

Welcome & Introduction

Welcome to *Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce*! A joint project of the four regional Equity Assistance Centers (EAC) funded by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE), this is **one module in a series** of courses.

This module seeks to expand the opportunity for educators across all four Equity Assistance Center regions ([Region I](#), [Region II](#), [Region III](#), [Region IV](#)) to increase understandings of effective culturally responsive and sustaining hiring processes and practices. Ultimately, we seek to impress the imperative of developing internal processes to create the conditions for authentic diversity.

Course Format

Across module sections, participants will engage in narrated presentations (linked & indicated by ***bold, italic, crimson letters***), reflection activities, and a supplemental resource that can be applied to local settings. Icons are used to cue the method of interaction:



Something to Watch



Something to Read



Something to Reflect



Something to Listen to



Something to Write



Stop for Instruction

This learning module is divided into the following topics *[please click on each topic to navigate to each lesson]*:


- [Module Overview](#)
- [A Rationale for Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce](#)
- [Foundations for Cultural Responsivity and Diversity in Educational Hiring Practices and Processes](#)
- [Demonstrating Critical Consciousness in Hiring Practices: Introducing the CRDW Framework](#)



Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce



- [Examining Your Infrastructure: A Self-Assessment towards a Diverse Educator Workforce](#)
- [Conclusion & Next Steps](#)

You will be asked to take notes along the way; please refer to the notetaking Google Doc, navigable by clicking the  icon in each section.

This content was prepared by Robin G. Jackson, M.A., Products Lead/Doctoral Research Assistant, on behalf of the [Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center](#).

Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center (MAP EAC)

Email: glec@iupui.edu

Office: (317) 278-3493

Mailing Address:

902 West New York Street
ES2124
Indianapolis, IN 46202

I. Module Overview

The purpose of this learning module is to present a framework towards interrogating and conceptualizing a culturally competent and diverse workforce. This framework includes a research-based, comprehensive self-examination of your organization's capacity for supporting the hiring of a diverse culturally responsive educator workforce. Finally, we offer recommended actions for working towards strengthening both personal and organizational practices related to a culturally responsive and diverse workforce.

Through these exercises, comprised of asynchronous recordings, activities, and related resources, participants will be able to recognize areas in their current structures which may inhibit anti-oppressive hiring policies and practices.

Learning Objectives:

- Explore and interrogate the key elements of cultural responsiveness and diversity in educational hiring practices and processes
- Interrogate internal structures to ensure the cultural competency of individuals tasked with hiring
- Identify and examine elements of standard hiring processes and practices to determine how to modify them, towards cultural responsiveness and diversity

Session Anticipated Outcomes:

- Articulate a strong rationale for the importance of developing a culturally responsive and diverse workforce
- Develop an interrogative process which serves to screen for potential applicants' implicit biases, towards surfacing cultural competency
- Establish a structure towards creating a culturally responsive and diverse hiring committee



Activity: [Pre-assessment](#): Examining the cultural responsiveness of your hiring processes
Directions: With your organization in mind in its current state, please rate the extent to which your organization's hiring practices are reflective of diversity, equity, and inclusion ([Please download and save this document before editing](#)).



Resource: [How Schools Can Improve Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Practices](#)

Source: National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)

Description: Participants and faculty from the 2017 NAIS Diversity Leadership Institute share advice on how schools can improve their diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.

Why this Resource?

This clip offers foundational a grounding/rationale of the importance of schooling environments to fully embrace DEI, acknowledging that it is a journey for everyone, at every level, and will not be achieved overnight. While this module is focused on building capacity in hiring practices, we want to recall *why* it's important to engage in DEI in every arena.

II. A Rationale for Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce

Affirming what diversity is means recognizing that although diversity *includes* race, it isn't *synonymous* with race (Hanover Research, 2014; Jackson et al., 2017). An authentic diversification of workforce means moving towards more holistic representations of difference, which includes additional minoritized identity markers (e.g., disability, LGBTQIA+, non-Christian, women, etc.) and lived experiences—and honoring these differences at every level of decision-making. For organizations who want to shift towards authentic DEI and anti-oppressive practices, moving beyond boilerplate characterizations of diversity is non-negotiable.

[Click to Activate Presentation for More Information](#)



Activity: [Ask a Chief Diversity Officer](#)

Source: educause

Description: Deborah Stanley-McAulay is chief diversity officer for Yale University.



Directions: Watch the clip above, then answer the following reflective prompts ([Please download and save this document before editing](#)):

- In what *systemic* ways can your organization reinforce the DEI training/techniques that they receive during professional learning?
- To what extent is DEI integrated into your organization's standard operations and procedures?
- How can integrating DEI into hiring practices affect your organizations climate?



Resource: [Reexamining Workforce Diversity: Authentic Representations of Difference](#)

Source: Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center

Description: This issue of *Equity Dispatch* seeks to interrogate and redefine what it should mean to have a diverse workforce, specifically at the district level. When we begin to recognize the importance of holistic representations of difference, we can begin to shift the culture of our districts in equitable and inclusive ways.

Why this Resource?

This resource reinforces the benefits of attending to authentic DEI in the workplace by surfacing that encouraging shifts in praxis lends itself to “surfacing voices in the school community that have been historically silenced and promotes equitable practices” (Jackson et al., 2017, p. 3). In this way we acknowledge the efforts toward paradigmatic shifts in the workplace as whole, facilitated by ensuring we are hiring the most effective people, in the most effective way.

III. Foundations for Cultural Responsivity and Diversity in Educational Hiring Practices and Processes

Now that we have discussed the importance of hiring a culturally responsive and diverse workforce, let’s establish some foundational understandings for cultural responsivity and diversity in educational hiring practices and processes. Before starting the hiring process, it’s important to ensure your policies and practices are equity-focused through a grounding in authentic representation and the equitable distribution of people and resources, including how we use language in our everyday discourse and materials. It is through foregrounding these priorities that we can ensure that they are also an *outcome* of our efforts, becoming standardized in our policies and practices.

[**Click to Activate Presentation for More Information**](#)





Activity: Review the MAP Center's *Critical Language Style Guide* (linked below)



Directions: Review the *Critical Language Style Guide* and interrogate how you characterize potential hires. Navigate to take notes on the following prompts (Please download and save this document before editing):

- Wow & Wonder: What surprised you while you were reading? Given what you read, what are you wondering about related to your current and future hiring practices?
- In what ways can your organization strengthen and expand how you are languaging diversity in your hiring materials?
- How can you begin to move toward authentic diversity?



Resource: [Critical Language Style Guide](#)

Source: Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center

Description: Language has the power to reinforce and perpetuate inequitable practices (Briscoe et al., 2009). Thus, developing an awareness for and use of critical language is imperative to critiquing and challenge existing power structures.

The purpose of this *Equity Tool* is to provide guidance on the critical use of language, through surfacing and discussing key aspects of critical language framework.

Why this Resource?

Attending to individuals' and collective personhood through how you address them is basic decorum. However, knowing which terms to use is not enough to decolonize how we refer to minoritized groups; part of moving beyond cognitive dissonance takes both will and tools. As such, DEI efforts require both direction and rationale to crystallize understandings of *why* and *how* language is powerful. We must commit to honoring language in all materials, and in action.

IV. Demonstrating Critical Consciousness in Hiring Practices: Introducing the CRDW Framework

In section three, we talked about the importance of attending to disparities in race and other identities in hiring, laying the foundation for how we think about and approach authentic representation and the equitable distribution of assets. In this section, we will begin to move toward structures which will serve to crystallize what has been presented thus far.

In order foster sustainable conditions for hiring a culturally responsive and diverse workforce, we propose the Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce (CRDW) Framework:

- Creating and embracing opportunities for cultivating critical consciousness
- Ability to interrogate current hiring protocol, related hiring tools, and processes to surface marginalizing language and practices
- Crafting an action plan to redress identified gaps. This necessitates implementing, monitoring, and evaluating your plan's execution and impact to address inequities

Much like any other efforts to ensure cultural competency and anti-oppressive education drive DEI efforts, we must ensure that the individuals who are creating policy and making decisions have attended to their own cultural competencies and biases through the building/strengthening of critical consciousness. In this way, the hiring processes will be reinforced through being intentionally anti-oppressive, and authentically inclusive. In consideration of hiring practices in schools, it is essential to increase school leaders' competence to ensure intentional, holistic, equity-centered practices (Warren et al., 2016).

In this **first part of the CRDW Framework**, you will explore what it means to be critically conscious to benefit yourself and your organizational goals of being equity-centered.

[Click to Activate Presentation for More Information](#)



Activity: Sample set of interview questions to examine to screen for bias



Directions: Please review these interview questions, and write your reflections to the following reflective prompts (**[Please download and save this document before editing](#)**):

- What biases can you perceive in the questions?
- How might hiring teams interpret the answers to these questions?
- How might you rewrite the questions to reflect culturally responsive practices?



Resource: [Developing Critical Consciousness through Professional Learning](#)

Source: Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center

Description: Dr. Sharon Radd talks about the importance of critical consciousness for transformative professional learning.

Why this Resource?

This podcast provides a rationale for grounding professional learning in critical consciousness, a consistent, active state of awareness of [systemic] inequities. This is to ensure we are surfacing biases and employing methods and strategies of critical reflection and action, towards becoming individuals and collectives who tend toward courageous conversations (Singleton, 2014) to enact change. Embedding critical consciousness into professional learning can be another tool/defense when disrupting oppressive hiring practices.

V. Examining Your Infrastructure: A Self-Assessment towards a Diverse Educator Workforce

A critically conscious and diverse educator workforce has always been a necessity. There remains an enduring identity and cultural gap between public school teachers and the student population (Gonzalez et al., 2018; Rafa & Roberts, 2020). In this **second part of the CRDW Framework**, you will engage in a self-assessment, serving to support teams in examining current hiring structure, systems, and practices.

[Click to Activate Presentation for More Information](#)



Activity: Post-session Assessment

Directions: The [Infrastructure for Increasing and Sustaining a Culturally Responsive Diverse Educator Workforce District Self-Assessment](#) is designed to support individuals in reflecting on the extent to which the infrastructure for increasing and sustaining a culturally responsive diverse educator workforce is in place in their district. The purpose of this assessment is to facilitate discussion among leaders in order to advance equitable practices at the organizational level. This tool is based, in part, on *the Unrealized Impact: The Case for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion* report (Padamsee & Crowe, 2017).

To use this assessment, you will need to first make a copy of the self-assessment before disseminating and completing the survey items. Please note that this assessment is created using the Google Forms platform. If your district or someone on your team has a Google account, you will be able to save your responses on your district's or that person's Google drive. If your district or someone on your team does not have a Google account, you will need to create an account to access a copy of this self-assessment.

To use the self-assessment please complete the following actions:

1. Open your district's or team member's Google account or create a Google account.
2. Click on [*Infrastructure for Increasing and Sustaining a Culturally Responsive Diverse Educator Workforce District Self-Assessment*](#) link or copy and paste the following URL shorturl.at/hLPUV in your browser.
3. Once the self-assessment is open in your Google account, use the send button to create a link to disseminate the survey to your selected staff.



Resource: [Grow Your Own Special Programs: Contributing More Than Diversity](#)

Source: Midwest & Plains Equity Assistance Center

Description: This *Brief* highlights Grow Your Own (GYO) special education alternative licensure programs for advancing inclusive schools by increasing teacher diversity while tapping into the community cultural wealth that GYO candidates bring to schools.

Why this Resource?

The criticality of ensuring that students from historically marginalized groups feel safe in schools is high. This is as inclusive of culturally relevant curriculum and instruction, as it is having administrators and educators who are committed to students' learning and safety. Grow Your Own (GYO) programs is one powerful method in hiring a culturally responsive and diverse workforce (Gonzalez et al., 2018; Rafa & Roberts, 2020). At the macro level, attending to building the cultural responsiveness and diversity of the current educator workforce could serve as an entrée for high school students (for example) into what it means to be an educator who is properly cared for, nurtured, and supported.

VI. Conclusion & Next Steps

Congratulations! You have completed the *Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce* learning module!

Throughout this learning experience, you were encouraged to take time with each resource and apply it to your current context reflecting on what you may already be doing—or what you may be able to do better. By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Articulate a strong rationale for the importance of developing a culturally responsive and diverse workforce
- Develop an interrogative process which serves to screen for potential applicants' implicit biases, towards surfacing cultural competency
- Establish a structure towards creating a culturally responsive and diverse hiring committee. Steps toward developing a framework for cultural responsiveness and diversity in educational hiring practices and processes include:
 - Creating and embracing opportunities for cultivating critical consciousness
 - Ability to interrogate current hiring protocol, related hiring tools, and processes to surface marginalizing language and practices
 - Crafting an action plan based on the *Infrastructure for Increasing and Sustaining a Culturally Responsive Diverse Educator Workforce District Self-Assessment*, to redress identified gaps. This necessitates implementing, monitoring, and evaluating your plan's execution and impact to address inequities

In this last part of the CRDW Framework, with the notes, resources, knowledge, and curiosities you've gained, we encourage you to go back to your institution to:

- Schedule a meeting(s) to discuss with your team what you have discovered
- Draft a list of next steps i.e., how will you operationalize what you have learned?
- Work with your team(s) to implement what you have learned; create a plan which includes use of the resources provided, assessment data, goals, and objectives toward systemic change
- Make a commitment to work diligently toward increasing the capacity of your organization



Hiring a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Workforce



Professional Development Units

The suggested amount of Professional Development Units for this course is 5 contact hours.

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