

HRAC has been an active advisory committee to the FCPS School Board for two years. During this time period, HRAC has focused on teacher retention as a problem of practice. In year one, the committee spent time defining the issues and considered possible recommendations that emerged from these discussions. In year two, the team took a deeper dive on the topic of teacher retention. Agendas, presentations, and minutes were publicly posted in a timely manner. All materials can be accessed at <https://www.fcps.edu/committee/human-resources-advisory-committee>

The HRAC has identified several Goal areas that will support and improve teacher retention.

They recommend:

- Employ best practices for teacher retention
- Study and address disparities in retention outcomes
- Restructure data collection and usage
- Establish HRAC processes

The Human Resources office is committed to working towards these goals in the following ways:

1. Maximize the Diversity existing in the Applicant Pool

- Make voluntary demographic data on diversity currently available in the Applicant Tracking system to Principals and to all HR staff.
- Increase accountability of Principals to hire and retain a diverse educator staff (Regional Assistant Superintendents).
- Increase responsibility of HR Staffing specialists to source candidates of color to Principals when vacancies occur, especially for schools with low diversity.
- Significantly increase offering early contracts (offered by HR in collaboration with representative Principals) with a focus on widening diversity and hiring for critical shortages. Work with Principals to help them embrace early contracts in order to increase diversity and ensure sufficient numbers in critical shortage fields. Early contracts (offered before specific vacancies are known) are an important way districts secure the best talent early in the staffing season.

2. Significantly Expand Alternative Certification Program Hires

- Traditional Schools of Education produce large numbers of non-diverse elementary and social studies teachers, but lack diversity in all fields and lack critical shortage field graduates (math, science, special education, Spanish, ESL, etc.). Some districts are going to 50-60% alternative certification hires because it is the only way they can increase diversity and meet their critical shortage needs. Research indicates that the alternative certification pathway produces equal numbers of effective teachers as traditionally-prepared teachers, and in some research studies, a few alternative certification pathways produce teachers who are can be even more effective in the classroom.
- VCU/COVE Cohort- FCPS, in collaboration with Virginia Commonwealth University/COVE, has developed a special education teacher cohort designed for current FCPS instructional assistants with a bachelor's degree a pathway to complete the required coursework to become a special education teacher. Upon completion of the first graduate-level course required for VDOE provisional licensure, cohort participants are hired as special education teachers. The two-year online graduate program provides full tuition reimbursement funded by FCPS. In return, participation in the cohort requires a

four-year teaching commitment to FCPS as a special education teacher. When the first two cohorts are combined, forty-five (45) percent of participants are people of color.

- FCPS Career Switcher Nights-The Department of Human Resources has hosted an annual Career Switcher Night for each of the past two years. The focus of this event is to provide Fairfax County residents with an opportunity to learn about state-approved alternative teacher licensing programs. Each of these two events drew over 100 people. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, this event will be held biannually (October and May).
3. Require Principals (and Assistant Principals) – especially those with Low Diversity -- to Attend Hiring Fairs
 - Even if a Principal does not have a vacancy at an early stage in the staffing process, require them (or their representative) to attend hiring fairs (February) and interview in anticipation of potential vacancies at a later date.
 4. Share Diversity Data by School more widely
 - Share diversity data by school at Cabinet meetings, at Regional Assistant Superintendent meetings and Principal meetings and hold RASes and Principals accountable for increasing diversity where it is lacking.
 - Collect and analyze data on candidates applying to specific vacancies to determine if candidates of color applied but may not have been interviewed or selected.
 - Review turnover data to see if teachers of color have a lower retention rate and determine strategies to increase retention if there is a difference.
 - Share research with Principals and RASes on the power of diversity on students of color and the impact it has on closing the achievement gap.

INTERVIEWING AND STAFFING

5. Issue Strong Guidelines to Principals on Interviewing and Hiring Best Practices
 - Recommend a minimum of three candidates vetted and in the pool be considered (interviewed) for every vacancy.
 - Recommend that any notes taken during interviews be retained for a minimum of three years.
 - Recommend that similar interviewing modalities and questions be asked of candidates applying for the same position.
 - Encourage Principals to involve others on their staff in the interviewing process (Assistant Principals, lead teachers).
 - Hold Principals accountable for the criteria they determined was important, who they selected to interview, any notes they took, and their justification for selection in the event a challenge is made to the process.
 - Consider training for Principals and Assistant Principals (voluntary) in interviewing and selection best practices.
 - Recommend that Principals always check to see if a candidate is already in the pool before they conduct an interview and hold off interviewing in depth until the candidate has applied and can be vetted by HR.

Additionally, HR will continue to address retention and engagement in the 2019-2020 by:

- Administering the Employee Engagement Survey
- Provide timely summaries to RAS colleagues and schools
- Arrange for workshops so that data can be better understood
- Provide questioning and feedback protocols to RAS colleagues so that there is consistency in the coaching conversations

There were also concerns outlined by HRAC regarding the fair treatment of teachers and the providing teachers an opportunity to better express their voice. In that effort HR:

- Participates in monthly meetings with the teacher associations to identify issues that are of concern and to brainstorm solutions
- Co-present with FEA a workshop on the new My PDE system and provide an opportunity for teachers to ask questions of the EER staff
- Update the EER website so that access to regulations that directly impact employees are easily accessible and accompanied by FAQs
- Ensure our Colleague Assistance Program (CAP) is utilized so that teachers receive maximum support

HR will also work collaboratively with the staff in the Office of Research and Strategic Improvement (ORSI) to examine retention data for the 2010-2019 school year and apply the regression analyses model as recommended by the HRAC committee. This data is forthcoming in the Fall of 2019.

Other ways HR and other FCPS colleagues can support this work include:

- Provide a timeline for the distribution and results of all engagement/climate/retention surveys that are given in a school year.
- Determine what costs are associated with professional development for engagement and retention (research, design, implementation, and monitoring). Draft a comprehensive list of possible costs for initiatives that would impact this work.
- Work with assistant superintendent, Department of Human Resources over the summer to create a comprehensive calendar and timeline for the HRAC goals for the 2019-2020 school year.