



Verona Public Schools

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our overarching goal for DEI is to match our structure, procedures and actions with our purpose, vision, and core values, to create an environment of belonging for all students and for our entire school community.

December 8, 2021

Good afternoon everyone:

We wanted to provide you an update with our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work. Dr. Furnari, our interim Superintendent of Schools, presented a [PowerPoint](#) during the Board of Education meeting last night describing our next steps that included a timeline. In her presentation, Dr. Furnari described how this important initiative is a part of our strategic plan. She highlighted our core values, what we have accomplished in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our school district, and areas for future work: (1) Educational Equity & School Climate and Culture, (2) Community Outreach & Hiring, Recruiting, and Retaining Staff, and (3) Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment & Professional Development. The aforementioned areas were the foci of the six committees (subgroups) that we formed last spring.

Working with Dr. Furnari, the DEI Leadership Team (Coordinator & Facilitators), and the administrative team, we have created a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify experts with experience in diversity, equity, and inclusion that we would like to partner with moving forward in the areas of (1) School Climate and Culture, (2) Hiring, Recruiting, and Retaining Staff. We are going to conduct an internal audit with our curriculum this winter and spring with our supervisors and teachers. Our timeline for the RFP is the following:

Action	Date
Requested for Proposal	December 2021
Join NJCEE Northeast	December 2021
Identification of consultant	February 2022
Attend workshops provided by New Jersey Consortia for Excellence & Equity (NJCEE)	December 2021 - June 2022

Work with consultant(s) on DEI initiatives such as data gathering, analysis, and making improvements to programs and processes.	February 2022 - June 2022 (and into the future)
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We really enjoyed working with all of you (committees/subgroups) last spring and would like to reconvene our meetings this February. The purpose of these meetings is to re-engage our community and staff members in a collaborative, democratic, and open manner. Each committee meeting will be structured with norms, expectations, and an agenda that will assist and guide the group. Additionally, we plan on bringing in pertinent speakers and resources to share best practices with our committee members. Once we identify a consultant or consultants, our six committees/subgroups will act as focus groups as part of the plan of identified work.

In closing, we thank you for your patience and support as we move forward this winter. We truly appreciate your willingness to partner with us as we continue to improve our school district. If you are unable to participate with us this winter and spring, please let us know.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Please be well and happy holidays!

Sincerely,



Dr. Charles R. Miller
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment



Dr. Lydia Furnari
Interim Superintendent of Schools