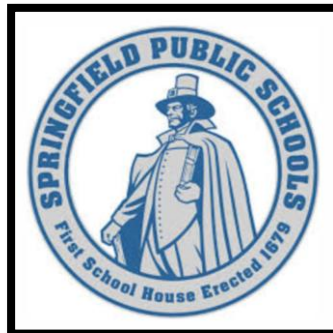


Diversity, Inclusion, and Racial Equity Team (DIRE)



History of the DIRE

In 2017, the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) began to organize educators of color in several Affiliates. Educators of color across the Springfield Educator Association developed a core team by utilizing one-on-one conversations. This core group of educators became ALANA (**A**frican, **L**atinx, **A**sian, and **N**ative **A**merican).

In January 2019, almost two-years after its first public action, ALANA educators met with the Superintendent and members of his cabinet to discuss the mission and goals of the committee, with a push for cultural competency training. ALANA did not get a commitment from the Superintendent at that time. However, in October 2019, during a PVP hosted community townhall, the same demand of cultural competency was a topic of interest and concern by student activists, and Superintendent Warwick agreed to work with SEA and PVP to roll out district-wide training for SPS staff.

From its inception and through many volunteer hours of its core team, the SEA ALANA inspired the development of the Diversity, Inclusion, and Racial Equity (DIRE) Initiative, a joint effort between Springfield Education Association (SEA), Springfield Public Schools (SPS), Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals and our community partner, Pioneer Valley Project (PVP) to address the barriers institutional racism imposes on students' academic success. ALANA was determined to develop a DIRE team with a strong mission and goals to dismantle white privilege and develop a school system based on a strong commitment to anti-racist practices.

History of the DIRE Team

In 2020, a collaboration between the Springfield Education Association/SEA ALANA, the Pioneer Valley Project, SPS Administration, and Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals was created to form DIRE.

DIRE labored to make a collective impact in transforming school climate, confronting institutional racism, and promoting academic excellence.

This team works to enhance five areas with Springfield Public Schools:

Policies and Procedures

Professional Development

Curriculum

Recruitment, Hiring and Retention of Educators of Color

Portrait of A Graduate (2022)

Collaboration

ALANA group (African-American, Latinx, Asian and Native American educators in Springfield)

Black Lives Matter Movement

Pioneer Valley Project

Springfield Education Association

Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals

Springfield Public Schools Administration

The Mission of (DIRE) Diversity, Inclusion, and Racial Equity Team is to:

Ensure

- ensure that the culture in all schools and the District is anti-racist and acknowledge that all lives cannot matter until brown and black lives matter.

Identify

- identify ways to foster the core values of diversity, inclusion, and racial equity to dismantle institutional and systemic racism throughout our District.

Work

- work to eradicate racist practices and ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are embedded, practiced, and sustained for our students, families, faculty, and staff.

Create

- create procedures and practices that eliminate racial injustice in our schools and District.

Build

- build awareness and empower educators and administrators to change curriculum.

Create

- create awareness and work to eradicate racism in our communities and profession.

Members of the DIRE Team



A group of 14 members comprised of educators, district personnel, and community members that meet bi-monthly to oversee the work.

The DIRE subcommittees meet once a month to brainstorm ideas and put together action plans in their perspective subcommittees.

30 total members

Chairs

Theresa Bryant
SEA Social Justice Organizer

Darcia Milner
Chief Schools Officer



Subcommittee: Policies and Procedures

Impact Statement/ Overarching Goals

Ensure all district employees, educators and administrators understand the historical and systemic racial injustices, and inequities that exist in our society and ensure that the aforementioned are not replicated within SPS worksites, classrooms, schools or the district.

Sub-Goal 1	Sub-Goal 2	Sub-Goal 3
Revise Code of Conduct	Develop a policy to deal with microaggression discussions that go awry	Develop DIRE/Equity Teams in our schools
Revise School Uniform Policy		
Revise Attendance Policy		
Revise Grading Policy		

School Based DIRE Postings

September 21, 2022

First Cohort-10 Schools

Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
Boland 7	Brunton 5	Central 10
Dorman 5	Gerena 7	Putnam 10
Talmadge 5	Glickman 5	STEM 5

Professional Development will be provided by:



Objective of the Institute to Advance Equity: Cycles of Improvement: Deepen facilitative leadership and continuous improvement practices in order to improve adult leadership and collaboration in service of equitable student outcomes.

School-based DIRE Teams network(blue) and coaching(pink) sessions

Session 1 6 hrs	Session 2 6 hrs	Session 3 90 mins coaching	Session 4 6 hrs	Session 5 90 mins coaching	Session 6 90 mins coaching	Session 7 90 mins coaching
December 7, 2022 9:00-2:30 VIRTUAL	January 23, 2023 9:00-2:30 VIRTUAL	Jan/Feb Date/time: TBD VIRTUAL	February 15, 2023 9:00-2:30 VIRTUAL	March Date/time: TBD VIRTUAL	April Date/time: TBD VIRTUAL	May Date/time: TBD VIRTUAL
<p>Foundations in Facilitative Leadership</p> <p>Analyze student data to Identify Equity Focal Group</p>	<p>LCS</p> <p>Conduct root cause analysis</p> <p>Instructional Core Vision</p>	<p>Review concept of short cycles & practical measurements</p> <p>Select/design high leverage change idea</p>	<p>Continue to strengthen leadership through giving and receiving feedback</p>	<p>Study team PDSA</p> <p>Strengthen how we measure the impact of our change ideas</p> <p>Plan next PDSA</p>	<p>Study team PDSA</p> <p>Revisit Root Cause Analysis</p> <p>Plan next PDSA</p>	<p>Study team PDSA</p> <p>Reflect on collective learning and impact</p> <p>Plan for amplifying & sustaining</p>

Next Steps

Policies & Procedures

Meet with Paul Gorski and go over his policy recommendations;
He is looking at Grading, Code of Conduct and Dress Code
Meet with School Committee Rep, Josiah Gonzalez to present the recommendations
Present recommendations to the School Committee

Solidify the process for how microaggressions are dealt with

Microaggressions are defined as the everyday, subtle, intentional — and oftentimes unintentional — interactions or behaviors that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups.

The difference between microaggressions and overt discrimination or macroaggressions, is that people who commit microaggressions might not even be aware of them.

Subtle acts of exclusion

While the speaker may not have intended the comment to be offensive, we must acknowledge the impact of our acts and statements

Get updated on the status of the POG Grading Team

Subcommittee

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Chairs

Brenda Dunn, Elementary Educator & Vice President of SEA

Stefania Raschilla, Chief of Instruction, SPS

Subcommittee: Professional Development

Impact Statement/ Overarching Goal

Make sure all Springfield educators, administrators and employees have initial and ongoing professional development whose purpose is to eliminate racial inequities and improve outcomes for all racial groups, making Springfield Public Schools a safe and equitable place to teach and learn.

Sub-Goal 1	Goal 2	Sub-Goal 2
<p>Educate administrators and staff on issues of diversity, inclusion, and racial equity through ongoing professional development.</p>	<p>Provide the professional development to ensure that people have the skills to be considered as racial and social justice facilitators of the DIRE teams in their schools and /or to be district racial equity facilitators.</p>	<p>Engage all educators in conversations and ongoing trainings about diversity, inclusion, and racial equity to create a diverse, inclusive, and culturally responsive staff for two full professional development days each year.</p> <p>Develop a pre and post survey for all educators to determine needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All administrators, secondary school teachers and para-professionals, counselors, department chairs and City Connects Coordinators have completed the basic 12-hour racial equity and microaggression training with Dr. Kalise Wornum. All elementary schools will start and complete training in the 22-23 school year. In the 22-23 school year all administrators will complete 12 hours of training on the Anti-Racist Leadership Competencies with the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity. (CLEE) Continue the Healing Racism Training. All assistant principals will attend the training in the 22-23 school year. 		<p>The current list of vetted professional development providers are; Kalise Wornum, Better Lessons, Newsela, Center for Leadership and Educational Equity, Mount Holyoke College, Healing Racism.</p>

Professional Development

Next Steps

Develop Plan/training for newly hired staff, that have missed Dr. Kalise Wornum trainings.

Schedule all school-based DIRE Teams PD.

9 Schools- 18 hours of School based PD with The Center for Leadership And Educational Equity (CLEE)

Schedule and Plan 4 sessions with CLEE, for all administrators on the Anti- Racist Competencies.

Schedule a time with Paul Gorski from The Equity Literacy Institute, and The Center for Leadership and Educational Equity (CLEE) to provide PD to The District Based Dire Leadership Team.

Have a discussion with CLEE, including questions about what impact PD has had to date. Add questions about Wornum training and what support people have received to carry on the work.

Subcommittee

Chairs

Cedric Cunningham

Secondary Educator

Brian Dickey

Director of Secondary English and
Libraries

Laura Mendes

Director of Literacy, Elementary &
Early Childhood Education



Curriculum: Subcommittee

Impact Statement/Overarching Goals

Develop curriculum that promotes racial social justice, challenges bias, and engages students in discussions about diversity, inclusion and racial equity. The curriculum incorporates the history of the racially oppressed and adds texts by black, brown and ethnic minority authors and works from diverse perspectives, holding every student to the same high expectations.

Sub Goal 1	Sub Goal 2	2022-2023
<p>Add a minimum of 25% new curriculum that promotes social justice, challenges bias, and engages all students from Preschool through Grade 12 in discussions about diversity, inclusion and racial equity. Incorporate into the curriculum the history of racial oppression and works by Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) authors and BIPOC characters that incorporate diverse perspectives.</p>	<p>Create pilot programs in at least 4 schools that will create DIRE projects across contents and then present these projects in the Spring during a “Diversity” night.</p>	<p>Continuously train teachers on having “courageous conversations” in at least 6 school’s PLCs, and train on how to approach racial issues in literature, to address racial equity and diversity. As an example, conducting book studies with ILSs, Chairs, Librarians, etc. that promote equity and diversity.</p>

Curriculum: Subcommittee



We have incorporated 25% new curriculum promoting diversity and equity in ELA grades 6-12. Researched, vetted and curated \$170,000 worth of new culturally diverse text to the SPS libraries.



17 new anchor texts and 90+ supplemental resources

Next Steps

Curriculum

Reading is an equity issue – Ensure teachers are providing high interest, grade level texts and providing evidence-based reading instruction.

Use ESSER funds to buy more books with diverse authors and characters.

Elementary - Auditing the ELA curriculum for diverse titles and text.

Secondary – Using the *Learning for Justice* website for teaching and learning.

Subcommittee: Recruitment, Hiring and Retaining Educators of Color

Chairs

Cathy Mastronardi

President
Springfield Federation of Paraprofessionals

Joy Ross

Adjustment Counselor

Valerie Williams

Senior Administrator of Talent and Diversity
Development



Subcommittee: Recruitment, Hiring and the Retention of Educators of Color

Impact Statement/ Overarching Goal

Evaluate and change the way we interview and hire staff of color to ensure transparency in the process.

Sub-Goal 1	Sub-Goal 2	Sub-Goal 3
To increase the retention of educator of color by understanding the experience of educators of color and other minority employees.	Evaluate and change the way we interview and hire staff of color to ensure transparency.	Hold administrators accountable in hiring and maintaining a qualified, diverse and culturally responsive workforce at all levels of the district.
	Have the Senior Administrator of Talent and Diversity Development's name on each posting for people to reach out to for additional support.	
	Create a bank of anti-racism questions/rubric to ask at interviews.	
	Change process so that educators of color who apply are kept in a database to be considered for the future.	

Next Steps

Recruitment, Hiring and Retaining Educators of Color

Develop process for SPS/SEA/SFOP to follow up with employees who have left the District.

Get the exit interview questionnaire data & develop ongoing process for review.

Get status of staying survey & distribute to members.

Review and analyze recent hiring data for administrator positions and others (by building, dept, etc.)

Subcommittee

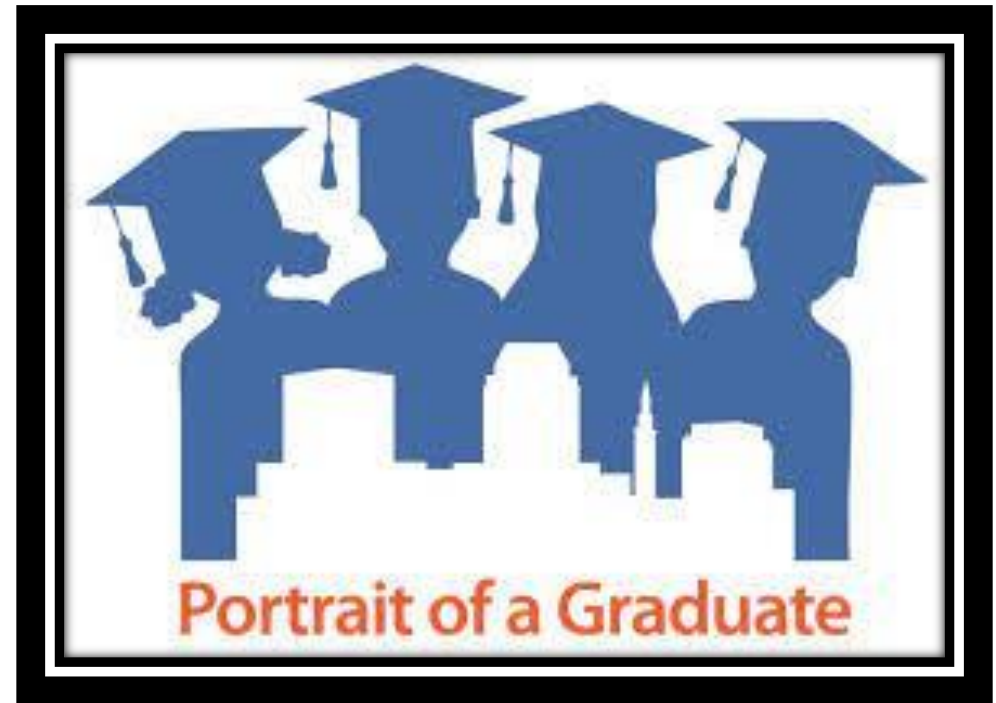
Chairs

Jose Escribano

Chief of Family and Community Engagement

Tracy Little- Sasanecki

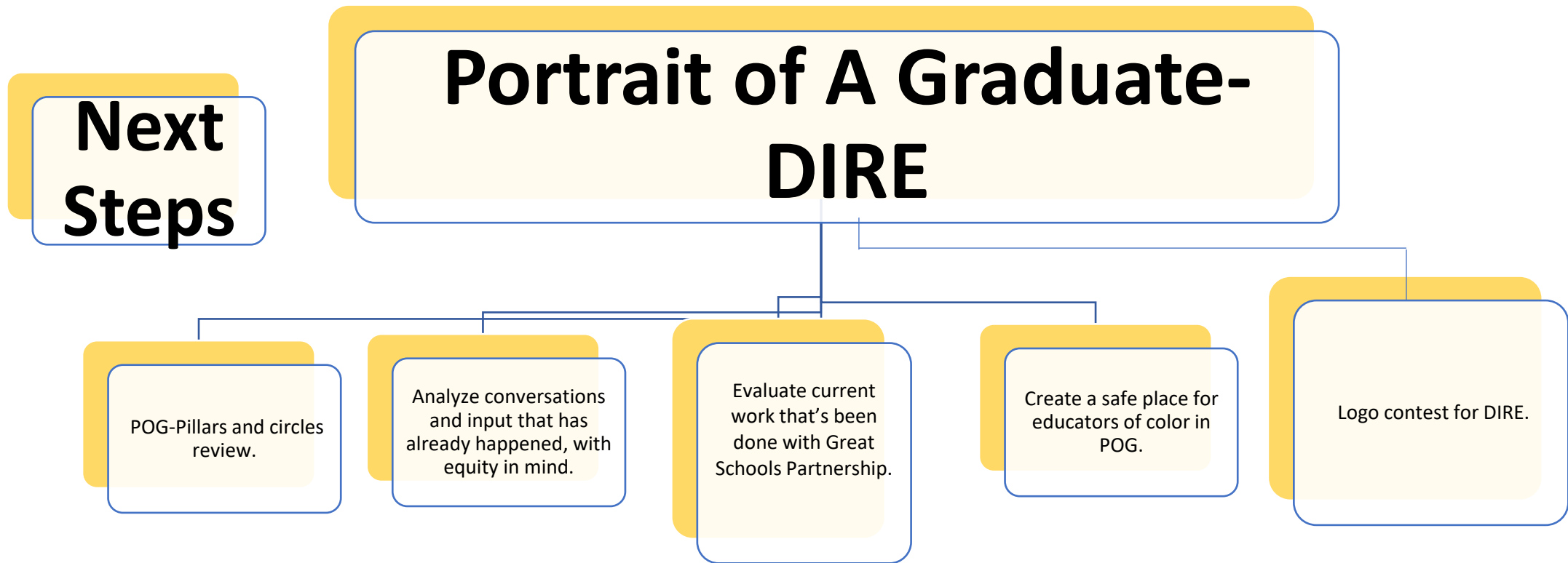
SEA President



Subcommittee: Portrait of A Graduate-DIRE

Impact Statement/Overarching Goal

We will ensure that racial equity is centered in the work of Portrait of a Graduate.



DIRE Accomplishments

Goals & Mission are solidified

Contributed different ideas for coaching services/professional development organizations

Prioritized large-scale needs for DIRE committees to work together effectively

Interviewed 2 vendors to support the District DIRE and School Equity Teams

SEA/AL acquired the REID Grant

DIRE acquired The Nellie Mae Grant, through the Pioneer Valley Project

DIRE Accomplishments, cont..

First Cohort-10 Schools Chosen to begin the work

Professional Development scheduled for School Based DIRE teams November 3rd, January 5th, and April 6th

We have incorporated 25% new curriculum promoting diversity and equity in ELA grades 6-12. Researched, vetted and curated \$170,000 worth of new culturally diverse text to the SPS libraries

17 new anchor texts and 90+ supplemental resources.

DIRE has acquired the REID Grant
REID grant is the Racial Equity Inclusion Diversity grant the SEA obtained from the MTA, to assist in the work we are doing as a District

DIRE has acquired, through the Pioneer Valley Project, The Nellie Mae Grant (\$900,000)
This grant will support the Partnership to identify racial equity barriers in its public K-12 school system and design and pilot strategies for addressing those barriers. The ultimate purpose of the grant is to support the Partnership to advance racial equity and excellent, student-centered learning in its public K-12 school system.



**“We need to know with
a fresh conviction that we
all share a common humanity
and that our diversity in the
world is the strength for our
future together.”**

**—Nelson Rolihlahla
Mandela**