

Talawanda Comprehensive Diversity and Equity Plan

Our commitment and goal is to create a school climate that embraces diversity (i.e., variety by reason of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical appearance, social/economic class, family structure, all physical or developmental abilities, etc.) and supports personal or academic development. Our purpose is to teach our children and ourselves to live, learn, and work together in a vibrant, diverse, and intercultural world.

Using short-term and long-term strategies, our blueprint for shaping the future diversity actions of the district rests on five main steps:

- (1) Develop a diversity leadership team to administer the ongoing planning, implementation, and evaluation of the district's diversity actions.
- (2) Recruit, hire, and retain diverse teachers, administrators, and staff.
- (3) Increase the cultural proficiency of all teachers, administrators, and staff.
- (4) Increase outreach for the purpose of community engagement with parents and community members of diverse backgrounds.
- (5) Increase student engagement with the diversity-change process.

(1) Develop a diversity leadership team to administer the ongoing planning, implementation, and evaluation of the district's diversity actions.

- Create a culturally proficient environment where respect for all and responsibility to all are displayed.
 - Understand and display cultural proficiency.
 - Promote and model district/school values (e.g., acceptance, respect, compassion, honesty, integrity, personal responsibility, confidence, commitment to learning, including the other healthy supports identified in the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets).
 - Provide diversity planning for professional development needs, curriculum changes (e.g., service learning programs), changes in student and classroom practices, and policies that address prejudice and discrimination.
 - Select a cultural liaison representative for each building site.
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate all district-wide diversity initiatives.
 - Allocate and earmark a reasonable amount of funds to support the district's diversity initiatives as a measure of the district's level of commitment to increasing diversity and diversity-related initiatives.
 - Communicate the Comprehensive Diversity and Equity Plan and all diversity-related initiatives on the district's website and school publications.
 - Communicate the district's work on diversity and equity to the community through the public media.

(2) Recruit, hire, and retain diverse teachers, administrators, and staff.

- Develop new partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (e.g., attend job fairs at Wilberforce and Central State) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.
 - Strengthen existing partnerships with local universities, focused on conducting targeted recruiting and hiring initiatives for graduating students of diverse backgrounds.
 - Recruit from multiple employment sources to access a diverse group of candidates.
- Involve the community in recruitment of candidates of diverse backgrounds.
- Review all current recruitment and hiring practices for unintentional or intentional bias or exclusionary practices.

- Create an internal networking/mentoring system to support new racially and ethnically diverse personnel.
- Create a list of community resources to support diverse community members, including school personnel, students, and families.
- Establish policy and procedure of district-wide diversity orientation for all building leaders and interview committees. When feasible, develop a process of selecting diverse staff to serve on all district and school committees.

(3) Increase the cultural proficiency of all teachers, administrators, and staff.

- Define and actively share the understanding of “cultural proficiency” as:

A way of being (engaged) in an ongoing life-long learning process of seeing cross-cultural differences and responding effectively and affirmingly, by demonstrating the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs that enable people to work well with, be supportive of, and respectful toward different cultural practices and worldviews. “Cultural proficiency” demands continual self-reflection to achieve an environment in which every child, teacher/staff, and family feels connected, safe, and welcome.

- Provide professional development training (in relationship development) for all teachers and staff at least once a year. Provide cultural competency training for all new staff members during new teacher orientation. Additionally, provide an annual professional development schedule in cultural competency.

[Cultural proficiency/competency training should first allow individuals to get to know where they stand in regard to their own culture, beliefs, and values. The direction of this form of training provides the most benefit when it is based on where we are in the process of becoming more inclusive. To be effective in attaining diversity plan goals, it is essential for all staff to take ownership of change and diversity goals. A major part of diversity work is change, and some changes are uncomfortable and take time. Some of that work will result in periods of adjustment and possibly instances of resistance to change.]

- Develop a district-wide intercultural awareness brochure (with input from existing research and community members) and make it available in English, Spanish, and other requested languages.
- Create and promote a library of literature and online resources for teachers to implement facets of cultural competency.
- Create and administer an in-house survey to capture and measure data on diversity-related issues, such as staff perceptions, cultural belief systems, cultural self-assessment, and levels of trust among teachers, administrators, and staff members.
- Refer to the TSD website under “Resources” for the Cultural Proficiency Continuum and the Developmental Assets.

(4) Increase outreach for the purpose of community engagement with parents and community members of diverse backgrounds.

[The goal here is to make the schools inviting places to be through developing a parenting network, broadening formats for home and school interactions, giving parents ideas for resources, and providing parents with greater accessibility to our schools.]

- Schedule annual outreach meetings, and listen to community members. Provide information about the diversity within our school community, the cultures represented, and the resources available for collaborating with the school, perhaps with a community resource handbook, which could include educational, cultural, and social service resources relevant to parents and community members. Develop effective ways to follow up with families who do not attend Open Houses to share information and find out their interests and needs related to helping their students succeed.
- Incorporate feature stories/profiles about our families and community resources in the monthly district newsletter.

- Develop resources to facilitate school staff involvement with families of diverse backgrounds through such activities as community-based tutoring services, home visits, community, etc.
- Enhance the district's website to be more inclusive, representative, and informative about diversity in our schools.

(5) Foster student engagement with the diversity-change process.

- Faculty and staff provide opportunities that encourage students to make a psychological investment in learning through the skills framed by the 40 Development Asset skills.
- Create student diversity alliances at MS and HS levels to develop culturally competent student leaders. For example, invite students of diverse backgrounds to play a direct role in committees to advance diversity across the district.
- Identify achievement gaps and non-academic barriers to learning and implement intervention programs to address growth.
- Strengthen relationships between teacher and students through attention to the Search Institute's Developmental Relationships.
- Establish a Student Ambassador Program for positive promotion of Talawanda High School with prospective families. Student Ambassadors serve as liaisons and helpful assets for new students and incoming first-year students.
- Continue to provide professional development opportunities for teachers on the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets and using it to focus on diverse student learning styles in order to strengthen the understanding of the root causes of student behaviors.
- Create and sustain district wide programs that address PRIDE (People Respecting Individual Differences Everyday).
- Create school programs that address a variety of learning styles of students. Encourage teachers to maintain high expectations of all students and develop ways to promote Academic and Diversity Excellence simultaneously.
- Develop and evaluate peer mediation programs at the secondary level.
- Develop and evaluate the district-wide anti-bullying programs and positive behavior support systems.
- Analyze suspension/expulsion data and advance-placement criteria for bias on the basis of socio-economic status, race, culture, gender, and/or disability condition.

**The Diversity & Equity Plan is reviewed annually by the TSD Diversity Team.*

***The TSD Diversity Team has quarterly meetings.*

****During the 2020-2021 school year the TSD Diversity Team was developed.*