

**Hartford's District Action Plan
to Increase Representation for Black and Latino Educators
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Aronson Consulting, LLC

Strategic Planning & Research:
Amanda Aronson
Principal
Aronson Consulting, LLC
www.aronsonconsulting.org

Abstract

After assessing the current effects of school culture on teacher retention within the Hartford Public Schools (HPS), as well as the certification barriers challenging interested out-of-state teachers, the Office of Talent Management (OTM) began to examine realistic strategies for the recruitment and long-term retention of minority teachers.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted with 174 people, and an additional 31 students were surveyed. Our broad qualitative research, combined with industry research and a review of previous plans created by the Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruiting Alliance, revealed a consensus about what our strategy should be. Our proposed plan will position us to begin a targeted approach that will harmonize with the district's strategic goals for teaching and learning, and advocate for support that will not only benefit Hartford Public Schools (HPS) but other districts as well.

HPS will strive to support any existing qualified and interested Bachelor-prepared staff to move from their current roles as paraprofessionals, child development associates (CDAs) and support staff to the next level of employment as certified educators. Currently, HPS employs 261 Bachelor-educated minority staff working in these roles, and a quick survey revealed that at least 30 of these professionals would commit to certification if supported.

We found encouragement for this approach from our students, who when interviewed, revealed that they felt most connected to the adults in their schools who could best understand their cultural experiences—especially if they were from Hartford, which many of the staff we interviewed were. When we asked our teachers and administrators for feedback, they overwhelmingly noted that this kind of investment in existing staff would not only benefit teacher morale, the increase in earning potential for adults in the Hartford region could begin a consistent economic lift that could help strengthen local families, create professional pathways for residents, and serve as inspiration for children, who could see the adults in their lives on career paths leading to a comfortable living wage. This strategy has the added potential to increase the likelihood of wrap-around support for our children by retaining teachers who may live locally and be more likely to know our students and families through the community.

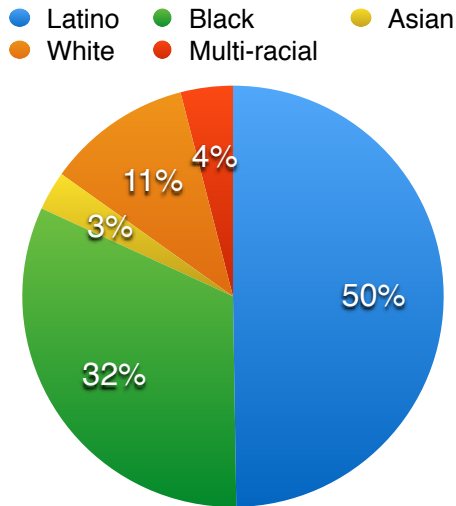
This strategy has the greatest potential to impact our schools and our city both short and long term; however, it has two key factors beyond the scope of our control that could make or break its success. The first is an appropriate number of certification officers to guide individualized certification inquiries, and the second is the financial support necessary to help qualified candidates complete certification.

The following plan will address how we can work with existing capacity, as well as how two new staff positions and an intern could begin longer-term recruitment efforts designed to inspire more students to enter education and better position HPS to recruit out-of-state candidates who would consider Hartford, respond to any future incentives offered, and be retained.

Section 1: Introduction

A. District Overview

While HPS exceeds the national averages for percentage of minority teachers and administrators, we do not have a ratio that serves our student demographics. Our current plan will continue to include a strong partnership with our Teacher Prep Academy, but also move us beyond our other past strategies, which focused on advertising, fairs, and out-of-state recruiting. We will focus on investing in our existing staff. If successful, we can increase our minority teacher representation within approximately 2 years.



Ethnic Breakdown of 21,00 HPS Students

Demographic Data for HPS Students

- Over 80 different languages spoken in homes
- 85.3% eligible for free/reduced price lunch

Percentage of Leadership and Faculty Who Report as Educators of Color

Principals	49%	(national avg. 17.6%)
Administrators	38%	(national avg. 17.6%)
Teachers	24%	(national avg. 17.3%)

B. Overview of Process

We began our planning by hosting a strategic-planning session with key stakeholders, as well as by doing a review of which recruitment strategies were working well, which were not, and how the current Office of Talent Management (OTM) team was structured. We then embarked on intensive qualitative field research. One hundred seventy four people were interviewed, and an additional 31 students were surveyed. Our goal was to understand how our teacher-retention rates were affecting our ability to recruit, where our most robust and consistent recruitment pool was, and how we could encourage more students to enter the field of urban education to create and sustain a long-term pipeline of certified candidates. We also examined why HPS educators leave our district, and if incentives offered by other states are proving effective. These questions prompted us to include the perspectives of independent schools, and we attended a panel discussion on minority leadership, which was part of a multi-day Leadership Institute for Educators of Color designed by Kingwood Oxford School in West Hartford.

Additionally, we reviewed:

- Minority teacher recruitment plans prepared by the Regional Education Service Center (RESC) Minority Teacher Recruitment (MTR) program;
- *Quality Teaching in At-Risk Schools*, a report published by The National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools;

- *Minority Teacher Recruitment, Development & Retention*, a report published by the Education Alliance at Brown University;
- *Best Practices in Minority Teacher Recruitment: A Literature Review* published by the CT RESC Alliance Minority Teacher Recruiting Initiative;
- *Evaluation of the Wallace Reader's Digest Fund's Pathways to Teaching Career Program*, published by the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C.;
- Data relative to long-term retention of teachers who receive incentives upon hire.

Finally, we circled back to our higher education partners to gather feedback on our plan and tested our theories with staff in our key demographic of HPS paraprofessionals, CDAs and support staff.

Breakdown of Interviews

76 students

Fifty three were from magnet schools. Twenty two of the 53 were interviewed in focus groups, and 31 were surveyed. Twenty one were Hartford Youth Scholars interviewed in focus groups. Two of the 53 were alumni of the Teacher Prep Academy and were interviewed together.

41 Teachers

Four were named Teachers of the Year. Fifteen were current Teacher Prep faculty interviewed in focus groups. Five left for independent schools. Five left for suburban schools. Two were current Teach For America corp members. Eight were out-of-state urban teachers. Two were independent school teachers from Puerto Rico.

14 Administrators

Four were current principals. Two were other administrators. Four were principals and administrators who left for other suburbs or independent schools. Four were out-of-state urban administrators.

48 Additional

Two were from CT NAACP chapters. Three were from the Hartford Federation of Teachers (HFT). Four were from the Superintendent's Cabinet. Two were from CREC. Eight were from youth programs or were Sunday school teachers. Three were out-of-state recruiters in Atlanta, North Carolina, and Teach For America, respectively. Five were HBCU alumni who work in Connecticut education and business sectors. One was from the Hartford Board of Education. Seven were from higher education (UCONN, CCSU, UHARTT). One was from the Alternative Route to Certification Office in the Office of Higher Education. Twelve were from HPS staff (paraprofessionals, CDAs, support staff).

26 Parents

Eighteen were interviewed in focus groups. Eight were interviewed individually.

*Many of the adults in other categories were also HPS parents.

Section 2: Review of Workforce Data

A. Workforce Description

Currently, 49% of principals, 38% of administrators, and 24% of teachers are educators of color. Finding candidates who express an interest in teaching in Hartford has not been an issue for us recently; hiring and retaining them has been. The main barriers to moving an interested candidate to an official hire are certification issues and passing the necessary Praxis exams.

We lose highly talented candidates to other states and to the independent schools because candidates feel our certification process does not respect their credentials from other states and that they would incur unfair costs and time delays to go through our certification process. The candidates we hire most successfully come from CT teacher-prep programs; however, they are not being retained. While we do not have our exit surveys disaggregated by ethnicity due to inconsistencies in employee self reporting, our data does reveal that not all school cultures support the retention of teachers who are hired.

Exit Survey Data	Reasons for Leaving (in order of importance)	Reasons for Staying (in order of importance)
	Dissatisfaction with Manager (lack of support from administration)	Children
	Working Conditions	Type of Work
	Retirement	Benefits/Pay

This creates an ongoing cycle of recruitment and on-boarding for OTM, and significant time is spent filling unexpected vacancies throughout the year. Teach For America (TFA) candidates have been consistently supportive in Hartford, but they are also not being retained. The average TFA hire remains in the district for 2.19 years.

Average Length of Employment for Teach for America Faculty (in years)	
Cohort: 2007-8	2.82
Cohort: 2008-9	2.02
Cohort: 2009-10	2.23
Cohort: 2010-11	2.07
Cohort: 2011-12	2.25
Cohort: 2012-13	1.92
Average	2.19

We are also at a disadvantage when competing with other states because we do not have a mandatory and successful new teacher support system—a proven key component for retention. Our data shows that in the 2014-15 school year, less than half of all new teachers attended the first day of orientation, and participation waned significantly throughout the school year.

Atlanta, for example, has a nationally renowned program that requires full participation at orientation and at monthly workshops, and they match first and second-year teachers with mentors who offer guidance, feedback and lesson modeling. They report that this is an attractive benefit to potential hires when they are recruiting and supports the retention of their teachers.

Percentage of New Teachers Attending Workshops	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Orientation: Day 1	69	72	48
Orientation: Day 2	69	63.2	35
Orientation: Day 3	73	67.2	42
September	N/A	49.6	15
October	59	42.4	27
November	35	23.2	21
December	42	19.2	11
January	46	22.4	Canceled due to low enrollment
February	34	26.4	17
March	20	12.8	6
April	32	12.8	6
May	N/A	6.4	

Results of Student Focus Groups & Surveys

Seventy six students were interviewed personally, and an additional 31 were surveyed.

Do You Enjoy School?

Yes: 52.6% No: 3.9% Mostly: 30.3% Not Really: 13.2%

When the Hartford Youth Scholar data was extracted, 100% of high school students said Yes (all of whom were enrolled at independent schools). Forty two percent of middle school students said Yes, 50% said Mostly and 8% said Not Really (most positive responses were from children enrolled at HPS magnet schools).

Is it Important to You That Your Teachers Look Like You Ethnically?

Yes: 16.6% No: 20% Sort of: 28.4% Not Really: 35%

When students answered in a written format, only half felt it was important that their teachers look like them; however, when asked orally about which teachers they felt most connected to, nearly all students described teachers who could relate to them culturally or because they understood their neighborhoods, and their answers implied they were referring to minority educators.

Would You Consider Becoming a Teacher?

Yes: 6.5% No: 56.5% Maybe: 37%

What Do You Think it Would be Like to be a Teacher?

30% had positive impressions (fun, meaningful)
70% had negative impressions (hard, stressful, hard to manage behavior)

Do You Think a Career in Teaching Would Provide You With a Good Starting Salary?

Yes: 34%

No: 16%

Maybe: 50%

Would You Think More About Becoming a Teacher if Your Boss Would Pay Off Your College Loans if You Taught for Three Years After You Finished College?

Definitely: 43%

No: 46%

Maybe: 11%

Results of Parent Focus Groups & Interviews

Eighteen were surveyed and interviewed, and an additional 8 were interviewed.

Would You Encourage Your Child to Teach?

Yes: 50%

No: 22%

Maybe: 28%

What if Incentives Such as Loan Forgiveness and Housing Support Were Offered?

Yes: 78%

No: 22%

Feedback from Higher Education and Other Certification Partners

One hundred percent of our Higher Education partners interviewed noted that the majority of candidates graduating from their teacher-prep programs are Caucasian and cite challenges when organizing their certification process and Praxis preparation as the primary barriers preventing an increased pool of qualified and certified educators.

The Alternative Route to Certification Office (ARC), which is the second largest preparer of critical teacher shortage areas in CT for grades 7-12 (core subjects), reported that the majority of their applicants are Caucasian and are mid to late-career professionals. Their enrollment has dropped 1/3 in the last twelve years. Candidates need to have passed Praxis I and II and meet course requirements before becoming enrolled. Candidates can enroll with a Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP), but most applicants are unaware of them. Their graduates seek employment statewide and some become employed because their districts paid for their certification (New London and New Haven currently have students enrolled.)

Current (Minority) Non-Certified Staff Holding Bachelor’s Degrees	
Paraprofessionals	144
Child Development Associates	17
Support Staff	100
Total Potential Internal Staff to Target for Certification	261

The timing of our planning corresponded with the end of the school year, so we were not able to survey all of the paraprofessionals, child development associates and support staff who are Bachelor's prepared. However, we were able to identify 30 who are not only qualified, but who have also been working in our schools and would commit to being certified if supported to do so. Twenty were at the Teacher Prep Academy and 10 more were interviewed personally and were all from a magnet school known for its positive school culture.

Sample of Current Staff Who Are Interested in Certification		
Role	Years at HPS	Current Degree
Support Staff	3	BA in English/Minor in Psychology
Paraprofessional	NA	Masters in Early Childhood Education Masters in Integrated Studies
Paraprofessional	29	Two Associates Degrees (121 credits) and close to Bachelors in Early Childhood Education
Paraprofessional	12	BA in Math BA in General Studies Masters in Math
CDA	8	BA in English BA in Early Childhood Education Masters nearly complete

B. Revelations

This data reveals that our experience in Hartford relative to minority teacher recruitment is not dissimilar from what other districts nationwide are facing: attrition is outpacing recruitment, making it increasingly difficult to attract candidates to a district struggling with retention.

National data suggests, and our interviews support, that while salary is a concern, teachers are leaving primarily due to school culture concerns and lack of support. Out-of-state staff are not feeling compelled to complete and finance additional coursework, nor take and pay for the Praxis I and Praxis II when they can avoid both of those burdens by accepting employment in another state or at an independent school. The salaries at independent schools are not competitive with public school salaries; however, minority candidates report greater job satisfaction due to teacher autonomy and professional development. Existing non-certified teachers who are pursuing certification independently appreciated the course reimbursement offered by the district, but noted that at only 6 credits allowed per year, the time it would take to do their coursework was too long to wait.

When we figure in student preferences for local teachers, and the fact that there are not enough minority candidates in the pipeline for our district's short-term needs, these factors suggest that it is wisest to concentrate our recruitment efforts and funds on the demographic that is already proving to be committed to HPS, understands our current school culture, is likely to have family connections to remain in the area long term, and is proving successful at connecting with the children. Nationwide, this demographic is also proving effective as a focus in minority-teacher recruitment.

Our interviews suggest that the concerns raised by minority teachers about support and cultural isolation could be alleviated by creating support systems within the district. Culturally-specific resources relative to what Hartford has to offer would be an additional way to help connect minority faculty to their respective cultural communities (e.g. cultural clubs, churches, hair salons, ethnic restaurants, ethnic events, etc.) to try and enhance their overall quality of life in the Hartford area.

As we designed our long-term plans, we took into account the profile that emerged throughout our interviews of the urban educators (not just teachers) working in Hartford who are being retained. When describing his or her path to education, all but one teacher noted enjoying school as a child. All had positive experiences working with youth when he or she was young and felt a specific call to action to urban teaching. Based on this profile, we need to focus some of our energy on ensuring that our students experience the same joy in their education, target messages to youth working with children and create calls to action, so students and members of the Hartford community are compelled to consider and encourage teaching as a career.

Currently, the majority of students interviewed are not considering being a teacher, nor do they have positive impressions for what teaching would be like as a career. When minority children were asked which careers they were considering, most answered medicine and law for their earning potential. We were pleased to see that most of the children answered Yes or Mostly when asked if they enjoyed school; however, that data was taken primarily from children in the magnet schools and from Hartford Youth Scholars who have access to independent school education. The students attending neighborhood schools did not overwhelmingly say that they enjoyed school, had more negative impressions of what teaching would be like, and were not as likely to consider teaching as a career. Additionally, as the student age grew older and the more individualized and/or privatized his or her education became, the more he or she reported enjoying school, which nurtured more positive impressions of teaching as a career.

C. Broad Questions

- If certification-related issues are a barrier to substantial out-of-state recruitment, and in-state programs are not producing enough minority candidates, where can we focus?
- If existing Bachelor-prepared paraprofessionals, CDA's and support staff in HPS are the most likely candidates for recruitment, and they are the demographic connecting best to the children, how can we help lift them to certification?
- If the two primary barriers for the recruitment of our key demographic are two areas that are outside of our current capacity, and somewhat out of our control, (one-on-one certification path planning & education financing), what can we do with the capacity we do have and with the areas we can control?

Section 3: Actions That Will Address Recruitment and Retention Challenges

A. Planning Process

We designed our process to examine as many different angles of this issue as possible. Starting with a broad session to hear about ubiquitous challenges and arguments for why different strategies should be considered, we designed an aggressive qualitative research schedule to listen to the *exact* steps that successful urban teachers took to get to their current positions.

We also questioned them about how they overcame barriers and which barriers they are noticing in their field for minority candidates. We also wanted to learn what motivated them to enter urban education and what was affecting their overall job satisfaction. Finally, we wanted to hear from people who were not successfully achieving their certification goals and also connect with educators who left the HPS system for other educational communities to learn why and what they were enjoying in their new positions, if they stayed in education.

As we examined each of the ideas presented by stakeholders for what our plans should be, we used our interviews to understand what the barriers were to each idea achieving success.

B. Prioritization

Mid-way through our planning, we realized we had a near consensus from the teachers, parents, students, union representatives, public and private school administrators and youth group leaders we interviewed for why supporting the lifting of paraprofessionals, CDAs and support staff made the most sense given our barriers. The most important step we then took was to circle back to the same demographics and ask pointed questions about where the process breaks down, so we could build a realistic plan.

Our stakeholders were insistent that we recognize the need for short term, mid-term and long-term plans, and we agreed that we would create a plan with three phases in mind.

Because our findings and discussions mirrored work that had already been submitted to the State in previous plans about how to support “grow-your-own” campaigns, inspire middle and high school students to choose a career in education, and encourage mid-career professionals to switch to education, we felt it was most important to focus our work on the *process* we needed to follow to achieve short-term results, while also laying out well-paced strategic steps to make steady progress on long-term goals.

The more deeply we examined what it would take for HPS to succeed at recruiting and retaining minority teacher candidates, the more clearly we recognized how comprehensive our approach needs to be. We spent time looking at how we can partner with our district leadership, along with our communications, marketing, strategic partnerships, finance, technology, professional learning and staffing departments to increase our chances for success. Partnership with district leadership is necessary to make this plan work. We put plans in place for both current and enhanced capacity. However, we still need support from other departments for plans to unfold in a coordinated manner. We began those conversations, and they were well received by leadership.

The only area where we did not experience consensus was relative to how best to incorporate Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The biggest point of contention was not whether these were valuable sources of teachers, but whether the recruitment strategy for them was best positioned as a short-term strategy or a long-term one. We ultimately found ways to incorporate these institutions into our mid-term and long-term plans. The consistent certification hurdles out-of-state candidates experience make it more practical for us to choose a different short-term goal and then work to improve the chances of out-of-state HBCU and HSI recruitment being successful long term. HBCU and HSI recruitment has historically been successful, but certification regulations have changed over time, which has affected our ability to utilize that avenue as fully as we would like.

We also chose to focus on lifting our Bachelor-educated paraprofessional, CDA and support staff to certification because that strategy falls in line with the current strategic plans of the district to select targeted areas and focus on processes to implement them well. The focus of the district will prioritize teaching and learning, so efforts in those areas will naturally serve to support the improvement of school culture and enhance teacher development—ultimately continuing to prepare our key demographic and create better school cultures to encourage retention.

When we proposed our specific plan to a union representative, a sample of internal staff who met our key demographic requirements, and some higher education partners, those we spoke with agreed that we were on the right track, and we discovered that with only minimal outreach, that we had 30 staff ready to commit to being certified if offered the opportunity with support. (See sample in Section 2: Workforce Data).

Central Connecticut State University also ran a pilot workshop to test if a strategy to invite interested potential students to an evening where they could receive guidance on the process would be effective, and they agreed that the need coincides with the interest. Their experience also confirmed the barriers we identified in our research, since they encountered the same barriers to moving candidates beyond a certain point: once a candidate receives general guidance on what his or her certification path might be, that person requires one-on-one support to determine which course requirements are needed, and in order to begin at an institution, that candidate would need to have passed the Praxis tests to be admitted. Passing the Praxis is a major challenge for many potential candidates.

As we fine-tuned our process, we examined which elements were beyond our control (enough certification officers and major funding), and which ones were not (support with Praxis and trying to help inform candidates of funding options.)

While it may seem that our higher education partners are the natural support system for course planning and tutoring for Praxis, relying on them for a consistent process is not sustainable. Our interviews confirmed our assumptions that they cannot be expected to commit significant human capital to students who may not enter their programs. As well intended as they are, they simply do not have the capacity to offer that support, and they need to prioritize their existing student base before reaching out to support the community in that way.

Certification-planning and funding support may be outside the scope of our current resources, but we feel that beginning our plan to make as much progress as we can is still a good investment of time and resources. It was suggested to us that if we purchase Praxis Prep materials, we can offer space and encouragement for potential candidates to gather in groups to study and encourage our own teachers to volunteer as tutors. Not only can they then support one another with test prep, they will also build relationships throughout the district. We envision trying to coordinate these sessions with other parent meetings or events so that childcare can be available.

Hartford Public Schools OTM Hosts Fall and Spring Certification Planning Fairs
(advertised publicly and through union reps, for all interested internal staff)

Target is the Bachelor-educated non-certified minority staff
144 Paras, 17 CDAs, 100 HESP

UCONN

CCSU

USJ

UHARTT

OTHERS

ARC

CSDE

University Partners, ARC and the CSDE
each bring their own certification officers and/or curriculum advisors to counsel individual staff
about **general** next steps and **general** certification planning

BREAKDOWN POINT #1

There are not enough certification officers to counsel 261 adults individually about their own unique paths to certification. Each person will need different information about course requirements depending on his or her respective transcripts and areas of interest.

Aside from general goodwill, university partners do not have the human capital, nor can they be expected to exhaust those they do have, to counsel people who may not become their students. Nor can they be expected to be sources for reliable Praxis tutoring for adults who may not become their students.

BREAKDOWN POINT #2
Many need financial support to attend program

BREAKDOWN POINT #3
Need to pass Praxis before being accepted into a program

HPS can strive to offer certification scholarships

HPS can host Praxis tutoring workshops

Students enter certification programs

Graduates get certified & then are hired by HPS. They attain more earning potential, while creating a pathway for future teachers and serving as role models for children.

A shift in marketing is also an area where we could work within our current capacity. While we still need to advertise openings, we will begin looking at more targeted resources such as church bulletins and cultural club newsletters to run stories and ads that create a call to action for all community members to support HPS in encouraging careers in education. We will also try to work with our external communications department to ask our local media to balance their reporting with some stories highlighting our urban teachers and why they teach, as well as features about events we are running for minority candidates. Current media coverage is reinforcing that a career in education is unappealing.

We also see great potential in how we can better utilize our existing Minority Teacher Recruitment Open House and our visits to our higher education partners. We will shift the Open House to a Symposium that will still include the elements it does currently, but add community partners. Our goal is to create an inspiring call to action. We will also work with existing HPS staff to ask any alumni of traditionally black fraternities and sororities to visit them for networking evenings to talk with students early in their college careers about considering education in Hartford as a career, and to plant the seeds for choosing HPS for internships and other experiences that will provide them with early exposure to the children and our schools. We can also add information sessions directed specifically at freshmen and sophomores when we visit our higher education partners to speak to juniors and seniors. We will advertise these at the fraternities and sororities as well.

Looking beyond our short-term plan, we also see great need for three positions: A Development Associate, a Project Manager, and an Intern (paid). These added positions could help us achieve our outreach goals to develop and cultivate relationships with potential candidates, begin the important work of culturally specific marketing, engagement in partnerships with our local community groups, and the tracking of information. We envision the intern to be called upon approximately once per month.

Development Associate

- Work with high school guidance officers to ensure students know about HBCUs and encourage them as strong preparers of educators.
- Track all Hartford graduates who attend HBCUs and follow up with them in freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years to encourage early course planning, summer internships in HPS, to consider majoring in education, and to build relationships with key faculty at those schools.
- Build relationships with key faculty at HSIs, specifically at the Rio Piedras Bayamon and Sagrado Corazon campuses at the University of Puerto Rico.
- Encourage Hartford cultural clubs to assist HPS with the creation of culture-centric guides to help prospective and existing teachers connect with local support systems and resources.
- Work with local youth organizations and churches to encourage them to help identify students who would be good teachers and ensure that they have hard-copy information on hand about the general process of certification, as well as general information about where to look for financial support.

Project Manager

- Manage all tracking, cultivation and support of prospective paraprofessionals, CDAs, support staff and any other leads for minority teachers.
- Assist with social media outreach to augment the shift we anticipate making in our marketing to minority candidates.

Intern

- Assist with the management, tracking, cultivation and support of prospective paraprofessionals, CDAs, support staff and any other leads for minority teachers.

To achieve our long-term goals, we would like to revive the model that Hartford used to have for a (Hartford-specific) Minority Teacher Recruitment/Certification Support Center. It could offer a local, centralized location that would house staff who could field questions about the certification process and financial resources available in the city, and most importantly, certification officers who could assist with individualized planning. It could also help coordinate the practicum and student-teaching placements for any students wishing to secure one in an urban environment. We envision that space as one that could host cohort meetings for Praxis prep and be large enough for childcare. Hartford could hire from this center first when recruiting, and cultural resources could be available for staff settling into Hartford, as well as resources about Hartford housing and any special financing opportunities available for educators.

As our school cultures become more positive, our retention grows and our communities begin benefiting from the investment in its own citizens who have committed to our schools, HPS will be better positioned to recruit staff from outside Connecticut. They are likely to respond better to a call to action and any future incentives, clearly see the depth of our cultural communities, enter into more supportive induction processes, teach in more positive school environments, and be on-boarded by happier faculty who can mentor them. Retention rates will rise and outreach to HBCUs and HSIs will have a better return on investment when relationships can then be developed and cultivated based upon a better overall experience for what it would be like to be a teacher in Hartford.

C. Implementation Plan: Year One (by maximizing existing capacity)

- Examine current roles and responsibilities of OTM staff to determine if any shifts can be made to increase capacity. (Chief of Staff & OTM) *Fall 2015*
- Add a paid intern to support monitoring and reporting. (Superintendent) *Fall 2015*
- Work with communications to re-shape external marketing approach to include a periodic focus on why urban teachers choose to teach in Hartford and to try and create a call to action within cultural organizations and faith communities. (Recruitment & Communications) *Fall 2015*
- Advocate that higher education partners include a call to action in their programs and encourage early urban field exposure. (Professional Learning) *Fall 2015*
- Hold two planning nights for all interested paraprofessionals, CDAs and support staff to inform their interest in gaining certification and get educated about the global path to certification. Ask higher education partners to attend with their certification officers and State to send representation. (Recruitment & Higher Education partners) *Fall 2015 and Spring 2016*
- Purchase Praxis-prep materials and advertise tutoring sessions advocating for a cohort style to build relationships and support for people pursuing certification programs. (Professional Learning) *Summer 2015 purchase. Fall 2015 advertise.*
- Re-shape marketing approach from an advertising style to a call to action style, while trying to create a “did you know” tone that highlights cultural communities within Hartford. (Recruitment) *Fall 2015-Spring 2016*
- Run information sessions at higher education partners for freshmen/sophomores and juniors/seniors, and coordinate networking events with black fraternities and sororities at CT higher education institutions. (Recruitment & HPS Alumni of Fraternities/Sororities) *Fall 2015 and Spring 2016*

- Work with local media sources to encourage stories about lateral entry educators who may have more financial resources to self fund an accelerated path to certification via DSAP. (Recruitment & Communications) *Winter 2016*
- Hold a Hartford-specific Minority Teacher Recruitment Symposium. (OTM, Communications, Community & Family Engagement & Strategic Partnerships) *Spring 2016*
- Hold a junior night for all HPS juniors to learn about what an education career could look like. Present information about salary, professional development, planning for course work, benefits of returning back to Hartford, benefits for living in the city, stories from happy teachers, and long-term career possibilities. Invite granting organizations and others who could inform students about where scholarships are available. Encourage all interested students to take the Praxis right after graduation while content is still fresh. (Recruitment) *Winter 2016*

Implementation Plan: Year Two (with increased capacity)

- Add a development associate and a project manager. (Superintendent) *Summer 2016*
- Purchase a broader set of Praxis-prep materials. (Professional Learning) *Summer 2016*
- Offer *flexible* certification scholarships of \$10,000 each that can be used by Bachelor’s-educated minority paraprofessionals, CDAs or support staff who have been accepted into a program and meet hiring criteria with a promise of 5 years of teaching. (Superintendent) *Summer 2016*
- Compile a list of Hartford graduates entering teacher-prep programs and reach out to them each fall to encourage a return to Hartford and Hartford practicums. Keep their names and contact information on recruitment mailing lists. (Recruitment) *Summer 2016*
- Develop a social media outreach plan for potential in-state candidates to create calls to action. (e.g. “Strengthen Your Home,” “Consider an Urban Practicum.” “Go Urban!” “Why I Teach in Hartford,” “Engage at our Symposium…”). (Recruitment) *Summer 2016*

Section 4: Expected Outcomes

Impact Outcomes

A. Baseline Measurement of Progress

Our baseline will begin with the number of Bachelor-educator minority paraprofessionals, CDAs and support staff who are eligible for certification. Currently, that number is 261. We will then measure how many attend our two planning sessions and establish an updated baseline to anticipate the number of candidates we will attempt to lift. Because our initial inquiry suggests that 30 staff are enthusiastic about moving to the next step, we anticipate that being our number. Working with our current capacity, and without additional funding, we anticipate that we can realistically attempt to lift 5 staff beginning in fall of 2016 with an anticipated hire date of fall 2017.

B. Targets for Year One and Year Two

Primary target for year one will be to reach out to all existing Bachelor-educated minority paraprofessionals, CDAs and support staff and establish a baseline of at least 5 candidates to lift with an anticipated completion date of fall 2017.

In year two, we hope to have secured more significant resources to help candidates plan and fund their certification. With advocacy and awareness beginning in 2015, and assuming capacity-building resources can be added, we would like to plan for 25 staff to be lifted to the next level.

C. Implementation-Phase Commitments

We will demonstrate intermediate outcomes by tracking each step of our process beginning in the fall of 2015. We will begin with our baseline measurement for how many candidates attended the fall planning night and are committing to certification. Then we will note how many progress to meet one-on-one with certification planners, prepare for and take the Praxis, and enroll in a program.

By the fall of 2016, we will strive to have at least 5 candidates enrolled in a program, with approximately 40 serious prospects attending the 2016 fall planning session session.

Section 5: Monitoring and Reporting

A. Monitorization Mechanisms

To ensure that we are moving steadily toward our goals, we will use an intern to help us monitor each step of the candidate's process, so we can evaluate where any breakdowns are occurring and support candidates when needed. To do this, specifically, we will start with a baseline number of Bachelor-educator minority paraprofessionals, CDA's and support staff who are interested in certification, then track the following who:

- attend information nights and tutoring sessions;
- take the Praxis exams;
- get accepted into a program (noting which one);
- are eligible for DSAP;
- complete program;
- apply for a position;
- get hired.

B. Frequency of Reporting

Ideally, we would like to monitor this process with fields incorporated into a synthesized database, which will make it easier to run reports and keep data updated. However, our information systems are not currently coordinated for us to be able to do that. Our plan is to secure an intern to create spreadsheets for all of our data and monitor it monthly to ensure it is kept up to date. We will include all steps of the process on these spreadsheets, and Nancy Williams will monitor the progression of data and share progress with principals. Jennifer Allen will report to all internal departments in the fall and spring to keep them updated on our process and progress, and she will also report to the Board of Education and the Hartford Federation of Teachers to support close communication relative to this effort.