establish Annual Student Summit (grades 10-12)

Subgoal 3.3: Provide training for students on cultural awareness, responsiveness, and understanding

Person(s) Responsible: Director, Diversity Education; DECP

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Chapter of Peace Jam at BHS; Student-led Courageous Conversations

Strategies:

- Development of PeaceJam Program/Chapter at BHS
- Student attendance at PeaceJam International
- Student-led Courageous Conversations

Subgoal 3.4: Establish a Peer Mentoring Program

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Students helping other students succeed; improved student outcomes

Strategies:

- Subject matter support and tutoring
- Support Partnership For Change Student Consultancy Program
- Middle School Affinity Groups

Goal 4: Strengthen connections with ELL and New American families and communities

Subgoal 4.1: Provide education to families about their children's schooling

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director, ML Coordinator

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved student outcomes, increased understanding by parents of student's program

Strategies:

- Explain ELL programming at meetings
- Disseminate information on US school system
- Provide policies and other district information in multiple languages and formats

Subgoal 4.2: Work collaboratively with other organizations that provide resources to families to broaden our collective impact

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director, ML Coordinator

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved use of ML, more organizations provide for interpretation supports, families have supports they need

Strategies:

- Collaborate with community organizations and parent organizations
- Maintain ELL program website as source of information about the program for the community

Subgoal 4.3: Provide supports for multilingual liaisons

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director, Multilingual Liaison Coordinator

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved retention of ML, improved working conditions for ML, numbers of parents and families served by liaisons increases.

Strategies:

- Develop capacity of ML through trainings, workshops, tuition reimbursement
- Ensure sufficient resources for ML program in budget
- Develop and deliver high level task based PD

Goal 5: Close the academic achievement gap

Subgoal 5.1: Ensure that data on academic achievement gaps are shared with BKids Afterschool Program to make sure that proper supports are provided to students in the program.

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education with support from Director of Curriculum and Tech/Assessment Data Specialist.

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: District Strategic Plan for Diversity and Equity is integrated into Afterschool program

Strategies:

- Include BKids director on Diversity & Equity Leadership Advisory Team

Subgoal 5.2: Identify and implement instructional strategies and supports needed to improve academic outcomes for English language learners

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Percentage of current and former ELL students meeting proficiency in math and reading increases

Strategies:

- Identify how to best provide instructional interventions for underperforming students.
- Provide professional development to mainstream teachers on teaching ELLs
- Ensure that school-based restructuring plans have diversity and equity embedded.

Subgoal 5.3: Provide additional learning opportunities for students who are not at grade level during the day, after school, and during the summer.

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director, with input from members of Teaching and Learning Team.

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Percentage of non-White, ELL, and low-income students enrolled in honors classes increases by 2% points

Strategies:

- Provide after school and summer programming that focuses on developing academic skills

Subgoal 5.4: Expand understanding of the achievement gap in the District and nationally

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity, with input from members of Teaching and Learning Team.

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: higher student academic success rate, lower dropout rate, higher student college enrollment rates of marginalized students.

Strategies

- Discuss achievement gap through equity conversations
- Convene district meetings on the topic
- Convene community forums on the topic
- Expand data collected for EIDR

Goal 6: Develop a diverse and inclusive curriculum

Subgoal 6.1: Review existing curriculum materials for bias to ensure multicultural perspectives

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education, with input from Director of Curriculum and K-5 Content Coaches.

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Inclusive curricula materials at all grade levels

Strategies:

- Assessment of all materials for all subjects and grade levels
- Provide teachers and librarians with guidelines for reviewing existing curriculum for sensitivity and bias and resource lists of multicultural inclusive curriculum materials
- Maintain the Dan Balon Memorial Library with non-fiction cultural competency curriculum tools

Subgoal 6.2: Research and purchase needed multicultural inclusive curriculum materials

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education, with input from Director of Curriculum and K-5 Content Coaches.

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: All subject areas, all grade levels curricula materials are culturally inclusive district wide

Strategies:

- Advocate for resources to purchase multicultural inclusive curriculum materials
- Ensure that newly purchased resources are culturally and linguistically inclusive

Goal 7: Recruit and retain diverse and culturally competent administrators, faculty and staff.

Subgoal 7.1: Develop and maintain affirmative hiring process for all hiring departments to meet the district wide goal of culturally competent administrators, teachers and staff

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: An increase in candidates of color and culturally competent candidates in all hiring pools

Strategies:

- Develop hiring plans for all hiring departments, including non-licensed positions
- Pursue resources which will allow for regular support and monitoring of all hiring processes across the district
- Review of BSD recruitment and hiring policies for unintentional bias or exclusionary practices.
- Update job descriptions through the use of position analysis with the support of CSSR and P4C
- Update job descriptions to include cultural proficiency as a criteria of employment
- Include questions and scenarios related to diversity and equity in Success Factor Interviewing
- Require all participants in hiring processes complete anti-bias training prior to participation

Subgoal 7.2: Develop long-term recruitment plan and promotional tools to attract diverse and culturally competent candidates

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: An increase in candidates of color for employment in all hiring pools

Strategies:

- Attend job fairs focused on candidates of color (years 1-3)
- Develop partnerships with HBCUs and HSIs (years 2-3)
- Expand marketing of Burlington School District to more diverse markets (years 1-3)
- Develop recruitment DVD that reflects diversity of BSD (year 1-2)
- Develop recruitment teams to assist and support recruitment efforts (years 2-3)
- Use of iamavermonter.org (website started by Dan Balon and completed by Church Street Marketplace)
- Develop a “See Vermont Weekend” Workshop

Subgoal 7.3: Increase percentage of administrators, teachers and staff of color based on appropriate labor demographics for Northeastern region

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Appropriate increase in administrators, teachers and staff of color.

Strategies:

- Compare District goals with Department of Labor statistics on teacher availability in the Northeastern region of the country

Subgoal 7.4: Develop mentoring programs to support new teachers

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs
DECP

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: An increase in candidates of color for employment; less turnover of all teachers, especially teachers of color

Strategies:

- Develop partnerships with local community organizations, teacher organizations and faith institutions
- Develop Retention Ambassadors (through Equity Council) for each school to support all new teachers in their building
- Establish coffee hours on topics of concerns for faculty and staff of color
- Develop monthly cultural competency opportunities

Subgoal 7.5: Professional development and support of Building Administrators for retention of diverse teachers

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education
Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs
Daniel Baron

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Greater retention of teachers of color

Strategies:

- Develop PD opportunities designed to help administrators build relationships with teachers and staff of color
- Provide diversity and equity resources specifically for the supervisory relationship

Subgoal 7.6: Develop Teacher Exchange Program

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs
DECP

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Teachers of color who participate in program seek employment with the District. District teachers return more culturally competent and with additional skills to address equity concerns

Strategies:

- Develop partnership with other similar schools to establish exchange program
- Prepare team of teachers to do exchange

Subgoal 7.7: Engage collective bargaining units in discussions regarding diversity and equity concerns before and during negotiations

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Partnership with Unions in addressing equity concerns

Strategies:

- District and Union Leadership Summit on Diversity and Equity

Subgoal 7.8: Specific support efforts for teachers of color

Person(s) Responsible: Human Resources, Superintendent, DECP

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Greater retention of teachers of color

Strategies:

- Check-in meetings through Hangout
- Retention specialist meets individually with new and teachers of color
- Quarterly Meeting with Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Goal 8: Organizational change and development

Subgoal 8.1: Ensure equitable policies and procedures

Person(s) Responsible: Sr. Director of Human Resources and Equity Affairs

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Consistent and equitable implementation of policies and procedures district wide; reduction in “unfairness” complaints

Strategies:

- Human Resources partner with Policy Committee to review policies for equity
- HR and district policies and procedures placed as an agenda item at All Admin meetings
- Create centralized location for all policies and procedures by building
- Support Building Administrators with employee evaluation and performance matters
- Provide information and timely response to employee questions on policies and procedures

Subgoal 8.2: Develop team approach between DECP and Building Administrators to strengthen diversity and equity efforts

Person(s) Responsible: DECP Directors and Staff

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved communications and relations between building administrators and DECP

Strategies:

- DECP on All Admin agenda each month
- Quarterly check-ins with building administrators by DECP to ascertain diversity and equity concerns

Subgoal 8.3: Establish Diversity and Equity Leadership Advisory Team

Person(s) Responsible: DECP

Timeline: Year 2-3

Measure of Success: Leadership support of DECP and Diversity and Equity goals; Leadership engaged in the implementation of diversity and equity goals.

Strategies:

- Establish Diversity and Equity Leadership Advisory Team

- Establish plan for leadership involvement in the implementation of the diversity plan

Subgoal 8.4: Develop and support culturally proficient and transformational leaders

Person(s) Responsible:

Timeline: Director of Diversity Education

Measure of Success: Increased cultural competency in the District

Strategies:

- Assess professional staffs' cultural proficiency in performance evaluations
- Offer supports to staff as indicated by performance evaluations

Goal 9: Training and Professional Development

Subgoal 9.1: Develop opportunities for cross-cultural conversations for District personnel.

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved relations amongst employees; improved climate across district

Strategies:

- Continue cultural competency trainings through Washington Consulting Group
- Develop cultural competency focused open forums for employees

Subgoal 9.2: Provide assistance to teachers and administrators developing diversity and equity-related activities and programming.

Person(s) Responsible: DECP; AmeriCorps

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Successful diversity and equity projects and programs developed by teachers. Increase in teachers who are willing to develop and engage in diversity and equity projects and programs.

Strategies:

- Continue Diversity Innovations Program
- Maintain and update resource list for teachers

Subgoal 9.3: Maintain professional development plan for District that is aligned with the Strategic Plan for Diversity and Equity

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Diversity Education

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success:

Strategies:

- Continue Anti-Bias and Cultural Competency trainings for District Personnel and the Board of School Commissioners
- Develop annual professional development plan for diversity and equity across the district

Subgoal 9.4: Provide professional development in teaching English Language Learners to all teachers

Person(s) Responsible: ELL Director, ELL Content Specialists

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: improved scores on standardized content assessment by current and former ELL students, number of teachers completing training increases, number and variety of trainings offered

Strategies:

- Offer TRAVELLS online
- Develop plan including barriers and opportunities to supporting teachers in earning ELL endorsement
- Collaborate with IHE to develop opportunities for teachers to get ELL endorsement
- Develop additional PD opportunities for teachers

Subgoal 9.5: Regular professional development for all employees

Person(s) Responsible: Dir. of Diversity Education, DECP

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Teachers and staff taking advantage of summer coursework; Improved climate in schools as evidenced by the Climate Survey

Strategies:

- Offer voluntary summer trainings focused on diversity and equity to all teachers and staff
- Offer a monthly diversity and equity training including anti-bias training
- Offer Summer Institute on Cultural Competency

Goal 10: Strengthen Parent and Community Partnerships

Subgoal 10.1: Improved Communications with Parents and Community regarding Diversity and Equity

Person(s) Responsible: DECP

Timeline: Year 1-3

Measure of Success: Improved communications and support of District diversity and equity goals; Greater parent and community engagement

Strategies:

- Continue work with Diversity Alliance Council to improve District communications within the community and develop support for ongoing school initiatives
- DECP representation on Partnership for Change
- Continue use and training of Multilingual and Outreach Liaisons