Town and School District of Hartford

Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

Prepared by
Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity

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Preface

The Town of Hartford (Town) and the Hartford School District (HSD) are in the business of delivering goods and services for the benefit of its residents and visitors. Some products are tangible, such as snow removal, paved streets, parks/green spaces, and school and recreational infrastructure. Other products are more intangible, such as the perception of being tourist- or family-friendly, an educated workforce and citizenry, progressive, or capable of attracting and retaining business.

The Hartford Select Board and the Hartford School District with the assistance of the Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI) engaged our services to assist them in improving the design and delivery of their goods and services through the lens of diversity, inclusion, and equity. These practices are business-essential, value-added components that render the delivery of goods and services more efficiently with greater customer satisfaction across all customer groupings. These business-essential practices are not the end points in and of themselves.

Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity asserts that graduates from local schools form the connective tissue between town government, local businesses, and civic organizations. Beyond the mastery of academic subject matter, schools must equip graduates with the essential "soft skills" to be elected officials, civil servants, entrepreneurs, workers, and civic leaders in an increasingly diverse public landscape. In this context the partnership between the Town, HSD, and HCOREI has both strategic and tactical merit.

Our work aligns with the HCOREI mission and purpose that "All people are accorded the right to live in a just, equitable and anti-racist community. This right is only possible if we embrace collective responsibility and support shared prosperity. We advocate for actions that raise the level of awareness within our institutions and promote municipal and school policies that remediate systemic racism."

The terms "diversity," inclusion," and "equity" are often used without specificity and with frequent misinterpretation. This plan defines these terms and a conceptual framework to move disparate readers closer to a shared understanding, the purpose of which is to move people into the same book where ultimately they find themselves on the same page.

Central to Vermont Partnership's approach is the belief that effective and enduring systemic change occurs when the top echelon of informal and formal leadership adopts and models new knowledge, policies and practices within their respective organization or community. Our overarching goal is to assist clients in strengthening institutional memory and developing a critical mass of personnel capable of aligning or realigning policies and practices to their core values in the face of ongoing demographic change.

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Executive Summary

The *Town and School District of Hartford Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan* seeks to reduce, if not eliminate, race-based disparities in Town & HSD operations and services. The Plan's mission to institutionalize inclusion, equity, and justice for all is intentionally broad and far-reaching. The legacy of overt racism and ethnic-based discrimination in our country restricts opportunities for marginalized populations. This legacy also obscures from view the economic benefits of a more multiracial and multi-ethnic Vermont and the multicultural marketplace beyond our state borders.

Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity's research yielded 12 General Observations, 15 Findings, and 40 Recommendations related to town government and the school district. These findings and recommendations span four operational spheres: training, data collection and analysis, and community engagement. The implementation grid located in the Annex outlines goals, objectives, discrete actions, lead players, and benchmarks. The goals are to:

- Institutionalize inclusive and equitable practices
- Promote strategies to eliminate race-based disparities
- Promote inclusion and engagement of all, particularly marginalized, community members

The discrete actions fall within one of the following categories: policy and practices enhancement, leadership capacity building, and community engagement. Twenty-one (21)of these actions are new initiatives and should be completed within the first 12 months; fifteen (15) involve changes to ongoing recurring practices.

The Town and HSD governing boards and their respective administrators must be the primary force driving these changes. Both entities and their senior leadership teams must demonstrate conspicuously courageous leadership in their words and actions to inspire others and to hold one another and others accountable. The senior leadership teams must, in some cases, be prepared to expend their hard earned political capital to achieve the desired results.

Essential for success is the need to work together in conjunction with partners, particularly historically marginalized communities. Meaningful community engagement encompasses residents from historically marginalized communities who see themselves - and are seen as - full partners in the decision-making, program-planning, and policy-making processes that impact their lives in significant and sustained ways.

Background

Bigotry and racism manifest themselves in both subtle and not so subtle ways. As is the case throughout Vermont the Town of Hartford and its school system have been the site of critical incidents where race or national origin were salient factors. These incidents range from the daily ongoing low level, but nonetheless irritating, microaggressions that Whites knowingly or unintentionally direct at residents or visitors of color to critical incidents involving law enforcement and school-based harassment, bullying, and hazing. In the last decade three high profile critical events merit recollection.

In 2010 Wayne Burwell, an African American resident, was beaten, pepper-sprayed and arrested in his own home while Hartford Police were responding to a reported burglary in Wilder. Burwell was suffering from a diabetic shock at the time of the incident and was not responsive to officers' commands. Burwell said he was targeted because of his race. In 2017 Burwell accepted a $500,000 out-of-court settlement from the Town to drop litigation even though Town officials denied the police behaved improperly and the Attorney General's office cleared officers of criminal wrongdoing,

In January 2017, Hartford Select Board member Mike Morris circulated an email containing a racist cartoon of former President Barack Obama. Heated public debate during subsequent Select Board meetings and on print and broadcast media, and social media drew attention to issues of systemic racism, free speech, bias, civility, and the concerns of the area's residents of color.

After the Morris incident, the Select Board created the Hartford Committee on Racial Inequality in April 2017. The Hartford School Board initially declined an invitation to join the ad hoc committee in February 2017. In the eyes of racial justice advocates, that refusal only heightened the level of mistrust between the advocates and the government writ large. By March 2018 the ad hoc committee had disbanded but not before issuing a series of recommendations on training, strategic planning, and the creation of a permanent standing committee to make ongoing recommendations to the Town and HSD.

The dissolved Hartford Committee on Racial Inequality was reconstituted in September 2018 as the Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI), this time with the support of the Hartford School Board, which joined the reconstituted body. HCOREI recommended cultural sensitivity training for Town and HSD employees citing the need to address and dismantle "white supremacy," "white privilege," and "systemic or institutional racism." Some found these terms to be harsh or unrelentingly accusatory of White residents and officials.

In April 2019 the Town and HSD issued a request for proposals to develop a Strategic Plan for Equity and Inclusion and to advise on its public dissemination and internal implementation through the offices of the Town Manager and School Superintendent**.**

The plan will provide recommendations and benchmarks to remediate race-based disparities in Town & HSD operations and services. The plan must research, analyze, and make recommendations with respect to each of the three following goals:

- Goal 1: Identify and make recommendations for remediation of race-based disparities across all Town and School departments
- Goal 2: Promote inclusion and engagement of all community members
- Goal 3: Develop means to respond to racial discrimination in the greater Hartford community.

The influence of HCOREI can be seen in *Strategic Vision: Mapping the Future of Hartford, VT* released in December 2019. Sections on an engaged and welcoming community, equitable opportunities, and visionary and responsive governance reflect the core mission of HCOREI. Evidence of this influence can be found in the following passages from *Strategic Vision* document:

- Stimulate community excellence through a culture of appreciation. Maintain a robust network of committees, high voter participation, and strong culture of volunteerism. Ensure voices are heard through open and civil dialogue. Create comfort and safety for all through anti-discrimination and pro-diversity policies and practices.
- A place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Appeal to a diverse ethnic, racial, and socio-economic demographic. Provide holistic care and services with dignity and without stigma. Residents have equal access to services, employment, and programs. Total cost of living is within reach through a balance of affordable housing, low-cost services, and affordable tax rate.
- Use leadership models to support civic dialogue across differences of opinion and carefully consider public input. Encourage a diversity of voices. Practice fiscally responsible and transparent governance.

This *Town and School District of Hartford Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan* is built on the premise that people of color, low-income residents, and ethnic groups who have limited English proficiency are more likely to experience racism, ethnic- based discrimination, underemployment, low education, poor health outcomes, incarceration, and general loss of opportunity. In addition, these community members are more likely to have unsafe living conditions with less access to public goods and services, resources, and life opportunities.

The Town and HSD through the issuance of the Request for Proposal acknowledge that they need to change the way they do business in order to address the root causes of inequities. Making the commitment to advance equity is not about blaming individuals and/or criticizing their discomfort in addressing racial inequities. Making a commitment to advance equity incorporates learning about the root causes of inequities and the social, economic, and physical factors that shape behaviors. It is about examining decisions, systems, and policies that can provide more equitable conditions.

Methodology

Vermont Partnership fielded a three-person team to execute the contract. The Town manager provided access to office space in the Town Hall and the Human Resources Director assisted in scheduling appointments with department heads. Similarly the Superintendent of Schools coordinated the appointments with school personnel.

Team members' social identities informed the manner of capture, triage, and valuation of information. These identities include, but are not limited to, being cis-female, cis-male, trans-female, of European heritage, of Black/African heritage, of Asian heritage, of different generations, of different socio-economic backgrounds, of different fields of study, and of domestic or international experience. We vetted our work through the lens of racial equity including an understanding of how white racial identity manifests itself in Hartford alongside other racial identities.

Team members completed the following activities in creating the *Town and School District of Hartford Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan:*

- Interviewed ten Town Department Heads and extended interviews with the Town Manager
- Designed and analysed the results of a self-audit tool for Town leadership team
- Interviewed nine members of the HSD leadership team
- Designed and analysed the results of a self-audit tool for HSD leadership team
- Interviewed members of the Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI)
- Interviewed community members who participated in the development of the request for proposal;
- Reviewed relevant resolutions, public documents, and press coverage;
- Reviewed and analysed census, economic, and school data
- Reviewed the Town of Hartford website: hartford-vt.org/
- Visited eight school facilities
- Conducted a visual assessment of information posted in schools
- Interviewed the leadership of
    - Hartford Area Chamber of Commerce
    - The Haven
    - RISE!
    - St. Paul's Episcopal Church
    - Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission
    - United Valley Interfaith Council

Interviews lasted about an hour and were conducted by Curtiss Reed, Jr. who focused on town government and the community-at-large or Mary Gannon, who focused on the HSD. Questions fell into two broad categories. One set focused on the operational nuts and bolts of the department or organization. The second set were used as discussion starters, and in many

cases led to more detailed information and suggestions, which are reflected in the Summary of Findings. The goal was to learn more about the interviewee's attitudes and possible commitments to the vision of an engaged and welcoming community, equitable opportunities, and visionary and responsive governance.

Questions posed to town and school officials and the community-at-large included, but were not limited to the following:

- How would you describe Hartford?
- What keeps you in Hartford?
- What do you see as Hartford's future?
- To what extent do diversity, inclusion, and/or equity have on achieving your idea of Hartford's future?
- What do you know of Vermont Partnership's work with the Town and HSD?
- What is your understanding of equity, diversity and inclusion in an academic or school setting?
- How do you define inclusion, diversity, and equity?
- Describe school climate/school community
- What is process for reporting incidents of harassment or bullying?
- What are your current challenges related to diversity, inclusion, and equity issues? What is going well in these areas?
- What resources do you feel you need to address equity, diversity, and inclusion?

Due to the limited size of the interview pool, the conversations cannot be viewed as a scientific test, and consequentially cannot yield reliable statistics or measures. They focus on the opinions and aspirations of a particularly engaged group of civil servants, residents, and Upper Valley thought leaders. The findings cannot be interpreted to reflect the opinions or aspirations of *all* of Hartford employees and residents. Interviewees were assured of the confidentiality of their interviews, and therefore no names are attached to the findings or recommendations.

In addition, the Vermont Partnership team secured permission to adapt a self-audit tool from the *L'Association des facultés de médecine du Canada* for specific use with the Town and HSD. The original self-audit tool was designed to assist Canadian medical schools to better understand working environments and climate, and to plan for needed adjustments. Separate tools were designed for the Town and HSD for internal use only to:

- assess how well an individual department or school is doing to promote diversity and equity,
- provide an opportunity to reflect on areas in need of improvement,
- garner support for any improvements needed to further departmental or employee commitments to equity and diversity, and
- develop an action plan and timeline for improvement.

The self-audit tools completed by Town and HSD senior leadership provide a "snapshot" and help departments or schools better understand their strengths, needs and concerns. The tools provide an opportunity for leaders to reflect on what they are doing well and how they might enhance equity, inclusion, and diversity. The self-audit is divided into the four sections: Planning, Policies and Procedures, Boards and Commissions, and Communications/ Community Relations. A blank copy of the Town and HSD self-audit appears in the Annex. Responders were encouraged to reflect on the following questions throughout the self-audit.

- In what areas do you think your department has been effective in promoting diversity and equity in the workplace?
- What areas do you think need improvement?
- What do you see as obstacles to diversity and equity in your department?
- What do you see as strengths of your department in terms of diversity and equity?

Notes on Data

Population Data United States Census Bureau population data for the Town of Hartford does not include the unincorporated area of West Hartford. While Hartford's total population dropped seven percent from 2000 to 2019 and its white population dropped by seven percent, the population of racial and ethnic minorities jumped 213% over the same period.

Table I
Hartford Population 1970 – 2019
Source: American Fact Finder, U.S. Census Bureau

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019
Total Population	6,477	7,963	9,404	10,367	9,943	9,684
White	6,407	7,859	9,228	10,058	9,555	9,025
Racial/Ethnic Minorities (REM)	70	104	176	309	388	659
% REM	*1.1%*	*1.3%*	*1.9%*	*3.0%*	*3.9%*	*6.8%*

The population census is not however without its unique challenges. For example, the 2010 Census sampling errors for population by race rendered the data almost meaningless. The occurrence is widespread throughout rural America, particularly northern New England where people live in small villages and towns that defy statistical models developed for US Census Bureau designated Standard Metropolitan Areas (SMA). Burlington is Vermont's only SMA. Table III below illustrates 2010 Census population data with sampling errors for Hartford. More census data appears in the Annex.

Table II
Hartford Population by Race 2000 – 2018
Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

	2000	2010	2018
Race: Alone or in combination with one or more			
...White	10,163	9,555	9,025
...Black or African American	76	88	155
...American Indian and Alaska Native	96	110	10
...Asian	114	397	203
...Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	151	0
...Some Other Race	33	39	
...Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	88	114	145
Percentage White	*97%*	*96.1%*	*93.2%*
Percentage Racial/Ethnic Minority	*3%*	*3.9%*	*6.8%*

Table III
Hartford 2010 Population Data Sampling Error
Source: US Census Bureau

	Count	Sampling Error	Minimum Count	Maximum Count
Race: Alone or in combination with one or more				
...White	9,555	+/- 117	9,438	9,672
...Black or African American	88	+/- 69	19	157
...American Indian and Alaska Native	110	+/- 79	31	189
...Asian	397	+/- 158	239	555
...Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	151	+/- 178	**-27**	329
...Some Other Race	39	+/- 61	**-22**	100
Ethnicity				
...Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	114	+/- 95	19	209

Economic Data Every five years the United States Census Bureau conducts its Economic Census. The last census was conducted in 2017. This census is an authoritative source on the types of business activity, industries, revenues, employees, types of ownership, and much more. In addition to a national snapshot, data is organized by state, county, city, and census tract. When our search for data on minority-owned businesses in Hartford fell short of expectations we enlisted the assistance of the Vermont State Data Center at the Center for

Rural Studies (University of Vermont), the David W. Howe Memorial Library, (University of Vermont), Vermont Department of Libraries, and the Brooks Memorial Library.

As each entity combed through the data they each confirmed our initial discovery of only one dataset of eight data points for minority-owned businesses from the 2012 Economic Census shown in Table IV. Of the 1,181 Hartford businesses in that census 28 or 2.4% were minority owned without any specificity as to the industry or race of the business owner. While there was a 213% increase of racial and ethnic minorities since the 2000 census, we were unable to determine whether there was a comparable increase of minority-owned business without reliable data.

In previous censuses (pre-2012) the Census Bureau noted "withheld (data) because estimate did not meet publication standards." In other words they did not have the statistical reliability for minority-owned businesses in Hartford.

The Vermont population and economic census data experts anticipate full data sets for the 2017 Economic Census will be released by the end of 2020. Hopefully there will be sufficient statistical reliability that would allow for the tracking of minority business activity including the granular data to track the race of business owners with the general population.

Disparities Twenty years ago racial justice advocates and Vermont law enforcement locked horns over the issue of racial profiling. Advocates accused the police of racial profiling as the police vehemently denied any profiling was taking place. Each side exemplified the adage that "perception is reality." Vermont Partnership asked Vermont State Police to prove their position by providing motor traffic stop data. Vermont State Police said they had no data to support their assertion however agreed to begin collecting relevant data.

In addition to collecting and analyzing the data, they also agreed to share the data with advocates before making it available to the public; to use the data to drive decision making relative to policy, recruiting, screening, training, internal affairs, and community outreach; and to partner with advocates to increase trust between the agency and the communities they serve. Data from the early years indicated a relatively high disproportionate contact between state troopers and drivers of color. However, over the course of a decade the data has begun trending in the direction of parity in contact and outcomes.

The Town and HSD approach data disaggregated by race in very different ways. On the one hand the Town collects very little data disaggregated by race. This makes it difficult to determine where racial disparities may exist or not. Therefore a major recommendation for the Town is to establish baseline data disaggregated by race.

Table IV
Extracts from the 2012 Economic Census
Source: US Census Bureau

	Total	*Relative standard of error (%)*	White	*Relative standard of error (%)*	Minority	*Relative standard of error (%)*
Number of firms with or without paid employees	1,181	*10.5*	1,097	*11.2*	28	*25.8*
Sales, receipts, or value of shipments of firms with or without paid employees ($1,000)	1,066,314	*10.8*	573,712	*19.9*	1,291	*8.4*
Number of firms with paid employees	370	*13.1*	296	*16.2*	3	*0*
Sales, receipts, or value of shipments of firms with paid employees ($1,000)	1,023,072	*11.4*	530,847	*21.8*	690	*8.9*
Number of paid employees for pay period including March 12	8,194	*6.7*	2,518	*18.4*	18	*22.1*
Annual payroll ($1,000)	225,913	*8.1*	91,323	*19.4*	264	*9.1*
Number of firms without paid employees	811	*13*	801	*13.1*	25	*27.5*
Sales, receipts, or value of shipments of firms without paid employees ($1,000)	43,242	*23.3*	42,865	*23.5*	600	*10.8*

On the other hand the HSD collects and has access to a considerable amount of data disaggregated by race. In some cases this data has been collected for at least a decade as in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which has been disaggregating data by race since 2011. For example, the following series of tables indicate the racial disparities for selected questions from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey for Windsor County and the entire state.

The Hartford School District 2017 YRBS results for the same selected questions appear in the table below. Unfortunately this data is not available to the public disaggregated by race. The Vermont Department of Health releases individual supervisory union or school district data disaggregated by race at the request of those entities due in large part to the small sample size of students of color.

The longitudinal data on these selected survey results from Windsor County and the entire state appear in the Annex. Our experience with other supervisory unions finds very little evidence that disaggregated data once known has influenced policy or practice decisions designed to reduce racial disparities. This is because when school administrators embrace race neutral or colorblind philosophies or programs, disaggregated data is ignored and racial

disparities persist. Generic anti-bullying/harassment programs and messaging fail to strike at the heart of racial disparities.

Table V
Extracts from the 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Source: Vermont Department of Health

		White non-Hispanic	Racial/Ethnic Minorities
Target of Electronic Bullying (within last 30 days)	**Windsor County**	**15%**	**22%**
	Vermont	15%	18%
Target of Bullying (within last 30 days)	**Windsor County**	**16%**	**27%**
	Vermont	15%	18%
Made Suicide Plans (within last 12 months)	**Windsor County**	**9%**	**16%**
	Vermont	10%	15%
Attempted Suicide (within last 12 months)	**Windsor County**	**4%**	**7%**
	Vermont	5%	8%

Table VI
2017 YRBS Selected Responses
Source: Vermont Department of Health

	Hartford School District	**Windsor County**
Target of Electronic Bullying (within last 30 days)	15%	16%
Target of Bullying (within last 30 days)	14%	17%
Made Suicide Plans (within last 12 months)	7%	7%
Attempted Suicide (within last 12 months)	4%	4%

We highly recommend the HSD request and examine the racial disparities in the YRBS longitudinal data (2011-2019), HSD disciplinary outcomes, and academic achievement gaps. Where racial disparities exists we recommend the HSD re-engineer the culture, curriculum, policies, and practices.

Enrollment While HSD student enrollment has dropped slightly from a high of 1,589 for the 2009-1010 school year to 1,529 for the 2018-2019 school year, there were notable changes in student demographics. Table VII indicates that during this period White students dropped from 95.1% to 89.9% in contrast to students of color who more than doubled in numbers from 4.9% of the student population to 10.1% led by Hispanic students who more than

quadrupled their numbers from 0.7% to 2.9% of students. Slight drops in Black/African American and Asian students were overshadowed by the 350% increase in students identifying as Multiracial.

Table VII
Hartford School District Student Enrollment
School Years 2009-2010 thru 2018-2019
Source: Vermont Agency of Education

	2018-2019		2017-2018		2016-2017		2015-2016		2014-2015	
	HSD	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Asian	1.0%	2.3%	0.5%	2.1%	0.9%	2%	1.0%	2.0%	1.1%	2.0%
Black/African American	1.2%	2.5%	1.1%	2.1%	1.1%	2.1%	1.5%	2.0%	1.6%	2.0%
Hispanic	2.9%	2.4%	2.7%	2.1%	1.8%	1.9%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
White	89.9%	89.6%	91.8%	90.0%	92.5%	90.5%	92.1%	90.8%	92.5%	91.1%
Multiracial	4.6%	2.8%	3.8%	3.6%	3.6%	3.3%	3.6%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%

	2013-2014		2012-2013		2011-2012		2010-2011		2009-2010	
	HSD	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*	*HSD*	*VT*
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	0.1%	2.0%	1.2%	1.8%	1.6%	1.7%	1.4%	1.6%	1.1%	1.6%
Black/African American	1.3%	2.0%	1.5%	2.0%	1.1%	2.0%	1.2%	1.9%	1.7%	1.9%
Hispanic	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%	1.4%	1.4%	0.8%	1.3%	0.7%	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
White	92.5%	91.3%	92.5%	91.7%	93.5%	92.3%	94.9%	92.5%	95.1%	93.0%
Multiracial	3.1%	2.8%	2.7%	2.5%	2.0%	2.2%	1.5%	2.1%	1.3%	1.9%

Academic Achievement The Agency of Education does not release public facing academic achievement data disaggregated by race for the Hartford School District because of the small sample size of students of color.

In the aggregate, however, there are persistent gaps in academic achievement statewide on standardized tests (i.e. New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), the Vermont Alternate Assessment Portfolio (VTAAP), English Arts and Math Assessments) between White students and students of color in general and Black students in particular. Table VIII illustrates achievement gap disparities for the NECAP Science assessment for Grade 11. Similar gaps exist in English and Math. Based on our discussions with educators we believe the HSD achievement gaps are not dissimilar to those statewide.

Table VIII
Statewide NECAP Science Results
by Race for Grade 11
Source: Vermont Agency of Education

2016-2017 School Year

	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White
Number of Students Tested	57	163	210	115	13	5,353
Proficient with Distinction	0 %	1 %	1 %	1 %	0 %	1 %
Proficient	21 %	31 %	14 %	39 %	23 %	31 %
Partially Proficient	49 %	37 %	33 %	33 %	76 %	42 %
Substantially Below Proficient	29 %	29 %	50 %	25 %	0 %	24 %
Total Proficient and Above	21 %	33 %	15 %	40 %	23 %	33 %
Total Below Proficient	78 %	66 %	84 %	59 %	76 %	66 %
Average Scaled Score	1132.7	1134.7	1128.6	1135.9	1138.5	1135.2

2015-2016 School Year

	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White
Number of Students Tested	++	158	184	104	++	5,557
Proficient with Distinction	++	1 %	0 %	0 %	++	1 %
Proficient	++	34 %	16 %	21 %	++	29 %
Partially Proficient	++	34 %	35 %	43 %	++	42 %
Substantially Below Proficient	++	29 %	47 %	35 %	++	26 %
Total Proficient and Above	++	36 %	16 %	21 %	++	31 %
Total Below Proficient	++	63 %	83 %	78 %	++	68 %
Average Scaled Score	++	1134.8	1130.3	1132.2	++	1134.9

The presence and nurturing of safe and supportive learning environments are very important variables in the calculus to reduce the racial disparities in academic achievement. Learning for HSD students of color is in no doubt more challenging than White students when they, the students of color, are statistically more likely to be targets of in person and online bullying, threatened with violence at school, prone to suicidal ideation and attempt, absent from school due to threats, or threatened with a weapon on school grounds.

Other critical variables include an engaging curriculum and pedagogy that promote inclusion and equity not only for the benefit of students of color but for all students.

Conceptual Framework

Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity operates from a mission and vision that is fundamentally grounded in the following conceptual framework. It is offered to the Town and HSD senior leadership as a way to shape and inform the findings and recommendations articulated in this document. The inclusion of this framework is necessary to establish a shared understanding of the issues.

The terms "diversity," inclusion," and "equity" are often used without specificity and with frequent misinterpretation. These working definitions are offered as a starting point for creating common understanding and continued, clear, and constructive dialogue relative to the *Proposed Town and School District of Hartford Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan.*

Culture is a learned set of values, beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors shared by a group of people. For individuals and organizations alike, such cultural groups may be characterized by race, ethnicity, nationality, regional or local geography, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age or generation, educational background, professional background, family structure, socio and/or economic background, dis/ability, and more. Sub-cultures exist within all cultures. Culture also is traditionally considered distinct from an individual personal characteristics.

Diversity is a characteristic describing variety in people, places, or things; in community, it is necessarily a mix of unlike people. No one person or group can represent diversity, though the subgroups of a larger cultural group represent diversity within that given group. A single individual who represents an underrepresented status might not be an accurate descriptor of diversity, but the mix of that individual along with individuals who represent other underrepresented statuses and majority statuses would constitute a diverse group.

Inclusion is representation of, and access afforded to, people - usually individuals from underrepresented groups - into a given group, traditionally constituted of members of a dominant culture.

Equity refers to the balance of resources distributed to individuals or groups based on what individuals or groups historically and/or currently have or need. Resources may be economic, political, social, or otherwise. What is equitable may not necessarily be equal. Equity stands apart from equality, which requires even distribution of resources to all. Wilful avoidance or benign neglect of addressing these issues by the community ultimately leads to continued racial inequity.

Applied Social Justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all social groups in a society that is shaped to meet the needs of all. A socially just society is one where the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure in their daily access to basic human needs. The *application* of social justice refers to the practice and approach to social justice, specifically, how we identify the social problems that need remediation, the solutions we consider to be as viable and sustainable, and the methods we choose as appropriate for reaching those

solutions. Paulo Freire (1970) refers to this process as “praxis” - the intersection of theory and practice.

Ongoing dialogue around the terms above as they relate to one another and other language used in community-based discussions are encouraged and expected from the Hartford community.

Racial Equity, Institutional Racism, and the Achievement Gap

In her January 2020 report to the Vermont Legislature, Xusana Davis, Executive Director for Racial Equity noted that “…Vermonters have a great need for more education about the collective harm of racial inequity and the collective benefit of equity. The fact is, Vermont cannot survive the economic, legal, and demographic tolls of inequity—this cannot be overstated. And yet, too many Vermonters see racial equity as a project that does not impact their lives, or as a handout to groups with interests that do not align with their own. This flawed thinking embodies what we know as the separate fates mentality, and contributes to a high meaning gap, wherein members of different groups show high variation in how meaningful an action or process is to them. It is of critical importance that Vermonters of dominant groups recognize that equity—in this case, racial equity—benefits the whole, and that continuing to ignore or actively resist efforts to undo structural inequity will lead to the continued shrinking of Vermont’s local and tourist economies, the hollowing of its school systems and underperformance of students from marginalized groups, the weakening of its state workforce, and the exodus of its young people who are leaving in search of greater diversity and social cohesion.”

Town and School District of Hartford Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan addresses the reduction, if not eradication of institutional and structural racism and ethnic-based discrimination within its jurisdiction. The legacy of overt racism and ethnic-based discrimination in our country, combined with the current impact of institutional and structural racism, restrict opportunities for people of color and immigrant and refugee migrants.

Institutional racism includes "policies, practices, and procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently, according to the City of Seattle Office of Civil Rights (CSOCR). An example of institutional racism in town government could be a job description that places undue emphasis on having a college degree over work experience, given that people of color traditionally face barriers to higher education.

Structural racism is defined as "a history and current reality of institutional racism across multiple institutions. This combines to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color," according to the City of Seattle Office of Civil Rights. For example, racial inequity in employment creates inequity in family wealth. Fewer household resources often means limited housing choices, lack of access to transportation, and inadequate health care.

Ongoing research on the education achievement gap points to several realities, including:

- Deeply rooted disparities in academic achievement that are associated with race, culture, income, etc. when considered alongside demographic trends have major adverse consequences for the overall level of educational attainment; and

- Disparities in academic achievement lead to greater inequality of all kinds, which in turn have multiple long-term effects on the individual and the community.

Civil rights laws and remedies have helped to address individual racism and ethnic-based discrimination, but they have been less effective on the underlying systems that maintain racial inequity and the denial of equal opportunity. The outcome gaps we see in health, education, unemployment, poverty rates, and the criminal justice system cannot be explained away as the result of decisions and actions of individuals. The lack of opportunity based on race or ethnicity emerges from inequity of access and the effects of institutional racism.

General Observations

Aversive Racism In many of our interactions with individuals in the Town and HSD we were reminded of a research article entitled "The Pernicious Nature of Contemporary Racism" by John F. Dovidio and Samuel L. Gaertner. The article, which may be found in the annex, "discusses how racism has mutated to partially hide itself from view—perhaps not from the view of those who experience its effects—but certainly from the view of those who practice what has come to be called 'aversive racism.'" Our attention was drawn to these key passages from the article:

> Racism is easy to recognize in its most explicit forms. Traditional forms of racism in the United States have even in the recent past been expressed directly and openly. Due in part to the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, however, the face of racism has changed. This legislation defined racism not only as morally improper but also as legally wrong. The spoken norm was that good people do not discriminate or in any way participate in racism.
>
> Aversive racism is the inherent contradiction that exists when the denial of personal prejudice co-exists with underlying unconscious negative feelings and beliefs. Unfortunately, the negative feelings and beliefs that underlie aversive racism are rooted in normal, often adaptive, psychological processes. For instance, people generally tend to like others who are similar to them. In contrast to the feelings of open hostility and clear dislike of blacks that characterize old-fashioned racism, the negative feelings that aversive racists experience are typically more diffuse, such as feelings of anxiety and uneasiness.
>
> On top of all of this, because aversive racists consciously endorse egalitarian values and deny negative feelings about blacks, they will not discriminate directly and openly in ways that can be attributed to racism. However, because of their negative feelings they

will, in fact, discriminate, often unintentionally, when their behavior can be justified on the basis of some factor other than race. Aversive racists may therefore regularly engage in discrimination while they maintain a nonprejudiced self-image. The term "aversive" in this form of racism thus refers to two aspects of this bias. It reflects the nature of the emotions associated with blacks, such as anxiety, that lead to avoidance and social awkwardness rather than to open antagonism. It also represents that, because of their conscious adherence to egalitarian principles, these whites would find any thought that they might be prejudiced to be aversive.

To make things worse, the uncomfortable and discriminatory behavior associated with aversive racism is very obvious to blacks, even while whites either don't recognize it or consider it hidden and deny it when confronted. For instance, despite the compelling evidence of contemporary racial disparities, between 40 and 60 percent of whites responding to a recent survey, depending upon the question asked, viewed the average black in the United States as faring about as well, and often better, than the average white.[1]

Blacks in numerous studies report a substantial difference—discrimination is a dominant force in their lives. Consequently, whereas the subtle nature of contemporary bias leads whites to underestimate the impact of racial prejudice, it leads blacks to be particularly attuned to these inconsistent and unpredictable racist behaviors. This inconsistency erodes blacks' confidence in a person and leads to a spiral of distrust. Blacks assume this disingenuous behavior is a consciously purposeful, old-fashioned racism—also a perfectly normal reaction since whites are, as a group, in a dominant power position.

Racial Colorblindness The discussion of race or racism proved to be challenging at best because when the subject(s) arose our interlocutors were quick to explain that the only challenges before Hartford were of a socio-economic nature or ascribed to the opioid crisis. Many conversations with White residents and officials were studded with statements like, "I don't see color," or "I am colorblind." This denial of personal prejudice co-exists in a space where daily contact with people of color is limited, if not rare. Some residents of color expressed feelings of erasure—an act by Whites that denies the existence of people of color. In order to build a community with authentic interracial relationships Whites need to acknowledge the presence of residents of color as visible bona fide residents. Rhetorical questions such as "With so few minorities how could race be a problem?" or affirmations of minority "exceptionalism" sidestepped understanding the nuances of White racial identity.

In her Psychology Today article entitled "Colorblind Ideology Is a Form of Racism", Dr. Monnica T. Williams noted "…colorblindness has helped make race into a taboo topic that polite people cannot openly discuss. And if you can't talk about it, you can't understand it, much less fix the racial problems that plague our society."

Otherwise stated by Dr. Warren J. Blumenfeld of the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) in his article entitled "Colorblindness" and the Myth of a "Post-Racial" U.S.A.:" "Though when we tell another that "I don't see your race; I just see you as a human being," may seem as a

righteous statement, what are we really telling the person, and how may this come across: "I discount a part of you that I may not want to address," and "I will not see you in your multiple identities." This has the tendency of erasing the person's background and historical legacy, and hides the continuing hierarchical and systemic positionalities among white people and racially minoritized people.""

Intergenerational entitlement Some older residents expressed an observation that younger generations felt they were entitled to affordable housing, a well-paying job, and a worry-free existence; and that their community or government writ large should provide these things with little effort on the younger residents' part. This sentiment was also expressed by some younger residents.

Low expectation syndrome (LES) An important variable in the design calculus of a vibrant, viable, and sustainable community is the setting of high expectations and doing the work necessary to achieve those expectations. A pall over many conversations was the assertion that students were graduating with lackluster civic and workforce skills. Another lament was that "children are doing less well than their parents."

Opiate epidemic Town and school officials, social service professionals, civic and business leaders, and faith leaders expressed being overwhelmed and under-resourced, and over-stretched to cope with the opiate epidemic. As noted above the unhoused and substance abuse addicts were viewed as constraints on economic growth.

Fear and anxiety The perception of a "gotcha" culture related to the topics of race and racism has produced varying levels of fear and anxiety among town and school officials. The 2017 incident that involved the emailing of a racist cartoon by a select board member unleashed a level of public discourse by racial justice advocates both unfamiliar to and disturbing to white officials. Racial justice advocates excoriated the school board for its subsequent decision to decline membership in the Hartford Committee on Racial Inequality. Unhealthy levels of paranoia and mistrust have negatively impacted the way people interact.

While residents expressed overwhelmingly positive feelings about living and working in Hartford six palpable tensions resonated along generational, socio-economic or racial lines.

1. *Livability versus Affordability* Whereas residents generally felt that Hartford was a great place to work and raise a family, many younger residents, in spite of the area's "eclectic vibe," felt that living costs, particularly housing, were exceedingly high.

2. *Optimism versus Pessimism* Whereas younger residents, public officials, and some business owners feel optimistic at the prospects of Hartford becoming a hub for the creative or high tech economies, longtime older residents were more pessimistic feeling the area has been on a long slow economic decline. Precarious was the balance between those who were bullish on the future and those who were bearish.

3. *Online technology versus Personal contact* Whereas Town government continues to make more information and services available online, there is a strong sense from some officials for the need of personal contact between Town employees and the residents they serve for the express purpose of building community. Meaningful public engagement is an ongoing challenge.

4. *Public safety versus Entrapment* Whereas the Hartford Police Department and its leadership have a very high reputation as one of a handful of law enforcement agencies statewide actively engaged in 21st Century Policing including fair and impartial policing, local social and racial justice activists expressed discomfort that plain clothes officers "infiltrate or surveille" encampments to allegedly entrap unhoused residents under the guise of connecting these residents to social services. Some advocates have expressed a deep mistrust of law enforcement writ large and advance the idea of eliminating area law enforcement all together.

5. *Faith in humankind versus Inherent distrust* Whereas residents overall expressed a generic faith in humankind, some expressed an inherent distrust of "the other" where the others are residents of different racial/ethnic groups, of different ages, of different levels of financial security, as well as environmentalists, elected officials, law enforcement (local, county, state, federal).

6. *Homogeneity (social cohesion) versus Diversity* Whereas many white, able-bodied, non-addicted, relatively financially secure residents expressed nostalgia for a time when racial homogeneity defined social cohesion, for some racial or ethnic diversity in the Upper Valley was an anathema. Whereas these individuals viewed racial or ethnic diversity as a constraint on social cohesion, the unhoused and substance abuse addicts were viewed as constraints on economic growth.

Findings and Recommendations

The purpose of our Findings and Recommendations is to chart a way forward through systems change. We caution the reader not to construe the findings as personal indictments of Town, HSD, or HCOREI personnel or members. Based on the conclusions drawn from interviews, data analysis, document research, and general observations, Vermont Partnership finds and recommends the following:

- No uniform collection of demographic data on race, gender, or ability across all Town departments vis-à-vis operations. The lack of substantive demographic data made the task of identifying race-based disparities difficult.

    - *Mandate all departments and programs, including boards and commissions, collect demographic data on race, gender, and ability*
    - *Establish baseline data on race, gender, and ability*
    - *Where such data is collected it should be disseminated to the public*

- Neither the Town nor the HSD have articulated communication strategies for public messaging during critical incidents or to communicate advances in the areas of diversity, equity, or inclusion. Racial and social justice advocates did a masterful job of messaging and controlling narratives which at times gave the appearance of driving wedges between Select Board, Town Manager, and Police Chief.

  Virtually no one locally knows that the Hartford Police Department and its leadership have a very high reputation as one of a handful of law enforcement agencies statewide actively engaged in 21st Century Policing including fair and impartial policing. Data does not support the assertion that either the Town, in general, or the Hartford Police Department, specifically, are willing or unwilling instruments of the United States Border Patrol or Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

  - *The Town and HSD should jointly hire a public information officer*
  - *Public officials should refresh skills related to critical incident public messaging*
  - *Public officials should adopt a coherent public communications policy and strategy*
  - *Public officials should adopt a more assertive public communications strategy focusing on the work of the police department and efforts to reduce disparities*

- There is a high level of concern regarding a "gotcha" culture and an unhealthy level of paranoia among school leadership and town officials relative to addressing issues of race, racism, and oppression.

  - *Public officials should attend workshops and engage in self-directed study on inclusion and equity, race, racism, white fragility, privilege, power, and related topics*
  - *Public officials should apply the lessons learned from workshops and self-directed learning*

- Absence of any correlation for the period 2012-2017 between public facing data on harassment, bullying, and hazing for the Hartford School District in the Agency of Education database and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) administered by the Vermont Department of Health for the 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017 YRBS cycles.

  For example, according to the Agency of Education, the school district reported there were 18 cases of reported bullying district-wide for the period 2012-2017 and no cases of reported harassment. By contrast, 97 or twenty percent (20%) of students (grades 9-12) reported being bullied during the previous 30 day period in the 2011 YRBS; 99 students or 22% for the 2013 YRBS; 102 students or 23% for the 2015 YRBS; and 70 students or 14% for the 2017 YRBS.

  - *Ensure that all students, parents/guardians, and school personnel understand how to report school-based bullying, harassment, and hazing.*
  - *Review procedures for collecting data and transferring to the Agency of Education*

- *Monitor the Agency of Education public facing website for data accuracy*
- *The district should request and acquire YRBS data disaggregated by race for the years 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 and develop school climate initiatives to specifically reduce the risk behavior disparities between white students and students of color.*
- *Post YRBS results on the school district website*

- Meaningful public engagement is an ongoing challenge even with efforts to rotate meeting times and locations "the same ten people show up."

  - *Create joint Town-HSD programs/activities in the middle and high schools to expose students, particularly students of color, to boards and commissions (civics field trip, leadership development); consider as a long-term investment*
  - *Adopt a short-term strategy to recruit college students to apply for boards and commissions by linking to the relevancy of their course of study*

- While the Hartford Police Department issued fewer tickets to minority vehicle drivers in 2019 relative to 2018, the datasets had a significant number of tickets and warnings with incomplete data on the race of the driver.

  - *Whomever is charged with traffic stop data entry should be instructed to only enter data from properly completed tickets including race data information; if race data is not included the data entry clerk should refer the incomplete ticket to the offending officer's supervisor*

- There are resources and colleagues in the HSD already engaged in the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion who can provide leadership, however there are few opportunities for cross-district relationship building relative to the need.

  - *Create an Equity and Diversity District-Wide Core Team – revisit District Mission Statement and Core Values*
  - *Conduct and disseminate an inventory of existing diversity, equity, and inclusion resources within the school district*
  - *Identify promising practices already in use in the district and disseminate to all schools*
  - *Dedicate time during district wide professional development to introduce diversity and equity resources*

- There is a strong presence of dominant (i.e. White, able-bodied) perspectives, visuals, representations in public school buildings.

  - *Educators should ensure ample representation of the various social identities represented in the United States general population*

- *Educators should attend workshops and engage in self-directed study on the visual display of inclusion and equity, race, racism, white fragility, privilege, power, and related topics*
- *Educators should apply the lessons learned from workshops and self-directed learning*
- *Develop an Equity and Diversity Framework*

- There is high demand among educators for building skills to address difficult moments, conversations, interactions – between students, between colleagues, between faculty and students.

  - *Identify trainers/consultants to deliver relevant skills training*
  - *Identify materials for self-directed learning*
  - *Apply the lessons learned from workshops and self-directed learning*
  - *Develop an Equity and Diversity Framework*

- The relationship between HCOREI and school leadership continues to strengthen in positive, productive ways.

  - *Conduct three team building workshops with school leadership and HCOREI members to further reduce stereotyping and increase trust*

- Lack of clarity regarding policies and procedures involving harassment reporting , not always clear on who are designated employees

  - *Conduct twice yearly refresher training on reporting school-based harassment, bullying, and hazing*
  - *Design and execute a social marketing campaign to keep parents and guardians informed of policies and procedures*
  - *Upgrade website search engines with keywords "harassment" and "bullying" linked directly to the Student Handbook and resources for students and parents*

- Individual and focus group discussions were an important first step to building awareness about equity and diversity work – most staff appreciated the time opportunity to talk and are eager to move forward with the work

  - *Develop a strategy for professional development alongside of requirements in Act 1, Ethnic Studies Bill - skills for integrating diverse perspectives in the classroom; skills for managing conflict and difficult dialogues*
  - *Create an Equity and Diversity District-Wide Core Team – revisit District Mission Statement and Core Values*
  - *Develop an Equity and Diversity Framework*

- Regional schools – HACTC, RAP, HARP – feel a bit isolated from the rest of the district – often feel like "guests" and not members of the community.

    - *Create an Equity and Diversity District-Wide Core Team – revisit District Mission Statement and Core Values*
    - *Develop joint educational programming and professional exchanges (i.e. guest teaching)*
    - *Develop an Equity and Diversity Framework*

- Many staff noted a lack of skill sets for managing difficult conversations regarding equity and diversity – among colleagues and between teachers and students.

    - *Design and deliver leadership and professional development on curriculum and practices, climate, and human resources*

Illustrative Implementation Grid

	Month																	
Town of Hartford	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
o *Collect demographic data on race, gender, and ability for departments, programs, boards and commissions,*				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Establish baseline data on race, gender, and ability*																x		
o *Disseminate baseline data to the public online*																x	x	x
o *The Town and HSD should jointly hire a public information officer*					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Refresh skills related to critical incident public messaging*				x	x													
o *Develop a coherent public communications policy and strategy*		x																
o *Implement a more assertive public communications strategy on the work of the police department*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Public officials should attend workshops and engage in self-directed study on inclusion and equity, race, racism, white fragility, privilege, power, and related topics*				x	x	x						x	x	x				
o *Public officials should apply the lessons learned from workshops and self-directed learning*							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Recruit college students to apply for boards and commissions by linking to the relevancy of their course of study*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
o *Whomever is charged with traffic stop data entry should be instructed to only enter data from properly completed tickets including race data information; if race data is not included the data entry clerk should refer the incomplete ticket to the offending officer's supervisor*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hartford School District																		
o *Ensure that all students, parents/guardians, and school personnel understand how to report school-based bullying, harassment, and hazing.*		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Review procedures for collecting HSD data and transferring to the Agency of Education*			x	x														

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
o *Monitor the Agency of Education website for HSD data accuracy*	x	x				x	x										x	x
o *Acquire YRBS data disaggregated by race for 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 and develop initiatives to specifically reduce the risk behavior disparities between white students and students of color.*	x	x	x															
o *Post YRBS results on the school district website*				x														
o *Create joint Town-HSD program in the middle/high schools to expose students, particularly students of color, to boards and commissions (civics field trip, leadership development);*		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
o *Create an Equity and Diversity District-Wide Core Team – revisit District Mission Statement and Core Values*	x	x	x															
o *Conduct and disseminate an inventory of existing diversity, equity, and inclusion resources within the school district*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Identify promising practices already in use in the district and disseminate to all schools*			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Dedicate time during district wide professional development to introduce diversity and equity resources*		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Ensure ample representation of the various social identities represented in the United States general population*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Educators should attend workshops and engage in self-directed study on the visual display of inclusion and equity, race, racism, white fragility, privilege, power, and related topics*				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Educators should apply the lessons learned from workshops and self-directed learning*		x	x	x	x	X	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Develop an Equity and Diversity Framework*	x	x	x															
o *Identify trainers/consultants to deliver relevant skills training*		x	x	x														
o *Identify materials for self-directed learning*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
o *Apply the lessons learned from workshops/self-directed learning*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
o *Conduct three team building workshops with school leadership and HCOREI members to further reduce stereotyping and increase trust*				x	x	x												
o *Conduct twice yearly refresher training on reporting school-based harassment, bullying, and hazing*						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
o *Design and execute a social marketing campaign to keep parents and guardians informed of policies and procedures*						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
o *Upgrade HSD website search engines with keywords "harassment" and "bullying" linked directly to the Student Handbook and resources for students and parents*	x	x	X															
o *Develop a strategy for professional development alongside of requirements in Act 1, Ethnic Studies Bill - skills for integrating diverse perspectives in the classroom; skills for managing conflict and difficult dialogues*				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
o *Develop joint educational programming and professional exchanges (i.e. guest teaching)*				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x
o *Design and deliver leadership and professional development on curriculum and practices, climate, and human resources*				x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
o *Develop joint educational programming and professional exchanges (i.e. guest teaching)*				x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x
o *Design and deliver leadership and professional development on curriculum and practices, climate, and human resources*						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x

ANNEXES

Color Blind or Just Plain Blind? The Pernicious Nature of Contemporary Racism

"Colorblindness" and the Myth of a "Post-Racial" U.S.A.

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Color Blind or Just Plain Blind?
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Color Blind or Just Plain Blind?

The Pernicious Nature of Contemporary Racism

By John F. Dovidio and Samuel L. Gaertner

This article discusses how racism has mutated to partially hide itself from view—perhaps not from the view of those who experience its effects—but certainly from the view of those who practice what has come to be called "aversive racism."

We start with a fairly stark example of what we are talking about. In 1973 we created a field experiment that divided a group of white people residing in Brooklyn, NY into those who had liberal and those who had conservative beliefs. Both the liberal and the conservative households received wrong-number telephone calls that quickly developed into requests for assistance. The callers, who were clearly identifiable from their dialects as being black or white, explained that their car was disabled and that they were attempting to reach a service garage from a public phone along the parkway. The callers further claimed that they had no more change to make another call and asked the subject to help by calling the garage. If the subject refused to help or hung up after the caller explained that he or she had no more change, a "not helping" response was recorded. If the subject hung up before learning that the motorist had no more change, the response was considered to be a "premature hangup."

The first finding from this study was easy and predictable. Conservatives showed a higher "not helping" response to blacks than to whites (92 percent versus 65 percent) whereas liberals helped blacks and whites more equally (75 percent versus 85 percent). If we were to have left the findings here, liberals would appear to be relatively well-intentioned.

Unfortunately, this edge is cancelled out by liberals having "hung up prematurely" much more often on blacks than they did on whites (19 percent versus 3 percent). Conservatives did not discriminate in this way (8 percent versus 5 percent). The numbers were even worse when we pulled out the response to male callers. That is, liberals hung up prematurely on black and white male callers 28 percent and 10 percent of the time respectively. Thus, both conservative and liberal whites discriminated against blacks but in different ways.

What could possibly explain such behavior among people who presumably consider themselves egalitarian? The explanation, as this and many subsequent studies have demonstrated, is that many liberal white people will not publicly and consciously express bias against blacks, but, because they have unconscious negative feelings about blacks, they will discriminate in subtle ways. This subtle and unconscious bias is what we mean when we refer to aversive racism.

Many people involved in nonprofit organizations forego considerable personal gain to dedicate themselves to making the world better in some way—through making health care more accessible, perhaps, or by promoting cultural richness or through human services or social change work in an impoverished community. Racism, we can probably all agree, is antithetical to this spirit. The problem is that oftentimes these same well-intentioned people are also racist, and, as we will discuss below, they are racist without being aware of it.

Overt Racism

Racism is easy to recognize in its most explicit forms. Traditional forms of racism in the United States have even in the recent past been expressed directly and openly. Due in part to the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, however, the face of racism has changed. This legislation defined racism not only as morally improper but also as legally wrong. The spoken norm was that good people do not discriminate or in any way participate in racism.

We can probably also agree that racism has aided in producing a myriad of social ills, redlined neighborhoods suffering from inadequate infrastructures, sub-standard and segregated schools, open discrimination in employment, high infant mortality rates, and a host of other problems. Many of these problems persist and have worsened over time. How do we explain this?
Even while overt racism has declined significantly since the 1960s, some of the motivations that underlie racism still exist. Racism can offer advantages. Discriminating against others can boost one's self-esteem and promote feelings of control and superiority. Tangibly, discrimination offers economic advantages to members of the majority group and serves to maintain that group's political, social, and corporate power. Thus racism may have, in mafia movie parlance, "gone to the mattresses" among many of the well-intentioned—retreated underground where it is harder to get at it.

Aversive Racism

Aversive racism is the inherent contradiction that exists when the denial of personal prejudice co-exists with underlying unconscious negative feelings and beliefs. Unfortunately, the negative feelings and beliefs that underlie aversive racism are rooted in normal, often adaptive, psychological processes. For instance, people generally tend to like others who are similar to them. In contrast to the feelings of open hostility and clear dislike of blacks that characterize old-fashioned racism, the negative feelings that aversive racists experience are typically more diffuse, such as feelings of anxiety and uneasiness.

On top of all of this, because aversive racists consciously endorse egalitarian values and deny negative feelings about blacks, they will not discriminate directly and openly in ways that can be attributed to racism. However, because of their negative feelings they will, in fact, discriminate, often unintentionally, when their behavior can be justified on the basis of some factor other than race. Aversive racists may therefore regularly engage in discrimination while they maintain a nonprejudiced self-image. The term "aversive" in this form of racism thus refers to two aspects of this bias. It reflects the nature of the emotions associated with blacks, such as anxiety, that lead to avoidance and social awkwardness rather than to open antagonism. It also represents that, because of their conscious adherence to egalitarian principles, these whites would find any thought that they might be prejudiced to be aversive.

To make things worse, the uncomfortable and discriminatory behavior associated with aversive racism is very obvious to blacks, even while whites either don't recognize it or consider it hidden and deny it when

confronted. For instance, despite the compelling evidence of contemporary racial disparities, between 40 and 60 percent of whites responding to a recent survey, depending upon the question asked, viewed the average black in the United States as faring about as well, and often better, than the average white.1 Blacks in numerous studies report a substantial difference—discrimination is a dominant force in their lives. Consequently, whereas the subtle nature of contemporary bias leads whites to underestimate the impact of racial prejudice, it leads blacks to be particularly attuned to these inconsistent and unpredictable racist behaviors. This inconsistency erodes blacks' confidence in a person and leads to a spiral of distrust. Blacks assume this disingenuous behavior is a consciously purposeful, old-fashioned racism—also a perfectly normal reaction since whites are, as a group, in a dominant power position.

How Contemporary Racism Works

Aversive racism has been investigated in psychological research over the past 25 years. One of our earliest experiments illustrates how aversive racism can operate in fairly dramatic ways. The scenario for experiment was inspired by an incident in the mid-1960s in which 38 people witnessed the stabbing of a woman, Kitty Genovese, without a single bystander intervening to help. What accounts for this behavior? Psychologists have found that feelings of responsibility play a key role. If a person witnesses an emergency and is the only bystander, and that person knows they bear all of the responsibility for helping, the likelihood of helping is high. If, on the other hand, the person witnesses an emergency but believes that there are several other witnesses who might help, then the responsibility for helping is shared. Moreover, if the person believes that someone else will help or has already helped, the likelihood of that person taking action is significantly reduced.

Early in our 25 years of research, we created a situation in the laboratory in which white participants witnessed a staged emergency involving a black or white victim. We led some of our participants to believe that they would be the only witness to this emergency, while we led others to believe that there would be other people (whites as well) who also witnessed the emergency. We predicted that, because aversive racists do not act in overtly bigoted ways, whites would not discriminate when they were the only witness and the responsibility for helping was clearly focused on them. However, we anticipated whites to be much less helpful to black than to white victims when they had a justifiable excuse not to get involved, such as the belief that one of the other witnesses was taking responsibility for helping.

This is precisely what we found. When white participants believed that they were the only witness they helped both white and black victims very frequently (over 85 percent of the time) and equivalently. There was no evidence of blatant racism. In contrast, when they thought there were other witnesses, they helped black victims only half as often as white victims (38 percent versus 75 percent). Thus, these results illustrate the operation of subtle biases in relatively dramatic, spontaneous, and life-threatening circumstances involving a failure to help, rather than an action intentionally aimed at doing harm. And, as this research shows, although the bias may be subtle, its consequences may be severe.

Aversive Racism in the Workplace

Labor statistics continue to demonstrate fundamental disparities in the economic status of blacks relative to whites—a gap that has not only persisted but also, in some aspects, has widened in recent years. Aversive racism may be one factor that contributes to disparities in the workplace. Subtle biases can influence both the access of blacks to the workplace and their performance in it. At the time of hiring, aversive racism can affect how qualifications are perceived and weighed, in ways that systematically

disadvantage black relative to white applicants. In particular, the aversive racism framework suggests that bias will not be expressed when a person is clearly qualified or unqualified for a position, because the appropriate decision is obvious. However, bias is expected when the appropriate decision is unclear, for example because of ambiguous evidence about whether the candidate's qualifications meet the criteria for selection or when the candidate's file has conflicting information (some strong and some weak aspects).

In one study of hiring decisions, in a context that was relevant to college students, we asked participants to evaluate candidates for a position in an ostensibly new program for peer counseling at their university on the basis of excerpts from an interview. White participants evaluated a black or white candidate who had credentials that were systematically manipulated to represent very strong, moderate, or very weak qualifications for the position. Their responses were supportive of the aversive racism framework. When the candidates' credentials clearly qualified them for the position or the credentials clearly were not appropriate, there was no discrimination against the black candidate. However, when candidates' qualifications for the position were less obvious and the appropriate decision was more ambiguous, white participants recommended the black candidate significantly less often than the white candidate with exactly the same credentials.

In subsequent research, in which participants were asked to help make admissions decisions for the university, we again found no racial bias when applicants had uniformly strong or uniformly weak college board scores and record of high school achievement. When applicants were strong on one dimension and weak on the other, however, black applicants were recommended generally less strongly than were white applicants. Moreover, participants shifted, as a function of race, how they weighed the criteria to justify their decisions. For black applicants, they gave the weaker of the dimensions (college board scores or grades) greater weight in their decisions, whereas for white applicants they assigned the stronger of the qualifications more weight. Taken together, these findings suggest that when given latitude for interpretation, whites give white candidates the "benefit of the doubt," a benefit they do not extend to blacks.

The behavior of aversive racists is thus characterized by two types of inconsistencies. First, aversive racists exhibit an apparent contradiction between their expressed egalitarian attitudes and their (albeit subtly) biased behaviors. Second, sometimes (in clear situations) they act in an unbiased fashion, whereas at other times (with ambiguous circumstances) they are biased against blacks. For blacks who may not understand the dynamics but who suffer the consequences, these inconsistencies can create a climate of suspicion and distrust.

Once on the job, aversive racism exerts subtle influences on the behavior of whites in interracial workgroups and, thereby, on the outcomes for blacks. Effective teamwork on the job requires social coordination as well as task-relevant skills. Inconsistent behavior of whites and feelings of distrust by blacks can thus have detrimental effects on team productivity.

We examined these processes in interracial pairs in which a black participant was paired with a white student who was identified as a traditionally high prejudiced person (who expressed their bias openly), an aversive racist (who expressed egalitarian views but who showed evidence of unconscious bias), or a low prejudiced white (who held egalitarian views and showed little evidence of unconscious bias). These participants engaged in a problem-solving task about challenges to college students. For example, for one task, they were asked to identify the five most important things that incoming students need to bring to

campus. Because there were no objective measures of the quality of team solution, we focused on the quality of their interaction (as reflected in their perceptions of friendliness and trustworthiness and feelings of satisfaction) and in their efficiency (as indexed by their time to complete the task).

In general, whites' impressions of their behavior were related primarily to their publicly expressed attitudes, whereas blacks' impressions of whites were related mainly to whites' unconscious attitudes. Specifically, whites who expressed egalitarian ideals (low prejudiced whites and aversive racists) reported that they behaved in more friendly ways than did those who expressed their bias openly (high prejudiced whites). Black partners perceived only whites who showed no evidence of unconscious bias (the low prejudiced whites) to be more friendly than those who had biases (aversive racists and high prejudiced whites). Of all three groups, blacks were least trustful of aversive racists.

Our results further revealed that whites' racial attitudes could be systematically correlated to the efficiency of the interracial teams. Teams with low prejudiced whites solved the problem most quickly. Interracial teams involving high prejudiced whites were next most efficient. Teams with aversive racists were the least efficient. Presumably, the conflicting messages displayed by aversive racists and the divergent impressions of the team members' interaction interfered with the task effectiveness of the team. To the extent that blacks are in the minority in an organization and are dependent on high prejudiced whites or aversive racists on work-related tasks, their performance is likely to be objectively poorer than the performance of whites who predominantly interact with other whites. Thus, even when whites harbor unconscious and unintentional biases toward blacks, their actions can have effects sometimes even more detrimental than those of old-fashioned racists on interracial processes and outcomes.

Combating Contemporary Bias

Like a virus that has mutated, racism has evolved into different forms that are not only more difficult to recognize but also to combat. The subtle processes underlying discrimination can be identified and isolated under the controlled conditions of the laboratory. However, in organizational decision-making, in which the controlled conditions of an experiment are rarely possible, this process presents a substantial challenge to the equitable treatment of members of disadvantaged groups.

Because of its pervasiveness, subtlety, and complexity, the traditional techniques for eliminating bias that have emphasized the immorality of prejudice and illegality of discrimination are not effective for combating aversive racism. Aversive racists recognize prejudice is bad, but they do not recognize that they are prejudiced. Thus, aversive racism must be addressed at multiple levels—at the personal level, the organizational level, and the societal level.

We have focused our efforts at understanding the problem of race relations in the United States by examining one aspect—the influence of the racial attitudes of whites in interpersonal interracial encounters. We have shown that contemporary forms of racial bias among whites, particularly liberal whites, are aversive and less blatant than the traditional form but still result in significant damage. Moreover, because aversive racists may not be aware of their unconscious negative attitudes and only discriminate against blacks when they can justify their behavior on the basis of some factor other than race, they will commonly deny any intentional wrongdoing when confronted with evidence of their bias. Indeed, they do not discriminate intentionally. In addition, we have illustrated how awkward and inefficient group processes become when aversive racism affects communication. This not only has

disproportionate negative outcomes for blacks but it may also prevent our ability to move forward at the various levels on which racism needs to be addressed.

So what can we each do about racism when we don't know what we don't know yet? Here are some simple (but not easy) suggestions for action.

• When a person of color brings up race as an issue in an interpersonal or organizational setting—listen! If the person indicates he or she is offended, don't be defensive. Instead try to understand the other person's perspective on the issue. Remember your perceptions can be very different from the everyday experience of others. As the data indicate, whites tend to underestimate the impact of discrimination. Do not begin talking quickly, explain why they are misinterpreting the situation, or begin crying. These are some of the most infuriating responses people of color encounter when they challenge a situation that feels wrong. Take time, if you need it, to think about the situation after listening fully to the other person's perspective. If you hear problems third-hand, don't get angry because you were not approached directly. You probably need to talk through the situation at some point, but remember it is almost never completely safe for a person of color to challenge a dominant perception. Listen deeply.

• On an organizational level—we must all begin to look beyond the general diversity of skin color to the issues of race and power in our organizations. Start by looking at who sits in the loci of power. With power comes the ability to affect frames of reference, style, rules and priorities. With a shift in power, issues that were unseen by whites for years and obvious to people of color emerge quickly as actionable items. (Read the case study from Planned Parenthood in Rhode Island, Summer 2002, page 37, for a description of this dynamic in action.)

• On the level of institutional racism—the aversion to addressing race concerns that is demonstrated through this research carries through to an aversion to discussing race as a driver in and a blind for bad social policy. (See Lani Guinier's article, Summer 2002, page 12, for more on this.) We must stop thinking that someone else will intervene in the state of emergency posed by institutional racism and begin to address the appalling realities of its effects actively, head-on and in deeply committed cross-cultural partnerships.

In conclusion, we can no longer be passive bystanders to racism. We have to hold ourselves responsible. Abstaining from wrongdoing that is immediately obvious to us is not enough. It doesn't begin to address the now convoluted and confusing nature of contemporary racism. In order to address contemporary racism, even and especially among well-intentioned people, it is necessary to establish new, positive norms for action that replace our current norms for avoidance of responsibility.

Endnote

1. See Morin, Richard. 2001. "Misperceptions Cloud Whites' View of Blacks." Washington Post, Wednesday, July 11, page A01.

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"Colorblindness" and the Myth of a "Post-Racial" U.S.A.
By Warren J. Blumenfeld

With the ascendancy of Barack Obama during the primaries and his election twice as the forty-fourth president of the United States, on numerous occasions the media have asserted that the United States can now be considered as a "post-racial" society, where the notion that "race" has lost its significance, and where our country's long history of racism is now at an end.

For example, National Public Radio Senior News Analyst, Daniel Schorr, during the presidential primaries on January 28, 2008 on All Things Considered noted that with the emergence of Barack Obama, we have entered a new "post-racial" political era, and that Obama "transcends race" and is "race free."

And according to MSNBC political analyst, Chris Matthews, responding to Obama's State of the Union message on January 27, 2010: "He is post-racial by all appearances. I forgot he was black tonight for an hour. You know, he's gone a long way to become a leader of this country, and past so much history, in just a year or two. I mean, it's something we don't even think about."

These commentators and others imply a number of claims in their statements: The first that we have become a "race-blind" or "colorblind" society – that race has become unimportant, that we don't see "race" anymore. The second implication states that racism (i.e., prejudice along with social power to enact oppression by white people over people of color) is a thing of the past.

Is the United States now a "colorblind" society? Or even more importantly, should the United States be a "colorblind / race-blind" society? The very notion of "race-blindness" is deeply problematic.

Though when we tell another that "I don't see your race; I just see you as a human being," may seem as a righteous statement, what are we really telling the person, and how may this come across: "I discount a part of you that I may not want to address," and "I will not see you in your multiple identities." This has the tendency of erasing the person's background and historical legacy, and hides the continuing hierarchical and systemic positionalities among white people and racially minoritized people.

In addition, the assertion that we have fully addressed and finally concluded the long history of racism in the United States with the election of Barack Obama is simply unfounded.

Anti-racism consultant Valerie Batts discusses what she terms as "new forms of racism." While the*Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954), the Civil Right Act (1964), and other judicial and legislative actions have criminalized a number of past realities (for example, slavery, "Jim Crow" laws, lynchings, cross burnings, segregated educational, employment, business, and governmental institutions, and more), many forms of racism continue.

While some of these conditions continue today on a de facto basis, Batts lists these "new forms" as "Dysfunctional Rescuing" where white people "help" people of color in a condescending way believing they can't help themselves; "Blaming the Victims" of systematic oppression for the oppression itself; "Avoidance of Contact" where white people self segregate in their personal and professional lives from people of color, and where white people show little interest in learning about the cultures of communities of color; "Denial of Cultural Differences," the notion of "color blindness," which minimizes the cultural and behavioral difference among people, which simply mask discomfort with racialized differences; and "Denial of Political Significance of Differences," in which white people deny the profound impact regarding the social, political, and economic realities of the lives of people of color.

I add to the list of conditions that perpetuate systemic racism the concept of stereotyping. A stereotype is an oversimplified or misinformed perception, opinion, attitude, judgment, or image of a person or a group of people held in common by members of other groups. Originally referring to the process of making type from a metal mold in printing, social stereotypes can be viewed as molds of regular and invariable patterns of evaluation on others.

With stereotypes, people tend to overlook all other characteristics of the group. Stereotypes of out-group members by in-group members depersonalize them, in effect seeing them largely as members of a group and not as individuals with unique and distinctive qualities and attributes. This often results in the tendency to diminish the humanity of out-group members relegating them to the category of "other," and as "different."

Individuals sometime use stereotypes to justify continued marginalization and subjugation of members of that group. In this sense, stereotypes conform to the literal meaning of the word "prejudice," which is a prejudgment, derived from the Latin *praejudicium*.

This is the case, for example, in actions explicitly intended as a mockery of Black History Month when a number of institutions around the country, for example in 2010, two years after Obama's first election, a group of students at the University of California at San Diego, throw off-campus "ghetto themed parties." Attendees were advised to come wearing chains, cheap clothing, and speak very loudly, and where female students are urged to come as "ghetto chicks."

In part, according to the invitation UCSD student organizers sent announcing what they referred to as the "Compton Cookout": "…For those of you who are unfamiliar with ghetto chicks -- Ghetto chicks usually have gold teeth, start fights and drama, and wear cheap clothes, they consider Baby Phat to be high class and expensive couture. They also have short, nappy hair, and usually wear cheap weave, usually in bad colors, such as purple or bright red…." The invitation continued: "We will be serving 40's, Kegs of Natty, dat Purple Drank, which consists of sugar, water, and the color purple, chicken, cool aide, and of course Watermelon."

We must not and cannot dismiss these incidents as simply the actions of a few individuals, for racism and other forms of oppression exist on multiple levels. These incidents are symptoms of larger *systemic* national problems.

The ongoing demonstrators protesting alleged police harassment and unprovoked killings of unarmed black men and boys surfacing throughout U.S. highlights the longstanding and continuous tensions and confrontations between police forces and the communities they are meant to serve. An essential question we must discuss and eventually answer, however, is: "Whose interests do they actually serve?"

In their book *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society*, the authors show how the concept of "colorblindness / race-blindness" attempts to deny and further entrench hierarchical and deeply rooted systemic racial inequities and privileges accorded to white people that permeate throughout our society.

We must as a society get beyond this false and counterproductive notion of "colorblindness / race-blindness" and confront head-on our past history and current realities of racism and transcend, to use Mica Pollock's term, "colormuteness" by engaging in honest and open conversations on the impact and legacy of race relations in our country.

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"To attain the truth in life, we must discard all the ideas we were taught, and reconstruct the entire system of our knowledge" ~ Rene Descartes

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Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool
Town of Hartford, Vermont

Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity adapted this self-audit tool with permission from the *L'Association des facultés de médecine du Canada*. The original self-audit tool was designed to assist Canadian medical schools to better understand working environments and climate, and to plan for needed adjustments. Vermont Partnership has adapted the self-audit tool for specific use with the Town of Hartford, Vermont.

This is designed as a self-audit tool for internal use to:

- Assess how well an individual department is doing to promote diversity and equity.
- Provide an opportunity to reflect on areas in need of improvement.
- Garner support for any improvements needed to further departmental or employee commitments to equity and diversity.
- Develop an action plan and timeline for improvement.

Completion of this self-audit tool will give you a "snapshot" and help your department better understand its strengths, needs and concerns. Using this tool provides an opportunity for you to reflect on what you are doing well and how you might enhance equity, inclusion, and diversity. Using this self-audit tool may identify systemic changes needed. Vermont Partnership will tabulate and combine all departmental responses to give a "snapshot" of town government as a whole. The town snapshot will form the basis of some of the recommendations forthcoming in the strategic plan.

The self-audit is divided into the following four sections: Planning, Policies and Procedures, Boards and Commissions, and Communications/Community Relations. Please circle your response to the multiple choice questions (Yes No DK, "Don't Know"). Respond to questions requiring a narrative in the "Comments" column or in a supplemental sheet. If you have any ideas for next steps relative to the posed question note them in the "Next Steps" column.

Reflect on the following questions as you complete the self-audit:

1. In what areas do you think your department has been effective in promoting diversity and equity in the workplace?
2. What areas do you think need improvement?
3. What do you see as obstacles to diversity and equity in your department?
4. What do you see as strengths of your department in terms of diversity and equity?

To assist you with the self-audit tool, we have used the following definitions.

Equality In the past, we thought that equality meant sameness and that treating people as equals meant treating everyone the same. We now know that the practice of treating everyone the same can lead to unequal outcomes. Failing to take difference into account reinforces, rather than alleviates, patterns of systemic oppression because the taken-for-granted norms that shape our institutional processes and thinking most often reflect the perspectives of the socially dominant. These norms tend to ignore, misunderstand, and de-value social differences that include, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, etc.

Equity Equity at its most basic level is about fairness, and it is premised upon a sense of justice. Equity is not the same as equality. Equality implies sameness. Equity on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account – to ensure a fair process and ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. Inequity refers to differences which are not only unnecessary and avoidable, but also unfair and unjust. Initiatives to promote equitable access to public services are largely dependent on the ability of administrators to recognize that equitable access is not synonymous with managing difference or diversity by "treating everyone the same."

Diversity Diversity is incorporated into the meaning of equity and moves us beyond the notion that difference is merely benign variation. Diversity, in the context of equity, acknowledges that power differences exist between people based on factors such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, etc. Diversity also acknowledges that, within any given group, there are significant differences between individuals themselves. Accounting for difference is an important task of organizations that embrace an ethic of equity. Doing this in ways that acknowledge differences between and within groups is an important consideration

Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool
Town of Hartford, Vermont

	DEPARTMENT			
		Response	**Comments**	**Next Steps**
1.	Approximate Number of Employees			
	Full time			
	Part time			
	Seasonal			
	PLANNING			
2.	Do equity statements or objectives exist?	Yes No DK		
3.	Are Equity principles included within the: • Mission Statement? • Strategic Goals, Plans or Initiatives? • Operational Plans?	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
4.	Are Equity objectives posted and available? Are the following methods in place to promote awareness? • Website • Information sessions • Newsletter/media • Brochures • Posters • Email • Other	Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
5.	Are equity policies in place regarding hiring, promotion, and retirement?	Some None DK Comprehensive Policies		
6.	Is responsibility for equity objectives and outcomes explicitly assigned?	Yes No DK		
7.	Are staff in place to address equity issues in the workplace?	Yes No DK		
8.	What are the strengths-activities or practices of your department that support equity?	1. 2. 3.		
9.	What are the challenges to achieving equity in your department? If there are challenges are they… • Attitudinal? • Communication? • Procedural/Administrative? • Economic? • Interdisciplinary? • External to your department?	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
10.	Are there mechanisms to monitor your department's achievements in equity? Please describe	Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
11.	Are diversity statements or objectives explicit?	Yes No DK		
12.	Are diversity principles included within the: • Mission Statement? • Strategic Goals? • Operational Plans?	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
13.	What are the strengths-activities or practices of your department that support diversity?			
14.	What are the challenges to diversity in your department?			
15.	Are there mechanisms to monitor your department's achievements in diversity? Please describe	Yes No DK		
16.	Are there awards/recognition for contributions in the advancement of equity and/or diversity.	Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES			
17.	Does your department have a set of core operating values?	Yes No DK		
18.	Do your core operating values support and foster equity and diversity?	Yes No DK		
19.	Do policies and procedures on harassment and discrimination exist within your institution?	Yes No DK		
20.	Are methods in place to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination among: • Employees • Residents	 Yes No DK Yes No DK		
21.	What methods are used? • Information sessions • Website • Newsletters (inc. electronic) • Brochures • Other, please specify	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
22.	Are new hires made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to: • Discrimination? • Harassment? • Core Values? How is this done?	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		

		Response	Comments	Next Steps

23.	Have supervisors completed professional development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values in the last two years?	Yes No DK		
24.	Do you have a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	Yes No DK		
25.	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	Yes No DK		
26.	Is the process of lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and the breach of core operating values easily understandable?	Yes No DK		
27.	Does your department conduct exit interviews regarding harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values for all departing employees?	Yes No DK		

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
28.	What methods are used to promote awareness of core operating values? • Information sessions • Website • Newsletters (inc. electronic) • Brochures • Other, please specify	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
	BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS			
29.	Approximate Number of Members			
	Male			
	Female			
	Transgender			
	Non-binary			
	White			
	Person of Color			
	<35 years old			
	36-50 years old			
	51 – 65 years old			
	65+ years old			
30.	Does board or commission membership reflect the demographics of the town?	Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
31.	Are new board or commission members made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to: • Discrimination? • Harassment? • Core Operational Values? How is this done?	 Yes No DK Yes No DK Yes No DK		
32.	Have board or commission chairs completed professional development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values in the last two years?	Yes No DK		
33.	Do boards and commissions have a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	Yes No DK		
34.	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	Yes No DK		
35.	Is the process of lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and the breach of core operating values easily understandable?	Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

		Response	Comments	Next Steps
	COMMUNICATIONS/COMMUNITY RELATIONS			
36.	Are diverse images used when people are featured in publications and websites (i.e. POCs, gender, persons with disabilities)?	Yes No DK		
37.	Can visitors to your webpage file a compliment or compliant about your department's services?	Yes No DK		
38.	Is your website compatible with handicap accessible software?	Yes No DK		
39.	Is Google Translate available on your webpage?	Yes No DK		
40.	Are all events arranged to be accessible to people with mobility disabilities?	Yes No DK		
41.	When arranging events, do you check whether people require specific accommodations such as interpreters (ASL, foreign language), dietary, childcare?	Yes No DK		
42.	Are event/meeting notices sent to individuals or organizations representing historically marginalized populations?	Yes No DK		

DK = Don't Know

Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool Tallied Responses • Town of Hartford

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
1	Approximate Number of Employees				
1a	Full-time				
1b	Part-time				
1c	Seasonal				
2	Do equity statements of objectives exist?	6	1	0	0
3	Are equity principles included within the:				
3a	Mission Statement?	4	2	0	1
3b	Strategic Goals, Plans, or Initiatives?	4	2	0	1
3c	Operational Plans?	4	1	1	1
4	Are equity objectives posted and available?	2	2	1	2
4a	Are the following methods in place to promote awareness:				
4a1	Website?	4	2	0	1
4a2	Information sessions?	2, 1 "some"	1	1	2
4a3	Newsletter/media	2	1	2	2
4a4	Brochures	2	1	2	2
4a5	Posters	1	1	3	2
4a6	Email	1	1	3	2
4a7	Other	1	1	2	2

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
5	Are equity policies in place regarding hiring, promotion, and retirement?				
6	Is responsibiility for equity objectives and outcomes explicitly assigned?	2	1	4	0
7	Are staff in place to address equity issues in the workplace?	3	2	1	1
8	What are the strengths (activities or practices) of your department that support equity?				
9	What are the challenges to achieving equity in your department? If there are challenges, are they:				
9a	Attitudinal?		4	1	3
9b	Communication?	2	3	1	2
9c	Procedural/Administrative?	1	4	1	2
9d	Economic?	3	2	1	2
9e	Interdisciplinary?	0	2	3	3
9f	External to your department?	2	2	2	2
10	Are there mechanisms to monitor your department's achievements in equity?	3	4	0	1
11	Are diversity statements or objectives explicit?	4	1	1	1
12	Are diversity principles included within the:				
12a	Mission Statement?	2	2	1	2
12b	Strategic Goals, Plans, or Initiatives?	3	2	1	1
12c	Operational Plans?	4	1	1	1
13	What are the strengths (activities or practices) of your department that support diversity?				

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
14	What are the challenges to diversity in your department?				
15	Are there mechanisms to monitor your department's achievements in diversity?	3	2	1	1
16	Are there awards/recognition for contributions in the advancement of equity and/or diversity?	2	2	2	1
17	Does your department have a set of core operating values?	6	0	0	1
18	Do your core operating values support and foster equity and diversity?	5	1	0	1
19	Do policies and procedures on harassment and discrimination exist within your institution?	6	0	1	0
20	Are methods in place to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination among:				
20a	Employees	6	0	1	0
20b	Residents	3	0	4	0
21	What methods are used?				
21a	Information sessions?	3	0	2	2

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
21b	Website?	3	0	3	1
21c	Newsletters (inc. electronic)?	1	2	3	1
21d	Brochures	0	1	5	1
21e	Other	1	0	3	3
22	Are new hires made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to:				
22a	Discrimination?	5	0	1	1
22b	Harassment?	5	0	1	1
22c	Core values?	3	0	2	2
22d	How is this done?				
23	Have supervisors completed professional development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values in the last two years?	3	2	2	0
24	Do you have a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	4	0	1	1
25	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	3	0	3	1

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
26	Is the process of lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and the breach of core operating values easily understandable?	2	0	4	2
27	Does your department conduct exit interviews regarding harassment, discrimination, and breach of core values for all departing employees?	2	1	3	1
28	What methods are used to promote awareness of core operating values?				
28a	Information sessions?	2	1	2	2
28b	Website?	3	0	2	2
28c	Newsletters (inc. electronic)?	1	2	2	2
28d	Brochures	2	1	2	2
28e	Other?	1	1	3	2
29	Approximate Number of Members of Board & Commissions:				
29a	Male				
29b	Female				
29c	Transgender				
29d	Nonbinary				

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
29e	White				
29f	People of Color				
29g	<35 yo				
29h	36-50 yo				
29i	51-65 yo				
29j	>65 yo				
30	Does board or commission membership reflect the demographics of the town?	0	1	1	5
31	Are new board members or commission members made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to:	0	0	0	7
31a	Discrimination?	0	1	1	5
31b	Harassment?	0	1	1	5
31c	Core operational values?	0	1	1	5
31d	How is this done?				

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty
32	Have board or commission chairs completed professional development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach or core operating values in the last two years?	0	1	1	5
33	Do boards and commissions have a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	0	1	2	4
34	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	1	0	1	5
35	Is the process of lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and the breach of core operating values easily understandable?	0	0	2	5
36	Are diverse images used when people are features in the publications and websites?	2	2	3	1
37	Can visitors to your webpage file a compliment or complaint about your department's services?	4	0	1	2
38	Is your website compatible with disability accessibility software?	0	0	6	1
39	Is Google Translate available on your webpage?	1	0	5	1
40	Are all events arranged to be accessible to people with mobility challenges?	5	0	1	1
41	When arranging events, do you check whether people requuire specific accommodation such as interpretation (including sign language), dietary needs, or childcare?	0	0	4	3
42	Are event/meeting notices sent to individuals or organizations representing historically marginalized populations?	2	1	2	3

Responses to Town Self-Audit Open-ended Questions

8. What are the strengths (activities or practices) of your department that support equity?

- We have specific legal guidelines for the department
- Openness when working with various people, Attitude that we are here to serve the public, Solicit community input at all stages of our work that -> goals, plans, recommended actions.
- None currently in place
- Election volunteers are multi-generational and gender-diverse

Next Steps:

- Increase awareness in (invite) community for the opportunity to volunteer at elections and election-related activities to a more diverse group of volunteers.
- Speak to everyone; Help resolve issues; Treat everyone respectfully
- Vision--something for everyone; scholarship program; CAPRA Accreditation
- Use of new media/outreach with colleges in recruiting; Engagement of union and supervisory personnel in policy development; Training

10. Are there mechanisms to monitor your department's achievements in equity?

- Compliance reviews by external parties
- We keep an informal list of active volunteers. As new volunteers are added, we can gauge achievement.
- None
- Department Program Plan
- Some

Next Steps:

- Formal analysis still in development

13. What are the strengths (activities or practices) of your department that support diversity?

- We follow and execute the Town of Hartford policies, external compliance requirements, and utilize our
- Openness when working with various people; Soliciting input from community to direct goals, strategies, and actions for our department propjects, programs; Attitude that we are here to serve the public
- We advertise regularly.
- Our office is a place most residents visit at some point. We provide a welcoming environment to all.
- DNA
- Facilities for all; maintain variety of services for all in the community
- Same as #8 (Use of new media/outreach with colleges in recruiting; Engagement of union and supervisory personnel in policy development; Training)

14. What are the challenges to diversity in your department?

- Communication also can be a challenge, given we don't have a very diverse population in Hartford, it is hard to truly evaluate how we are doing.
- Candidate pool is limited.
- See #9 (Our department consists of only two people. Not much turn-over. Volunteers would be the most likely area for us to achieve equity in volunteer opportunities.)
- 2 employees
- Promotion and acknowledgement of differences. It's OK to participate, as an example.
- Community outreach and perception

Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool
Hartford School District

Vermont Partnership for Fairness & Diversity adapted this self-audit tool with permission from the *L'Association des facultés de médecine du Canada*. The original self-audit tool was designed to assist Canadian medical schools to better understand working environments and climate, and to plan for needed adjustments. Vermont Partnership has adapted the self-audit tool for specific use with the Hartford School District in Hartford, Vermont.

This is designed as a self-audit tool for internal use to:

- Assess how well an individual department is doing to promote diversity and equity.
- Provide an opportunity to reflect on areas in need of improvement.
- Garner support for any improvements needed to further departmental or employee commitments to equity and diversity.
- Develop an action plan and timeline for improvement.

Completion of this self-audit tool will give you a "snapshot" and help your department better understand its strengths, needs and concerns. Using this tool provides an opportunity for you to reflect on what you are doing well and how you might enhance equity, inclusion, and diversity. Using this self-audit tool may identify systemic changes needed. Vermont Partnership will tabulate and combine all departmental responses to give a "snapshot" of town government as a whole. The town snapshot will form the basis of some of the recommendations forthcoming in the strategic plan.

The self-audit is divided into the following four sections: Planning, Policies and Procedures, Boards and Commissions, and Communications/Community Relations. Please circle your response to the multiple choice questions (Yes No DK, "Don't Know"). Respond to questions requiring a narrative in the "Comments" column or in a supplemental sheet. If you have any ideas for next steps relative to the posed question note them in the "Next Steps" column.

Reflect on the following questions as you complete the self-audit:

5. In what areas do you think your department has been effective in promoting diversity and equity in the workplace?
6. What areas do you think need improvement?
7. What do you see as obstacles to diversity and equity in your department?
8. What do you see as strengths of your department in terms of diversity and equity?

To assist you with the self-audit tool, we have used the following definitions.

Equality In the past, we thought that equality meant sameness and that treating people as equals meant treating everyone the same. We now know that the practice of treating everyone the same can lead to unequal outcomes. Failing to take difference into account reinforces, rather than alleviates, patterns of systemic oppression because the taken-for-granted norms that shape our institutional processes and thinking most often reflect the perspectives of the socially dominant. These norms tend to ignore, misunderstand, and de-value social differences that include, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, etc.

Equity Equity at its most basic level is about fairness, and it is premised upon a sense of justice. Equity is not the same as equality.

Equality implies sameness. Equity on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account – to ensure a fair process and ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. Inequity refers to differences which are not only unnecessary and avoidable, but also unfair and unjust. Initiatives to promote equitable access to public services are largely dependent on the ability of administrators to recognize that equitable access is not synonymous with managing difference or diversity by "treating everyone the same."

Diversity Diversity is incorporated into the meaning of equity and moves us beyond the notion that difference is merely benign variation. Diversity, in the context of equity, acknowledges that power differences exist between people based on factors such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, etc. Diversity also acknowledges that, within any given group, there are significant differences between individuals themselves. Accounting for difference is an important task of organizations that embrace an ethic of equity. Doing this in ways that acknowledge differences between and within groups is an important consideration

Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool
Hartford School District

	Personnel	Response	Comments
1.	Approximate Number of Employees		
	Administrative Support		
	Administrators		
	Building & Grounds		
	Cafeteria Staff		
	Counsellors		
	Licensed Educators		
	Para-educators		
	Union		
	Non-Union		
2.	Employee Demographic Profile		
	w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		
3.	Leadership Team		
	w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		

	Students	Response	Comments
4.	Approximate Number of Students		
	Students w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		
5.	Student Leadership		
	Students w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		
6.	Advance Placement Students		
	Students w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		
7.	Participation in Extra-Curriculum Act.		
	Students w/Disabilities		
	Female		
	LGBTQ		
	Male		
	Non-binary		
	POC		

	Students	Response	Comments
8.	Extra-Curriculum Activity Access to		
	Affordability	Yes No DK	
	After school transportation	Yes No DK	
	Materials	Yes No DK	
	POC Models/Mentors	Yes No DK	
	Sports Equipment	Yes No DK	
	Trips	Yes No DK	
	VISION/MISSON		
9.	Are Equity principles included within the:		
	• Mission Statement?	Yes No DK	
	• Strategic Goals, Plans or Initiatives?	Yes No DK	
	• Curriculum?	Yes No DK	
10.	Are Equity objectives posted and available?	Yes No DK	
11.	Are the following methods in place to promote Equity objectives awareness?		
	• Brochures	Yes No DK	
	• Email	Yes No DK	
	• Information sessions	Yes No DK	
	• Newsletter/media	Yes No DK	
	• Posters	Yes No DK	
	• Thought Leaders	Yes No DK	
	• Website	Yes No DK	
12.	Are equity policies in place regarding hiring, promotion, and retirement?	Some None DK Comprehensive Policies	
13.	Is responsibility for equity objectives and outcomes explicitly assigned?	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
14.	Are staff in place to address equity issues in your school?	Yes No DK	

15.	Do you send educator job vacancy announcements to affinity groups of		
	• educators w/disabilities?	Yes No DK	
	• LGBTQ educators?	Yes No DK	
	• POC educators?	Yes No DK	
16.	Do you send educator job vacancy announcements to affinity groups of		
	• educators w/disabilities?	Yes No DK	
	• LGBTQ educators?	Yes No DK	
	• POC educators?	Yes No DK	
17.	Do you send administrator job vacancy announcements to affinity groups of		
	• administrators w/disabilities?	Yes No DK	
	• LGBTQ administrators?	Yes No DK	
	• POC administrators?	Yes No DK	
18.	Do you send educator job vacancy announcements to affinity groups of		
	• administrators w/disabilities?	Yes No DK	
	• LGBTQ administrators?	Yes No DK	
	• POC administrators?	Yes No DK	
19.	What are the strengths-activities or practices of your school that support equity?	1. 2. 3.	
20.	Are there mechanisms to monitor your school's advancements in equity? Please describe	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
21.	What are the challenges to achieving equity in your school? If there are challenges are they…		
	• Attitudinal?	Yes No DK	
	• Communication?	Yes No DK	
	• Economic?	Yes No DK	
	• External to your school?	Yes No DK	
	• Interdisciplinary?	Yes No DK	
	• Lack of understanding?	Yes No DK	
	• Procedural/Administrative?	Yes No DK	
22.	In our schools we		
	• Collaboratively Identify Problems	Yes No DK	
	• Collaboratively Solve Problems	Yes No DK	
23.	Our schools practice restorative justice	Yes No DK	
24.	There are disparities in disciplinary outcomes between white students and		
	• students of color	Yes No DK	
	• student with disabilities	Yes No DK	
25.	There are disparities in disciplinary outcomes between students from more affluent families and students from income insecure families	Yes No DK	
26.	The visuals on our walls reflect POC adults as active and productive citizens	Yes No DK	
27.	The visuals on our walls reflect LGBTQ adults as active and productive citizens	Yes No DK	
28.	The visuals on our walls reflect adults with disabilities as active and productive citizens	Yes No DK	
29.	We have a source for diverse wall visuals	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
30.	Our curriculum reflects diverse identities and representations in		
	• foreign languages	Yes No DK	
	• history/social studies	Yes No DK	
	• literature	Yes No DK	
	• math	Yes No DK	
	• music	Yes No DK	
	• performing arts	Yes No DK	
	• science	Yes No DK	
	• visual arts	Yes No DK	
	• vocational arts	Yes No DK	
31.	Are diversity statements or objectives explicit?	Yes No DK	
32.	Are diversity principles included within the:		
	• Mission Statement?	Yes No DK	
	• Strategic Goals?	Yes No DK	
	• Curriculum?	Yes No DK	
33.	What are the strengths-activities or practices of your school that support diversity?		
34.	What are the challenges to promoting diversity in your school? If there are challenges are they…		
	• Attitudinal?	Yes No DK	
	• Communication?	Yes No DK	
	• Economic?	Yes No DK	
	• External to your school?	Yes No DK	
	• Interdisciplinary?	Yes No DK	
	• Lack of understanding?	Yes No DK	
	• Procedural/Administrative?	Yes No DK	
		Response	**Comments**
35.	Are there mechanisms to monitor your school's advancements in diversity?	Yes No DK	

	Please describe		
36.	Are there awards/recognition for contributions in the advancement of equity and/or diversity.	Yes No DK	
	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		
37.	Does your school have a set of core operating values?	Yes No DK	
38.	Do your core operating values support and foster equity and diversity?	Yes No DK	
39.	Do teachers actively employ anti-bias teaching strategies? If so, provide an example	Yes No DK	
40.	Do teachers use a diversity of perspectives or materials in their curriculum?	Yes No DK	
41.	Do students have regular and ongoing access to POC role models through		
	• the curriculum?	Yes No DK	
	• school personnel?	Yes No DK	
	• subject matter experts?	Yes No DK	
	• visiting artists?	Yes No DK	
	• visuals on the walls?	Yes No DK	
	• volunteers?	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
42.	Do students have regular and ongoing access to role models with disabilities through	Yes No DK	
	• the curriculum?	Yes No DK	
	• school personnel?	Yes No DK	
	• subject matter experts?	Yes No DK	
	• visiting artists?	Yes No DK	
	• visuals on the walls?	Yes No DK	
	• volunteers?	Yes No DK	
43.	Do students have regular and ongoing access to LGBTQ role models through	Yes No DK	
	• the curriculum?	Yes No DK	
	• school personnel?	Yes No DK	
	• subject matter experts?	Yes No DK	
	• visiting artists?	Yes No DK	
	• visuals on the walls?	Yes No DK	
	• volunteers?	Yes No DK	
44.	Do policies and procedures on harassment and discrimination exist within your school?	Yes No DK	
45.	Are methods in place to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination among:		
	• Employees?	Yes No DK	
	• Parents/Guardians?	Yes No DK	
	• Students?	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
46.	What methods are used to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination?		
	• Brochures	Yes No DK	
	• Information sessions	Yes No DK	
	• Newsletters (inc. electronic)	Yes No DK	
	• Thought leaders (word of mouth)	Yes No DK	
	• Website	Yes No DK	
	• Other, please specify	Yes No DK	
47.	Are new hires made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to:		
	• Core Values?	Yes No DK	
	• Discrimination?	Yes No DK	
	• Harassment?	Yes No DK	
	How is this done?		
48.	Have supervisors completed professional development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values in the last two years?	Yes No DK	
49.	Do you have a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	Yes No DK	
50.	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	Yes No DK	
51.	Is the process of lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment, and the breach of core operating values easily understandable?	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
52.	Does your school conduct exit interviews regarding harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values for all departing employees?	Yes No DK	
	COMMUNICATIONS/COMMUNITY RELATIONS		
53.	Are diverse images from your community used when people are featured in publications and websites (i.e. POCs, gender, persons with disabilities)?	Yes No DK	
54.	Do you mitigate the effects of the "Shirley Card" when photographing black or brown students	Yes No DK	
55.	Can visitors to your webpage file a compliment or compliant about your school's services?	Yes No DK	
56.	Is your website compatible with handicap accessible software?	Yes No DK	
57.	Is Google Translate available on your webpage?	Yes No DK	
58.	Are all events arranged to be accessible to people with mobility disabilities?	Yes No DK	
59.	When arranging events, do you check whether people require specific accommodations such as interpreters (ASL, foreign language), dietary, childcare?	Yes No DK	
60.	Are event/meeting notices sent to individuals or organizations representing historically marginalized populations?	Yes No DK	

		Response	Comments
61.	Are climate surveys designed in collaboration with		
	• consultants?		
	• parents or guardians?		
	• school personnel		
	• students?		
	• no one (off the shelf)		
62.	We conduct climate surveys for		
	• parents or guardians		
	• school personnel		
	• students		
63.	Are climate survey results published for public review for the		
	• parent/guardian survey?		
	• school personnel survey?		
	• student climate survey?		

Equity and Diversity Self-Audit Tool Tallied Responses • Hartford School District

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
1	Approximate Number of Employees					
1a	Administrative Support					10
1b	Administrators					7
1c	Building & Grounds					7
1d	Cafeteria Staff					4
1e	Counsellors					5
1f	Licensed Educators					138
1g	Para-educators					83
1h	Union					0
1j	Non-union					1
2	Employee Demographic Profile					
2a	w/Disabilities					5
2b	Female					201
2c	Male					48
2d	Non-binary					0
2e	PoC					2
2f	LGBTQ					2
3	Leadership Team					
3a	w/Disabilities					0
3b	Female					20
3c	Male					4
3d	Non-binary					0
3e	PoC					0
3f	LGBTQ					0

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
4	Approximate Number of Students					
4a	w/Disabilities					460
4b	Female					532
4c	Male					701
4d	Non-binary					4
4e	PoC					39
4f	LGBTQ					1
5	Student Leadership					
5a	w/Disabilities					0
5b	Female					2
5c	Male					2
5d	Non-binary					0
5e	PoC					0
5f	LGBTQ					1
6	Advanced Placement Students					
6a	w/Disabilities					0
6b	Female					0
6c	Male					0
6d	Non-binary					0
6e	PoC					0
6f	LGBTQ					0
7	Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities					
7a	w/Disabilities					0
7b	Female					0
7c	Male					0
7d	Non-binary					0

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
7e	PoC					0
7f	LGBTQ					0
8	Extra-Curricular Activities Access to:					
8a	Affordability	2	0	1	2	
8b	After School Transportation	1	1	1	2	
8c	Materials	2	0	1	2	
8d	POC Models/Mentors	1	1	1	2	
8e	Sports Equipment	2	0	1	2	
8f	Trips	2	0	1	2	
9	Does your school have a set of core operating values?	4	0	0	1	
10	Do the core operating values support and foster equity and diversity?	4	0	0	1	
11	Are equity principles included within the:					
11a	Mission Statement?	4	0	0	1	
11b	Strategic Goals, Plans, or Initiatives?	4	0	0	1	
11c	Curriculum?	3	1	0	1	
12	Are equity objectives posted and available?	2	2	0	1	
13	Are the following methods in place to promote awareness of equity objectives?					
13a	Brochures	1	3	0	1	
13b	Email	2	2	0	1	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
13c	Information Sessions	1	3	0	1	
13d	Newsletter/Media	2	2	0	1	
13e	Posters	2	2	0	1	
13f	Thought Leaders	1	2	1	1	
13g	Website	2	2	0	1	
14	Are equity policies in place regarding hiring, promotion, and retirement?					
15	Is responsibility for equity objectives and outcomes explicitly assigned?	0	5	0	0	
16	Are there staff in place to address equity issues in your school?	4	1	0	0	
17	Do you send educator job vacancy announcement to affinity groups of:					
17a	Educators with disabilities?	0	4	1	0	
17b	LGBTQ educators?	0	4	1	0	
17c	PoC educators?	0	4	1	0	
18	Do you send administrator job vacancy announcements to affinity groups of:					
18a	Administrators with disabilities?	0	3	2	0	
18b	LGBTQ administrators?	0	3	2	0	
18c	PoC administrators?	0	3	2	0	
19	Do you send educator job vacancy announcement to affinity groups of:					
19a	Administrators with disabilities?	0	4	1	0	
19b	LGBTQ administrators?	0	4	1	0	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
19c	PoC administrators?	0	4	1	0	
20	What are the challenges to achieving equity in your school? If there are challenges, are they:					
20a	Attitudinal?	0	3	1	1	
20b	Communication?	1	2	1	1	
20c	Economic?	3	1	0	1	
20d	External to your school?	3	1	0	1	
20e	Interdisciplinary?	0	2	2	1	
20f	Lack of understanding?	2	0	2	1	
20g	Procedural/Administrative?	2	0	2	1	
21	In our schools we:					
21a	Collaboratively identify problems	4	0	0	1	
21b	Collaboratively solve problems	4	0	0	1	
22	Our schools practice restorative justice	3	1	0	1	
23	There are disparities in disciplinary outcomes between white/able-bodied students and:					

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
23a	Students of color	1	2	1	1	
23b	Students with disabilities	1	2	1	1	
24	There are disparities in disciplinary outcomes between students from more affluent families and students from income insecure families	1	2	2	0	
25	The visuals on our walls reflect LGBTQ adults as active and productive citizens	3	2	0	0	
26	The visuals on our walls reflect POC adults as active and productive citizens	2	3	0	0	
27	The visuals on our walls reflect adults with disabilities as active and productive citizens	3	2	0	0	
28	We have a source for diverse wall visuals	2	3	0	0	
29	Are diversity statements of objectives explicit?	1	3	0	1	
	Are diversity principles included within the:					
29a	Mission Statement?	2	2	0	1	
29b	Strategic Goals, Plans, or Initiatives?	2	2	0	1	
29c	Curriculum?	1	3	0	1	
30	What are the strengths, activities, or practices of your school that support diversity? Please describe.					
31	What are the challenges to promoting diversity in your school? If there are challenges, are they:					

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
31a	Attitudinal?	0	3	1	1	
31b	Communication?	2	1	1	1	
31c	Economic?	2	2	0	1	
31d	External to your school?	3	1	0	1	
31e	Interdisciplinary?	0	2	1	2	
31f	Lack of understanding?	3	1	0	1	
31g	Procedural/Administrative?	1	2	0	2	
32	Are there mechanisms to monitor your school's advancements in diversity? Please describe:	1	3	0	1	
33	Are there awards/recognition for contributions in the advancement of equity and/or diversity?	0	4	0	1	
34	Do policies and procedures on harassment and discrimination exist within your school?	4	0	0	1	
35	Are new hires made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to:					
35a	Core values	4	0	0	1	
35b	Discrimination	4	0	0	1	
35c	Harassment	4	0	0	1	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
35d	How is this done? Please describe:					
36	Is there a process in place for dealing with concerns related to discrimination and harassment?	5	0	0	0	
37	Does your school conduct exit interviews regarding harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values for all departing employees?	1	1	4	0	
38	Are methods in place to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination among:					
38a	Employees?	5	0	0	0	
38b	Parents/Guardians?	5	0	0	0	
38c	Students?	5	0	0	0	
39	What methods are used to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination?					
39a	Brochures	1	3	0	1	
39b	Information sessions	3	1	0	1	
39c	Newsletters (inc. electronic)	3	1	0	1	
39d	Thought leaders (word of mouth)	3	0	1	1	
39e	Website	5	0	0	0	
39f	Other, please specify	2	0	1	2	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
40	Have supervisors completed profession development related to responding to harassment, discrimination, and breach of core operating values in the last two years?	5	0	0	0	
41	Are concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment treated seriously and in a timely manner?	5	0	0	0	
42	Is the process for lodging concerns or complaints related to discrimination, harassment of breach of core operating values easily understandable?	5	0	0	0	
43	Do teachers use a diversity of perspectives of materials in their curricula?	3	0	2	0	
44	Do teachers use a variety of teaching strategies, such as universal instructional design approaches, to meet diverse learning styles? Please describe.	3	1	0	1	
45	Our curricula reflect diverse identities and representations in:					
45a	Literature	3	0	1	1	
45b	Science	3	0	2	0	
45c	Math	2	1	1	1	
45d	Music	3	0	2	0	
45e	Performing Arts	3	0	2	0	
45f	History/Social Studies	2	0	2	1	
45g	Visual Arts	3	0	2	0	
45h	Vocational Arts	1	1	2	1	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
46	Do teachers actively employ anti-bias teaching strategies? If so, provide and example.	0	2	2	1	
47	The visuals on our walls reflect POC adults as active and productive citizens	2	2	0	1	
48	Do students have regular and ongoing access to POC role models through:					
48a	the curriculum?	2	2	1	0	
48b	School personnel?	1	4	0	0	
48c	Subject matter experts?	1	4	0	0	
48d	Visiting artists?	1	4	0	0	
48e	Visuals on the walls?	2	3	0	0	
48f	Volunteers?	2	3	0	0	
49	Do students have regular and ongoing access to role models with disabilities through:					
49a	the curriculum?	1	3	1	0	
49b	School personnel?	1	4	0	0	
49c	Subject matter experts?	1	3	1	0	
49d	Visiting artists?	1	4	0	0	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
49e	Visuals on the walls?	1	4	0	0	
49f	Volunteers?	2	3	0	0	
50	Do students have regular and ongoing access to LGBTQ role models through:					
50a	the curriculum?	1	3	2	0	
50b	School personnel?	3	1	1	0	
50c	Subject matter experts?	2	2	2	0	
50d	Visiting artists?	2	2	2	0	
50e	Visuals on the walls?	2	1	2	0	
50f	Volunteers?	1	2	2	0	
51	Are diverse images from your community used when people are featured in publications and websites (i.e., POCs, gender, persons with disabilities)?	3	1	1	0	
52	Do you mitigate the effects of the "Shirley Card" when photographing black or brown students?	0	1	4	0	
53	Can visitors to your website file a compliment of complaint about your school's services?	0	4	2	0	
54	Is your website compatible with accessibility software?	1	1	3	0	
55	Is Google Translate available on your website?	0	1	4	0	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
56	Are all events arranged to be accessible to people with mobility disabilities?	3	1	2	0	
57	When arranging events, do you check whether people require specific accommodations, such as interpreters (sign language or foreign language), special dietary needs, or childcare?	3	1	1	0	
58	Are event/meeting notices sent to individuals or organizations representing historically marginalized populations?	0	3	2	0	
59	Are climate surveys designed in collaboration with:					
59a	Consultants?	0	4	1	0	
59b	Parents/Guardians?	2	1	1	1	
59c	School personnel?	4	0	1	0	
59d	Students?	3	1	1	0	
59e	no one (off the shelf)	2	0	0	3	
60	We conduct climate surveys for					
60a	Parents/Guardians	4	1	0	0	
60b	School personnel	5	0	0	0	
60c	Students	4	1	0	0	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total
61	Are climate survey results published for public review for the:					
61a	Parent/Guardian survey?	3	1	1	0	
61b	School Personnel survey?	3	1	1	0	
61c	Student survey?	2	2	1	0	

Q	Question	yes	no	dk	empty	total

Responses to Hartford School District Self-Audit Open-ended Questions

9. Does your school have a set of core operating values?

- Values statements are very broad and could more explicitly address equity and diversity.

30. What are the strengths, activities, or practices of your school that support diversity? Please describe:

- Second Step, See Saw to connect w/ all families, Restorative practices, Community focus in each grade, Reach the world, Dartmouth mentoring partnerships
- murcal(?), students groups, collaborative staff
- An emphasis on "all", a healthy, well-supported LGBTQ+ community and leadership.
- Recruiting, advertisement

32. Are there mechanisms to monitor your school's advancements in diversity? Please describe:

- Leadership team reviews everything above 4x/year

35. Are new hires made aware of their rights and responsibilities related to:

35a *Core value*
35b *Discrimination*
35c *Harassment*
35d *How is this done? Please describe:*
- Training, staff meetings, handbook
- New teacher + handouts, training annual videos(?)
- Verbally
- In the advertisement

39. What methods are used to assure awareness of the policies on harassment and discrimination?

39a *Brochures*
- Handbook

39b *Information sessions*
- Online for staff

39c *Newsletters (inc. electronic)*
39d *Thought leaders (word of mouth)*
39e *Website*
39f *Other, please specify*:
- Advisory and class discussions with students
- Classroom focus

44. Do teachers use a variety of teaching strategies, such as universal instructional design approaches, to meet diverse learning styles? Please describe:

- Math menu (?), WIN, leveled groups, Superflex

Hartford School District
Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results
Selected Questions

Hartford School District	**2011**	***%***	**2013**	***%***	**2015**	***%***	**2017**	***%***
Total Participating Students	486		449		445		503	
Male	257	***53%***	239	***53%***	236	***53%***	282	***56%***
Female	222	***46%***	204	***45%***	200	***45%***	221	***44%***
Grade 9	139	***29%***	106	***24%***	119	***27%***	131	***26%***
Grade 10	122	***25%***	113	***25%***	122	***27%***	111	***22%***
Grade 11	132	***27%***	138	***31%***	108	***24%***	131	***26%***
Grade 12	88	***18%***	85	***19%***	88	***20%***	131	***26%***
White NH	418	***86%***	373	***83%***	365	***82%***	468	***93%***
SOC/REM	68	***14%***	67	***15%***	65	***15%***	35	***7%***
Target of electronic	**2011**	***%***	**2013**	***%***	**2015**	***%***	**2017**	***%***
bullying, last 30 days								
Overall	83	***17%***	76	***17%***	89	***20%***	75	***15%***
Male	49	***10%***	31	***7%***	45	***10%***	35	***7%***
Female	122	***25%***	121	***27%***	134	***30%***	126	***25%***
Grade 9	68	***14%***	94	***21%***	93	***21%***	70	***14%***
Grade 10	107	***22%***	112	***25%***	89	***20%***	75	***15%***
Grade 11	92	***19%***	58	***13%***	89	***20%***	96	***19%***
Grade 12	63	***13%***	40	***9%***	62	***14%***	55	***11%***
Target of bullying, last 30 days	**2011**	***%***	**2013**	***%***	**2015**	***%***	**2017**	***%***
Overall	97	***20%***	99	***22%***	102	***23%***	70	***14%***
Male	78	***16%***	67	***15%***	58	***13%***	50	***10%***
Female	122	***25%***	135	***30%***	142	***32%***	96	***19%***
Grade 9	117	***24%***	139	***31%***	151	***34%***	70	***14%***
Grade 10	112	***23%***	130	***29%***	89	***20%***	65	***13%***
Grade 11	102	***21%***	76	***17%***	98	***22%***	75	***15%***
Grade 12	44	***9%***	54	***12%***	49	***11%***	60	***12%***

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey, Vermont Department of Health