

NEW EDITION

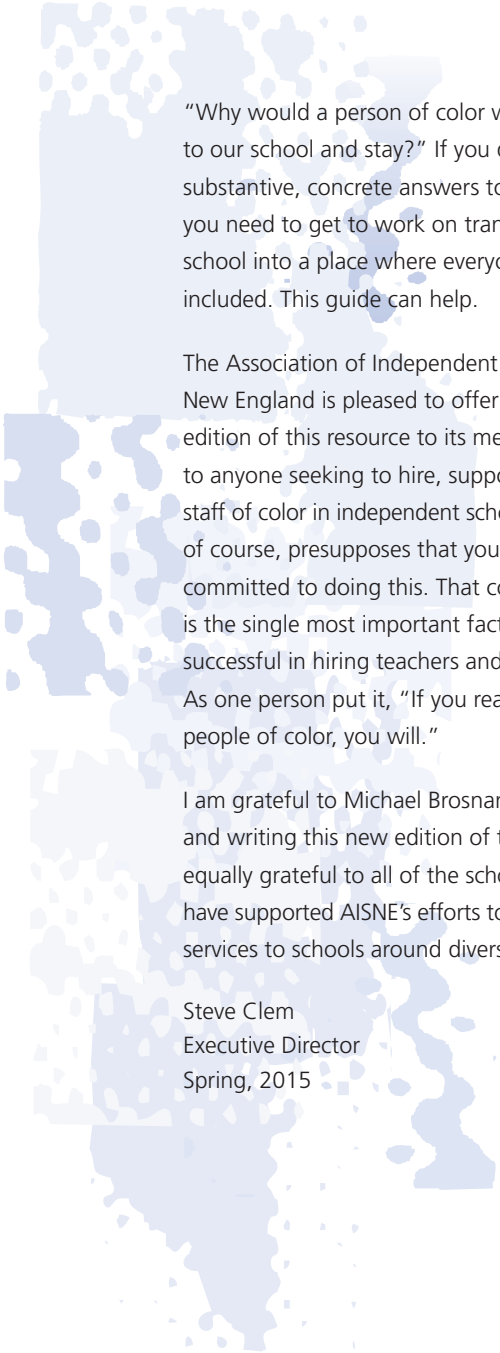
The AISNE Guide to

Hiring
and Retaining
Teachers
of Color

The Why and How of It

Michael Brosnan

AISNE Association of Independent Schools in New England



“Why would a person of color want to come to our school and stay?” If you don’t have substantive, concrete answers to that question, you need to get to work on transforming your school into a place where everyone will feel included. This guide can help.

The Association of Independent Schools in New England is pleased to offer the second edition of this resource to its members and to anyone seeking to hire, support, and retain staff of color in independent schools. This guide, of course, presupposes that you are in fact committed to doing this. That commitment is the single most important factor in being successful in hiring teachers and staff of color. As one person put it, “If you really want to hire people of color, you will.”

I am grateful to Michael Brosnan for researching and writing this new edition of the Guide. I am equally grateful to all of the school people who have supported AISNE’s efforts to enhance our services to schools around diversity issues.

Steve Clem
Executive Director
Spring, 2015

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"In some ways, schools should be less surprised by the difficulty of finding teachers of color than they should be by the fact that any teacher of color would choose to teach in a predominantly white institution. Even with all the benefits of teaching in an independent school, it takes a pretty big leap of faith."

Acknowledgments

The support, wisdom, and knowledge of those educators who helped with the original edition of *The AISNE Guide to Hiring and Retaining Teachers of Color* still inform this new edition: Patrick Bassett, Peter Braverman, Reveta Bowers, Christopher Bull, Randolph Carter, Norman Colb, Elizabeth Denevi, Bobby Edwards, Barbara Eggers, Peter Gow, Patsy Howard, Peter Hutton, Pearl Rock Kane, Scott Looney, Peggy McIntosh, Stephanie Neal-Johnson Alfonso Orsini, Carolyn Peter, Christine Savini, Tyler Tingly, Ingrid Tucker, and Luthern Williams.

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Ingrid Tucker, head of school, Cambridge Montessori School (Massachusetts)

Ralph Wales, head of school, Gordon School (Rhode Island)

Over the years, many other incredibly dedicated educators in independent schools and elsewhere, through their writing, speeches, conversations, leadership, and overall passion for equity and justice, have also informed this and the other AISNE diversity monographs.

A special thanks to Steve Clem, executive director of AISNE, for willing this monograph into existence and for keeping diversity work front and center in all conversations about quality education — knowing that, by doing so day after day, we build a better world.

The AISNE Guide to Hiring and Retaining Teachers of Color

The Why and How of It

Note on the Second Edition

Regarding race and race relations in the United States, much has happened since the first edition of this monograph was published in 2004 — including the election of Barack Obama, twice, and the 2009 appointment of Sonia Sotomayor as the first Hispanic on the United States Supreme Court.

But one of the great disappointments of the United States in the 21st century has been our nation's overall failure to live up to the promises embedded in the civil rights efforts of the last half of the 20th century. All those public efforts resulting from the civil rights protests of the 1950s — especially the Civil Rights Act in 1964, the Voting Rights Act in 1965, and the Fair Housing Act in 1968 — presaged true racial equity to come. Yet the nation has made little if any progress. Since 2004, in fact, things have gotten worse. Any way you parse it, racial inequities are unconscionably large in this nation, worse then they were a decade ago — the worst, in fact, that they have been in the 25 years the Census Bureau has been keeping race-related statistics.

During the mid-2011 debate in Washington, DC, over the federal debt, the debt ceiling, and taxation (often referred to hyperbolically as the “debt crisis debate”), the *New York Times* ran an article on a study by the Pew Research Center on racial inequities in wealth, based on recent U.S. Census Bureau data. Here's the second paragraph in its entirety:

The study, which used data collected by the Census Bureau, found that the median wealth of Hispanic households fell by 66 percent from 2005 to 2009. By contrast, the median wealth of whites fell by just 16 percent over the same period. African Americans saw their wealth drop by 53 percent. Asians also saw a big decline, with household wealth dropping 54 percent.

The title of the article tells it straight: “Recession Study Finds Hispanics Hit the Hardest.” To make the point more striking, the *Times* notes that the average wealth of

whites is 20 times that of African Americans and 18 times that of Latinos. So, for every \$100 a white family has, on average, an African-American family has \$5.

An *Atlantic* article in fall 2014, “What If Black America Were a Country?” by Theodore R. Johnson, engages in a revealing thought exercise about race in America today. It contains more than a few telling statistics that make it clear that one's experience in this nation depends a great deal on one's race. As Johnson notes, “Black America is a fragile state embedded in the greatest superpower the world has ever known.”

A short list of the disparities should be enough to make us all act with moral alacrity for racial justice and vote accordingly:

- Blacks are the only racial group over-represented in the military. They make up 12.6 percent of the U.S. population, but 17 percent of the military.
- U.S. unemployment (as of October 2014) was 8.1 percent. For blacks, it was 13.4 percent.
- The incarceration rate for blacks in America (2,207 per 100,000 in 2010) dwarfs the overall incarceration rates of every nation in the world. The incarceration rate for black men is nearly double that: 4,343 per 100,000.
- On the human development index — weighing health, education, and financial security, etc. — black America lags behind the U.S. as a whole by 30 places.

The stories for Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans aren't much better. The 2013 poverty rates tell the basic problem:

- Blacks: 27.4 percent
- Native Americans: 25.3 percent
- Hispanics: 23.5 percent
- Asian Americans: 10.4 percent
- Whites: 9.6 percent

*Race is for me
a more onerous
burden than
AIDS. My disease
is the result of
biological factors
over which we...
have no control.
Racism...is entirely
made by people,
and therefore it
hurts...infinitely
more.*

— Arthur Ashe

We can find parallel inequities in access to quality education, health care, housing, financial institutions, and jobs. Among our national truths:

- The poverty rate for African-American children is a stunning 43 percent.
- The 2007 financial recession hurt most Americans (all except the top 1 percent), but it hurt people of color much more than whites. In the financial collapse's aftermath, the unemployment rate for African-American men was almost double that of white men.
- The income gap separating whites and blacks widened from about \$19,000 in the 1960s to about \$27,000 today.

Some truths have to be really pounded into the national psyche. And one of them is that history counts.

— Roger Wilkins

Eric Garner in New York City, followed by two grand jury decisions not to indict the police officers involved, set off a level of public outrage not seen in this nation in years. As of this writing, shortly after the grand jury decisions, protests have taken place in cities and towns across the country — including a march on Washington of more than 5,000 people calling not just for justice in the cases of Brown and Garner, not just for reform in police department tactics and hiring practices, but also for renewed federal, state, and local efforts for racial justice and equity.

As much as ever, our nation needs an honest public dialogue on race matters with the goal of surfacing the issues as well as the political decisions that have gotten us to this unacceptable point.

I mention all this here because I think it ties into the independent school community's own challenges regarding an exploration of race. How could it not? The essential challenge for schools comes in the form

■ Learning gaps between white and black and Latino students exist nationally — in both public and independent schools.

■ According to ProPublica, in 2014, African-American boys were 21 times more likely to be shot by police than white boys.

The latter statistic, of course, is the one that has gotten the most attention in 2014. The tragic deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and of

of establishing policies and cultural norms that counteract the broader culture's poorly articulated perspective on race and other issues of equity and justice — from the growing socioeconomic divide to gender inequities to discrimination based on sexual orientation and identity. And it connects directly with the challenge many schools have had in attracting, hiring, and retaining teachers of color.

I would be among the happiest people if this publication faded away for lack of need. But a decade after this was first published, independent schools still wrestle with how they can best establish policies and programs that will both increase the numbers of students and teachers of color, as well as improve the experiences of both groups in schools. They also wrestle with the degree to which the topic of race, and of diversity matters in general, should be a part of the formal curriculum as well as a part of the conversation on school culture.

Many schools are engaged in such conversations and have made progress. Over the past decade, in the independent school community as a whole, the number of teachers of color has increased from 10.7 percent to 13.8 percent, according to NAIS's 2012–13 statistics. In New England, the numbers have also risen — from 8.5 percent to 11 percent — although they still lag behind the national average. Schools have gotten markedly better in their efforts to make their communities inclusive on myriad levels. But the efforts are still falling short. Not only should the numbers of teachers of color be higher but schools can also do a better job retaining the teachers of color they hire. Teachers of color still tend to leave schools more quickly than whites, often because the culture and climate do not feel as supportive as they should be.

This monograph exists to not only help schools improve the racial diversity of their faculties but, by doing so, to help schools live up to their missions. This new edition updates steps schools can take to attract the best teachers of color possible and to retain them. From all the interviews for this new edition, the issue of retention — of teachers of color feeling engaged and supported enough in a school community to stay — still looms large.

So it feels like the right time to breathe new life into this guide and get it back out into the hands of diversity practitioners, heads of schools, board members, division directors, department chairs, and anyone else interested in developing the best possible multicultural learning communities — into the hands of those who believe in both justice and excellence and who are determined to make them central tenets of their school communities.

Overview

It's late February. You have an opening on your faculty for a history teacher next fall. You have booked time at the NAIS conference to interview candidates. You sit down with the résumés and realize you have only one person of color in the pile. You're busy. You have, among other things, conference sessions to attend, other teachers to hire, money to raise for the new capital campaign, but somewhere in the back of your mind you feel frustrated because you want more people of color on your faculty. You just don't know how to get qualified candidates to apply. You interview the top candidates on your list. The candidate of color would be a good fit, but says she has received an offer from another school and, all things considered, she thinks it's a better match for her. Sorry.

So what happens next?

The reality is that if you're thinking about hiring a teacher of color for the first time in February, your odds of finding someone are slim. You can try calling the teacher placement agencies you know best and making as much noise as possible. You can post the announcement on the AISNE and NAIS job sites, but you shouldn't expect to solve the problem in this sort of reactive way. At this point in the history of our country, given the current cultural forces and the still-recovering economy, you have no choice but to think more carefully about the hiring process early in the year — be proactive instead of reactive — if you expect success in diversifying your teaching and administrative staff.

It's important to know this, too: Even if you find good candidates of color, without carefully laid strategic plans to diversify your school community in as many ways as possible, these candidates are unlikely to sign up for teaching duty at your school. Those who do are just as likely to depart quickly for more inviting environments.

The good news is that many independent schools have been successful at hiring teachers of color and diversifying their communities in a variety of ways that fulfill their missions. But it requires not only a school's willingness to change in fundamental ways but also a clear resolve and a long-term commitment.

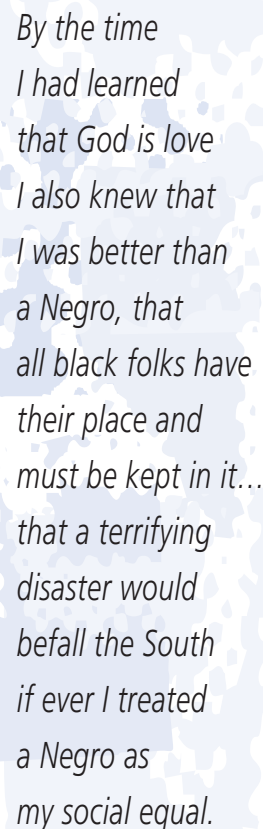
Start with questions

Before you worry about hiring strategies, it's best to ask a basic question: Why do you want to hire teachers (and administrators) of color?

The question seems simple, but it's really just the gateway to a series of questions and to a better understanding of your school's history, its mission, its sense of where it's going, and its connection to the world as it is. Answering it allows you greater clarity about other related questions — and better responses to those in your school who prefer the status quo to changes of this nature.

Some preliminary questions to consider:

- If your school has had good college or secondary school placements with an all-white faculty, or with only a few teachers of color, what's the motivation for hiring more teachers of color?
- If your school is at full capacity (possibly with a waiting list), why change anything?
- How do you respond to the board member and alumnus who say the school needs to be colorblind in its hiring and admission policies?
- What do you think new teachers of color will bring to the school community?
- What expectations will you have of them?
- What accommodations are you making for their success in your community?
- To what degree is your school involved in broader diversity work and how does the hiring of teachers of color fit into this work?
- How does hiring teachers of color connect with your mission statement?



*By the time
I had learned
that God is love
I also knew that
I was better than
a Negro, that
all black folks have
their place and
must be kept in it...
that a terrifying
disaster would
befall the South
if ever I treated
a Negro as
my social equal.*

— Lillian Smith, 1949

- If your school has written a vision statement, how do teachers of color fit in?
- What exactly will you say to your trustees, teachers, parents, students, and alumni about the plan to hire more teachers of color — especially to the detractors?

What you'll find here are some tried-and-true strategies from a number of schools for hiring teachers of color. But hiring a teacher of color is only part of your concern, the second part, which is why the strategic details come later. First, we'll explore the "why" of it — the foundation work. As one long-time director of diversity planning says, "Hiring teachers of color and diversifying your student body shouldn't be your first step. Too many schools have brought in teachers and students of color and then tried to figure out the implications. Rather, a school needs to work on itself first, examine the institutional culture. Heads and gatekeepers in schools also need to think about their own commitment to the process."

In order to answer some of the overarching questions, it helps to look at the pragmatic, academic, and moral reasons for hiring teachers of color. This discussion extends more broadly to diversity issues in general — that is, to diversifying your administrative and teaching staffs, your student body, and your board of trustees in as many ways as possible in an effort to reflect the world around you. But for the sake of focus, we'll stick close

to the topic at hand: hiring more teachers of color. Once you get clarity about the "why" of it, it's easier to move on to the "how."

But one more thing before moving on. Race relations in America (and in the world) range from uneasy to tense. America has made strides in this area, but the country, obviously, does not speak with a unified voice about race, and in the past decade, the divisions have gotten worse. There are newspaper stories nearly every day that remind us of this. There are big stories this decade, such as the deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, and Trayvon Martin; the undoing of affirmative

action in public universities; racist comments from LA Clippers owner Donald Sterling; the New York City police practice of targeting blacks and Latinos for random frisking; and the increasingly disproportionate number of people of color in our jails and on death row. There are also quieter stories — take the high-school dropout rate for Latina teens (an estimated 41 percent), for instance — that nevertheless speak volumes about the racial divide. A study by the Civil Rights Project (formerly at Harvard University, now housed at UCLA) indicates that America is losing ground in terms of integration of our schools. Segregation of white students and students of color is higher today than it was fifty years ago. Seventy percent of all African-American students, for instance, attend schools that are predominantly African American. They are also enrolled in predominantly poor schools. "Black and Latino students tend to be in schools with a substantial majority of poor children, but white and Asian students are typically in middle-class schools," notes Gary Orfield and Erica Frankenberg in a 2014 Civil Rights Project report.

When it comes to diversity work in schools, and efforts to diversify the teaching staff, white teachers and administrators — the majority of professional adults in your school community — may also feel threatened by the process, believing that they could be the "losers" in the drive toward a multicultural community. Some, although one hopes fewer and fewer, will undoubtedly argue that the focus on hiring teachers of color only widens the racial divide by drawing attention to differences and not to similarities. All of this — and more — will come to bear in a school community when it decides to change its basic racial make-up over time.

Given the public landscape surrounding independent schools, it's not surprising they would struggle with diversity issues. But this much is clear: In independent schools, what is needed most are school leaders with unflappable clarity and commitment to the process. The responsibility can be shared — and should be — but the work can't be completely delegated to others. If a school head needs to delegate work in order to get important projects done, he or she should find something else to pass along. Without solid leadership in diversity, a school won't meet with success.

As one head of school put it: "I refuse to believe that people of color who are qualified to teach in our schools don't exist. It's a question of how much effort are you willing and able to put in to find them."

Few members of a race that has oppressed another race can understand or appreciate the deep groans and passionate yearnings of those that have been oppressed.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Reasons for hiring more teachers of color

Demography is destiny

Indicators suggest that in a very short time the demographic make-up in the U.S. will be far more diverse than it is today. According to the 2012 U.S. Census Bureau projections, by the year 2043, the U.S. will be a “majority-minority nation.” In 2012, people of color made up 37 percent of the population; by 2060, they will be 60 percent. Back in the 1990s, in an article in *Independent School* titled “Tomorrow Is Today,” authors Peter Braverman and Scott Looney describe the demographic, sociological, and economic trends, all of which indicate a very different marketplace for independent schools in the coming decades. “Schools [that] take assertive positive action to attract and retain a wider array of students and families will find the marketplace of the early twenty-first century more hospitable...,” they write. “Waiting much longer may mean waiting too long.”

This logic stills holds today. Schools should be motivated by mission. But, in the end, all are motivated by financial needs. As Braverman and Looney note, if you are interested in financial health, you have to be interested in demographic trends and what those trends suggest about the future. And those trends tell you that you need to be concerned with diversity and market your school to a broader spectrum of families and aim to serve them well.

As one dean of faculty put it, a diverse faculty today is “a competitive necessity.”

Preparing students for the new world

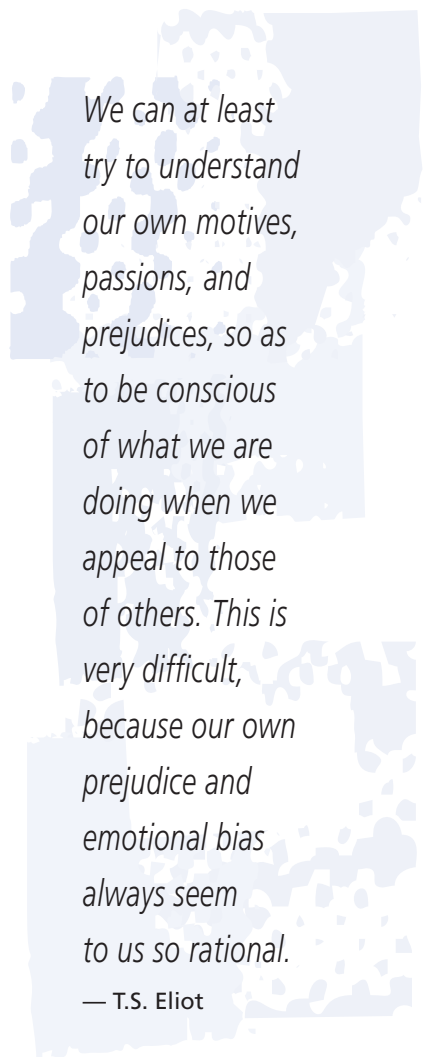
Along with the motivation to keep your school afloat, diversifying your student body and teaching staff makes sense if you’re serious about preparing students for their adult world to come. Any school that promises to prepare students for the future must help them understand how to function in a multicultural society and in a multicultural organization. Over the past two decades, corporate America has been working hard to train top and middle management in how to manage a diverse workforce. Think of the advantages students from diverse schools have when they enter the corporate world with a better understanding of diversity.

Along these lines, it might help to know that the corporate world is ahead of the independent school world in understanding the importance of diversity. Why? It’s

partly because most Americans live in segregated communities and attend homogenous schools and churches. The workplace is the one place where the races currently mix in ways that more closely mirror society. Businesses connect productivity with worker harmony. But businesses have also studied the economic and demographic trends and know that their financial success depends on their understanding of a diverse marketplace. The greater their own diversity, they reason, the more likely they are to thrive.

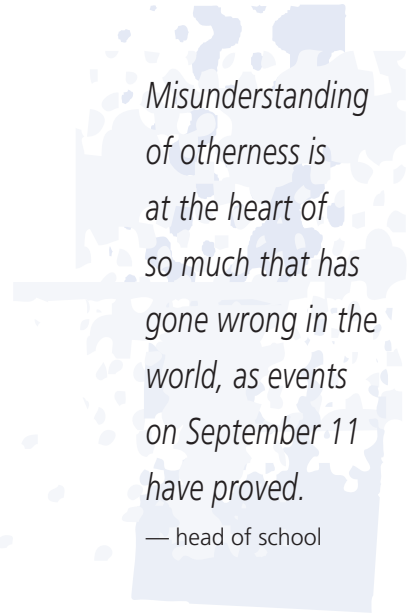
Many schools are working hard these days to analyze their curricula and find ways to make them more multicultural. They are also considering how to account for the various multiple intelligences, while continuing to offer the sort of academic preparedness for the next level that has been the hallmark of independent school success over the years. This is all good and important work. Students need a better, more balanced, if not more truthful, view of history, a better understanding of how the world functions, and a deeper knowledge of the contributions of various cultures (and of women). All students in independent schools should see themselves reflected in their studies.

But it’s also important to remember that a vast satchel of information is not what students need today. Roland S. Barth, in his book *Learning by Heart*, reminds us that in 1950, high school graduates learned about 75 percent of all they needed to be successful in the workplace. Today, the estimate is that high school graduates learn about 2 percent of all they need to know, even though they leave high school knowing far more than the graduates of the 1950s. “The notion that we can acquire, once and for all, a basic kit of knowledge that will hold us in good stead for the rest of our lives is folly,” Barth



We can at least try to understand our own motives, passions, and prejudices, so as to be conscious of what we are doing when we appeal to those of others. This is very difficult, because our own prejudice and emotional bias always seem to us so rational.

— T.S. Eliot



*Misunderstanding
of otherness is
at the heart of
so much that has
gone wrong in the
world, as events
on September 11
have proved.*

— head of school

writes. The difference between the 1950s and today lies in the speed of change in human knowledge — as well as the easy access to most factual information.

What business leaders will tell you is that they need people with a variety of *skills*, including problem-solving skills, interpersonal skills, creative-thinking skills, listening skills, the ability to work well in teams, strong oral and written communication skills, and leadership skills. Since these skills will be applied in a multicultural world, it only

makes sense that they be taught and practiced in multicultural schools with diverse teaching staffs.

Instilling confidence and making connections

We may be straying a little into the next section on moral reasons for hiring more teachers of color (what imagined line was ever clearly drawn?), but while we're on the subject of practical and academic reasons for diversifying your teaching staff, you can also consider the self-esteem and confidence of your students. You can support students of color all you want with white teachers, but it's clear that they'll have a stronger self-image, and are thus more likely to be good students and contributors to the community, if they see themselves reflected in the adults around them. Psychologist JoAnn Deak, in her book *How Girls Thrive*, notes that girls need "connectedness" in their lives. What better way to provide such connectedness for your students of color than to have adults like them in your school community? Michael Reichert and Richard Hawley, in their 2014 book, *I Can Learn from You: Boys as Relational Learners*, push this notion of connectedness even further. Boys learn best, their research makes clear, when they have a strong relational connection to their teachers. For boys of color, this means schools will have a good representation of teachers of color who are closely connected to the cultural lives of students. It also means schools will offer professional development for white teachers to help them learn how to form strong relationships with students of color and their families.

Moral reasons for hiring teachers of color

The word "elite" is double-edged. Administrators in independent schools understand that their schools are aberrations in American society. On one hand, their graduates have a high degree of success in college and beyond — a kind of elitism one can easily endorse. Parents send their children to these institutions primarily for the academic and character development that will help them do well in life. At the same time, independent schools exclude most of America — close to 99 percent. Such exclusivity would be morally acceptable only in the degree to which the institutions reflected American society, but many independent schools have long histories of not mirroring the nation's diversity in race (or socioeconomic status). This partly explains why many schools are working so hard at diversity these days. Academic elitism is one thing, but exclusivity based on race and economics is another — if you consider your institution to be a morally guided one.

Independent school history

If the press and the general public take potshots at independent schools for being socially exclusive places, one can understand their viewpoint. Art Powell, in his book *Lessons from Privilege: The American Prep School Tradition*, delves deeply into this historical exclusivity, tracing the thinking of schools back to the 1930s, when "prep schools assumed that homogeneous communities were major assets." By mid-century, Powell notes, "alongside a cultural elitism irrelevant and uninteresting to most Americans lurked a social exclusivity very easy to dislike. Prep schools opened their doors to desirable student groups and closed their doors to others. In the eyes of critics such as C. Wright Mills... exclusive prep schools were agents in a conspiracy of the already privileged to perpetuate their privilege forever."

In the traditional prep schools of the Northeast, the exclusion was based primarily on race and class and any changes to this were slow in coming. In the South, in the ten years following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court case, many new independent schools were founded for the exclusive education of white children.

The good news is that much of this history has been transformed into the fuel that drives morally guided change in independent schools — that leads them to debate their public purpose. Now we even have a subset of independent schools participating in a coalition — Private Schools with Public Purpose — with the stated goal of greater community connectivity. Today you find

most independent schools asking questions about this purpose and embracing the concept that they must work to be more diverse and more connected to the community at large — ready to move on from pasts of social exclusivity. Still, as Art Powell notes, “Near the century’s end most were perhaps more apt to celebrate diversity than to attain it.” The road to equity and justice has, indeed, been a slow one for independent schools. Fourteen years into this new century, Powell’s observation still holds true in many schools.

Myth of the level playing field

At the heart of diversity work is a clear understanding that, racially speaking, the playing field has never been level — and that it is still not level today, even given the advances we’ve made as a nation. Pick up almost any current issue of *Education Week* and you’ll find stories that focus on this uneven playing field and the advantages in educational opportunities based on race. A good example is Julian Weissglass’s article, “Racism and the Achievement Gap.” Weissglass, the director of the National Coalition for Equity in Education and a nongovernmental delegate at the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, argues that a deep-seated racism, still quite invisible to many in this society, is at the heart of the education achievement gap between white students and students of color. David Wellman, in his book *Portraits of White Racism*, defines racism as a “system of advantages based on race.” Under this definition, widely agreed upon by scholars, the advantaged race in America is white, and among the advantages white people have is access to better schools. If you agree with this, you start to see independent schools as part of the racial problem in America. This does not mean that racism is the fault of the people who work in independent schools. But it does mean that schools have an obligation to address the problem.

Diverse faculty: necessity, not luxury

Regarding excellence and diversity, in his book *The Difference*, Michigan University professor Scott Page makes it clear that, when it comes to solving problems, “diversity trumps ability.” This is a mathematical truth, he writes, not a feel-good mantra. We know this, of course. Our nation is founded on this principle. And yet, a part of us has fought against it throughout our history.

When it comes to hiring teachers of color, independent schools collectively are not doing as well as they could. In their 2004 book, *People of Color in Independent Schools*, authors Pearl Rock Kane and Alfonso Orsini point out that “just over 7 percent of the... teachers

employed by independent schools were people of color as compared with the approximately 13 percent teachers of color working in our nation’s public schools.” To make matters worse, the authors investigated these numbers further and discover that if you take Hawai’i out of the picture (where the number of teachers of color is high), the percentage falls to under 5 percent. In addition, the authors found that 233 schools (27 percent of those surveyed) did not have any people of color on their staffs. These figures, the authors write, “suggest that many students graduating from independent schools may never interact with a teacher of color over the course of their precollegiate studies.”

While the overall numbers have improved over the past decade, there still remains a significant gap between the percentages of students of color and faculty of color. In 2012–13, 27.6 percent of all independent school students were students of color. But the total faculty of color was only 13.8 percent (it’s now at 18 percent in public schools). And the possibility of students never having a teacher of color still holds true.

While schools should certainly think about their strengths — nurture them, improve upon them, exult in them — it’s best to view the lack of diversity in the teaching staff as a clear weakness that schools need to address in order to fulfill their various missions.

Is it possible to educate truly moral leaders with good character if we educate them in schools that have no or few teachers of color? Perhaps. But when it comes to interacting with people of color in their professional and personal lives, white students who have had little interaction with students of color and teachers of color, will be ill equipped. It’s likely they will end up drawing upon the harmful racial stereotypes played out in the cliché-ridden media.

To suggest that the problem of the twenty-first century will be the problem of the color line is not to ignore the changes that have occurred in this as well as in other centuries. It is merely to take notice of the obvious fact that the changes have not been sufficient to eliminate the color line as a problem, arguably the most tragic and persistent social problem of the nation’s history.

— John Hope Franklin

Role models

For the student of color in independent schools, the importance of teachers of color can't be stressed enough. Kane and Orsini conclude that for the students of color in independent schools, "many of whom have moved alone into a very elite version of white-dominated society, the

You can't invite all these people to the party and play one kind of music. Some people are not going to dance, and some might leave.

— director of community and multicultural development

teacher of color who has already successfully negotiated such a world could be a great source of wisdom, a provider of cues for behavior, a source of inspiration, and a cultural decoder. For white students and many students of color as well at these institutions, many of whom have seen people of color working only in service and labor positions, teachers of color could be the only people of color they see in professional roles."

Orsini and Kane conclude, "Consider the conception of people of color that such an

experience will shape in the minds of... students."

For these students, it comes down to a matter of identity — which connects to the self-esteem issue noted earlier. We all form our identities not only in home and in the culture at large but also in the school and classroom. Schools can help us feel good about ourselves or help us feel as if we're not important.

But you don't have to ask professional researchers to know this; you can ask the students themselves. At a student diversity conference, students of color were asked about what they needed from a school. One wrote, "We want more faculty of color — a wider variety of teachers (Asian, African-American, etc.) teaching a wide variety of subjects." Another, from a boarding school, wrote, "We'd like a few dorm parents of color." Both of these desires for mentors of color were seconded by others. They also spoke of the need to be taken as seriously as white students, to be graded by the same criteria as white students. They asked that teachers have cultural training so they don't single out students of color to speak for their race anymore than they would single out a white person to speak for, say, Christopher Columbus or Richard Nixon. They ask for understanding when students of color sit together. They ask for a multicultural curriculum.

In short, as one student put it, "We want adults to be more culturally sensitive."

Challenging the status quo

One of the difficulties in diversity work is in the way information about diversity challenges the status quo, and all those who have been working in the status quo for many years. Administrators and teachers in white-dominant schools who have been preparing students for college for years without feeling the need to diversify either the staff or student body can easily get defensive about what seems to be an attack on their way of doing things. Again, one can point out the college admission records, the achievements of alumni, the brilliance of certain teachers, the inclusion of community service, and the infusion of values — or whatever a school has done well. But we have too much information about the problems caused by a lack of diversity in the teaching staff — and the flat-out immorality of it — to let it go. Simply put, the horse is out of the barn; schools have to act. And there are so many thoughtful studies of race and race relations in the United States published in recent years, as well as consultants and other specialists who can guide a school, that it's hard to think of a compelling reason why a school wouldn't move forward with diversity work in a carefully orchestrated institutional manner. It's not an easy journey, but, being a moral one, it's easy to see its importance and, in doing so, make it a priority for the school.

Working with white teachers and administrators

If your school is made up mostly of white teachers and administrators, the last thing in the world that will convince them that the school should become more diverse is to blame them. As composer and playwright George C. Wolfe notes, "As soon as guilt and rage enter the room, everyone wants to exit." Still, it's important to discuss whiteness — white identity and privilege — in your school community and what it means and how it connects with diversity efforts. It only makes sense that, if your school is mostly white and your mission statement proclaims that the school should be a diverse place, you talk about it. You can't let "whiteness" be invisible while you talk about color. You can't act as if people of color have racial identities and white people don't.

This is one of the areas where the work gets hard. For one, many white people don't see themselves as white — that is, they don't define themselves by their race, but by other traits (male, Italian-American, Catholic, elementary school teacher, athlete, extrovert, husband,

father — almost any trait except race). For another, within the white community, as within all other racial communities, there is a wide spectrum of differences. As Beverly Daniel Tatum notes in *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*, “White lesbians sometimes find it hard to claim privileged status as whites when they are so targeted by homophobia and heterosexism, often at the hands of other whites.” It doesn’t even have to be that obvious. For example, many Irish-Americans, two generations removed from outright discrimination in this country, don’t like the idea of being linked to any segment of the American Brahmin community. Nevertheless, talking about whiteness in schools is pivotal. Helping white educators understand their own racial identity will help them understand their role in diversifying their community, and this, in turn, will help a school reach its goal much more quickly than it would if everyone tiptoes around the issue.

Understanding whiteness doesn’t mean that the white people on your campus have to bear the burden of guilt for all oppression of people of color throughout history. But understanding that history and how it contributes to current inequities in a nation that proclaims itself as the world’s greatest democracy can help your school find its way beyond the deadening stasis of endless talk accompanied by little action. People of color shouldn’t be put in the role of pushing an institution with a white majority into action. White people need to be involved at every step. Better yet, they should lead.

As one director of community and multicultural development points out, “Once you are able to educate the community and garnish the support of the majority, once you reach a level of understanding that this work is equally educational and beneficial to all, then you’ll see movement.”

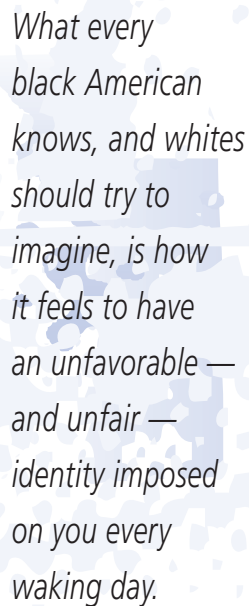
And to understand whiteness is to understand that race blindness is nice in theory, but not in practice, since it misses a number of truths about life in America today — among them that there are still glaring inequities in access to housing, jobs, and education. To understand whiteness is to also understand that racism is not just about outright acts of hatred against others (most people in independent schools are unfailingly kind and caring), but about — as Peggy McIntosh, associate director for the Wellesley Centers for Women, says in her seminal article, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” — “invisible systems conferring dominance” on one group. To varying degrees, white people in America have more privileges than people of color. White people move more easily through their days in America than

do people of color. White people are afforded a greater benefit of the doubt than people of color. Life might not be easy for white people, but in America it’s easier for them, on average, than for people of color.

In the area of education, there are numerous examples of how systemic advantage plays out. Even something as seemingly neutral as standardized testing has proven to be biased in favor of the white and wealthy. The SAT’s were originally designed as an indicator of how well an independent school student would perform as a freshman in Ivy League colleges. Over time, the test morphed into an indicator of all sorts of things, including how almost all high school students will fare in any college. Kenneth Wesson, who as a founding member of the Association of Black Psychologists fought to minimize the importance of I.Q. tests in schools (because of their inherent bias), points out that studies of the SAT have proven that the test consistently over-predicts the success of males and under-predicts the success of females in college. More insidious, the test is also a more accurate predictor of socioeconomic status than of success in college. “Family income plays such a prominent role in test scores,” he writes, “that some testing analysts have facetiously proposed gauging something they call the ‘Volvo Effect’ as a way to save vast amounts of money on standardized tests. Simply count the number of Volvos, sport utility vehicles, and comparably priced luxury cars used to transport students to and from a given school, and use that figure to measure ‘school quality.’” Standardized tests, by their very nature, require a broad spectrum of results. A broad spectrum means winners and losers. And because the test is biased, the winners are generally wealthy, white, and male. And, yet, it remains the primary entrance exam for college in America.

A candid examination of race matters takes us to the core of the crisis of American democracy. And the degree to which race matters in the plight and predicament of fellow citizens is a crucial measure of whether we can keep alive the best of this democratic experiment we call America.

— Cornel West



*What every
black American
knows, and whites
should try to
imagine, is how
it feels to have
an unfavorable —
and unfair —
identity imposed
on you every
waking day.*

— Andrew Hacker

a new, more skills-focused test starting in 2016. At this point, it's impossible to say if it will be a more racially fair than the current one. But that's certainly a goal. In announcing the changes, College Board President David Coleman asked a central question: "Are we, individually and as a group, doing all we can to advance equity and excellence? Because if you look around, it sure doesn't look like it."

In light of this, Wesson challenges educators. "Let's be honest," he writes. "If poor, inner-city children consistently outscored children from wealthy suburban homes on standardized tests, is anyone naïve enough to believe that we would still insist on using these tests as indicators of success? Would we continue to advocate the use of such tests if there were evidence that they presented inner-city students with a sizable edge in the distribution of future job opportunities?" These are telling questions.

The College Board, which runs the SATs, will offer a

It's not hard to see that there are social inequities in our country. It's harder, however, to see how our own lives and work connect with those inequities. For white educators, as Peggy McIntosh points out, the first step is to acknowledge and define white privilege — for "describing white privilege," she writes, "makes one newly accountable." After pointing out twenty-six ways in which she feels advantaged as a white person (and this is just a sampling), she concludes by raising the question, "What will we do with such knowledge?" The answer is simply that one has the choice of using privilege to one's personal advantage and to preserve the status quo or using this "arbitrarily awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems based on a broader base."

At diversity workshops involving white educators, one often hears the comment that white educators need to lean into their discomfort, or push beyond their comfort zone. This may be true, but it also sounds a bit too much like taking medicine. The good news is that schools that align their "walk" with their "talk" have seen their communities come alive in exciting ways. It takes energy, and risk, but it's not about subjecting oneself to pain and ridicule. It's about growing. It's about finding deeper truths — especially regarding the structures of systemic racism, the effects of microaggressions (race-based slights) on the lives of students and faculty of color, and the importance of a multicultural curriculum and diverse faculty for all students. In short, it's about getting moral clarity about the past and moving forward with greater knowledge and commitment. Doing this work can actually feel great.

Hiring teachers of color

There are three finalists for a teaching position, one of them a person of color. Your school has a stated plan that it wants to become a multicultural organization and, because of this, it wants a candidate of color in the finalist group for all teaching positions. After a small committee chooses the finalists, it introduces the candidates to a broader segment of the school community and asks those who meet and interview the candidates to offer a brief evaluation and recommendation. The school does this a number of times for various positions — and in almost every case, the person of color is not hired. Why? Responses from those doing the hiring are often variations on the following: “I just don’t think he (or she) would fit in here.”

Unless we are trained in how to interview candidates, especially candidates whose cultural backgrounds are different from ours, we are likely to gravitate toward the candidate who seems most like us. One’s qualifications almost don’t matter at this point (though we often examine those qualifications with a fine-toothed comb and find reasons there for dismissing any candidate). Unfortunately, what tends to matter most is our comfort level. Is this someone I think I can work with? Is this someone I’d like to have lunch with? Do we have anything in common? It is this kind of thinking, for instance, that would allow partners in a law firm full of Ivy Leaguers to hire more Ivy Leaguers, even though the school they attended is far less important than their skills in, say, estate and trust law. It’s all about our unexamined comfort levels. In white-dominant schools, heads must recognize this tendency (in themselves and others) and learn to work against it in constructive ways.

Of course, there is another side to this coin: Why would a person of color want to work in your school? As one diversity specialist says, “The number one question teachers of color will ask themselves is, ‘Wouldn’t I be better off working in a school where there is a diverse population already in place, where children really need a motivated, talented teacher like me?’ It certainly gives you pause. I hope it encourages schools to push harder for school communities where all teachers would answer, ‘No, I’m serving a good cause right here.’”

Earlier, we raised the question: Why do you want to hire a teacher of color? If there is vagueness in your response, there will be vagueness in your process and you are not likely to succeed. Attend any diversity workshop and you’re bound to hear one complaint over and over:

“We’ve talked about this for years, but nothing has changed.” This sort of stasis — in which a school proclaims its intention to become a multicultural organization and does little more than talk about it — can be worse than not doing anything at all. It raises expectations and hopes, only to slowly erode those hopes and replace them with a culture of cynicism and despair. The good people you can hardly afford to lose may start leaving for other schools.

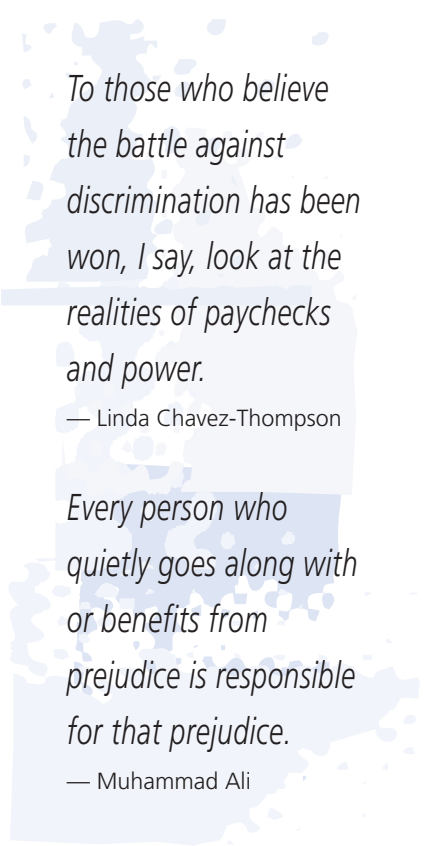
The basic premise is that any effort to hire teachers of color, if it is to be successful, must coincide with steps to become a multicultural organization. It’s not just a matter of bringing in a Latino and an Asian-American teacher, say, and announcing that your work is done. It’s a matter of carefully restructuring the school climate and culture — from the board of trustees down — to fulfill the stated mission of the school. And then being ready to discuss and debate the relative value of your school’s diversity efforts — to continuously take one’s pulse, like a long-distance runner. Doing so, schools find, creates an atmosphere and culture inviting to teachers of color.

What follows is an essential list of steps schools have taken to diversify their teaching staffs. Most of it comes from the work at schools that have had success in hiring teachers of color. Some of these steps overlap the work at a number of schools; some are unique to individual schools.

1. Connect the need to hire more teachers of color with the school’s mission.

As noted, it starts with mission. A school — especially the school head, with the blessing of the board of trustees — needs to make sure everyone understands the mission. If the mission includes a statement about the importance of diversity, or the importance of inclusivity, then and only then can a school start to analyze how well it is doing in regard to its mission.

(continued on page 18)



To those who believe the battle against discrimination has been won, I say, look at the realities of paychecks and power.

— Linda Chavez-Thompson

Every person who quietly goes along with or benefits from prejudice is responsible for that prejudice.

— Muhammad Ali

What Students of Color Want You to Know

The following quotes come from students of color attending a diversity workshop. They were asked, among other things, to respond to the question, “What do the adults in your school need to understand and do to make your school a better place for students of color?” The responses were anonymous.

We’d like a few dorm parents of color.

Don’t take into account race when grading.

We want adults to understand that students of color are full and total students.

Teachers need to encourage non-fluent English speakers (and make sure that they can be challenged to catch up academically with their English-fluent classmates).

Have faculty of color who can socialize with and relate to the students.

Don’t expect students of color to be cultural representatives.

Know that black students/students of color are not trying to exclude themselves when they sit together and hang out together.

Teachers need to understand that we all need to pay attention to diversity.

Specifically in history classes, tensions can arise in class when the subject turns to people of color. Teachers need to stop pointing out students of color and asking them to speak for their race.

Keep an unbiased opinion while teaching.

We want more faculty of color — a wider variety of teachers (Asian, African-American, etc.) teaching a wide variety of subjects.

Teachers need to expand their horizons to better understand students of color.

We want teachers to understand class issues — and not make assumptions about our family, where we are from, our income, etc.

We want adults to be more culturally sensitive.

Get involved.

More variety of food: Chinese, soul food, Asian food, Hispanic food. Different cultures are in the school so we should have various, good food choices.

The faculty and head of school should have dinner with students of color.

We need to create a multicultural curriculum, especially in already established classes.

Teachers are always asking if I can afford it — assuming the students of color are on financial aid.

Include classes that educate people about race. For example: Hispanic culture class taught by an Hispanic adult.

Understand the complexities of our lives and the adjustments that we need to make in order to fit in.

There needs to be more communication between white faculty and black faculty.

Know that, for many students of color, it is difficult to adjust to an environment that is so much different from anything they ever experienced.

During assembly, make an effort to allow and encourage minority students to make announcements.

Offer a wider spectrum of entertainment (not just movies about white people).

We want personal relationships with adults.

Understand that it's difficult for students of color to have only one or two of their race in their entire class.

We need more conferences that address diversity and address the changes that needed to be made in schools.

We want support but not in a patronizing way. Support the person based on individual need.

We want adults to see that we have multiple capacities (not just sports).

We want teachers to make an effort to develop meaningful relationships with students of color, as they do with the white students.

Give diversity clubs a chance — give them a budget, too.

Why do you accept us to private schools? Because we are black and you need the numbers? It feels like either that or for sports.

Faculty members need to understand that students of color feel more comfortable around their own kind.

(continued from page 15)

If your school wants to make a commitment to diversity, but it's not clearly outlined in the mission statement, the school needs to revisit the mission statement and rewrite it in a way that will direct everyone's daily work toward this goal.

Some schools publish separate statements on their commitment to diversity to augment and strengthen the diversity language in the mission statement.

2. Make your commitment public.

Once you have them, post your school's mission and diversity statements on the website for the world to see. Reference them often.

Include strong and clear language. One school's Statement of Diversity and Inclusion notes that the school "is committed to diversity and inclusivity with responsibility, mutual respect, and empathy. We strive to maintain a community in which every person feels welcomed, valued, and respected. We are dedicated to shared examination of our different perspectives, inherent privileges, disadvantages, and prejudices, especially in terms of race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, and political ideology."

In its statement of purpose, another school writes that it is "committed to establishing a community that encourages people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs

to understand and respect one another and to be sensitive to differences of gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation."

Another, making the academic-cultural link, says it "intentionally seeks to admit students and families of various identities and backgrounds, working to integrate them into the vibrant culture of the school. Our rigorous, inclusive core curriculum and extracurricular programs prepare the school's diverse students for a highly competitive, global education." This school also goes on to acknowledge the role of teachers in this work, saying it "creates a highly talented, heterogeneous team of faculty,

*You need
parents as allies.
It affects student
retention,
which can affect
applicants
and influence
teachers of color
to come here.
It's all connected.*
— director of diversity

Hiring Teachers of Color

1. Connect the need to hire more teachers of color with the school's mission.
2. Make your commitment public.
3. Get clarity on the climate and culture in the school.
4. Create a sense of urgency.
5. Make the case that hiring people of color relates to institutional excellence.
6. Outline strategic issues related to hiring more teachers of color for the coming year(s).
7. Be empathetic, but uncompromising.
8. Establish a hiring committee.
9. Establish clear hiring procedures.
10. Advertise positions widely.
11. Seek out candidates of color at job fairs.
12. Push teacher placement firms to find the candidates you want.
13. Know what to look for in résumés.
14. Understand the impact of unconscious bias in hiring.
15. Make your ads inclusive.
16. Get to know more people of color for networking purposes.
17. Make the school attractive to teachers of color in as many ways as possible.
18. Consider the visual impact of your campus (your hidden curriculum).
19. Find ways to bring as many people of color as possible onto your campus annually.
20. Mentor teachers of color in the candidate stage.

administrators, and staff by working to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention and promotion of these individuals.”

There are many excellent variations on these statements. The goal is intentionality. Be explicit in your commitment to diversity. Use the school’s mission statement, stand-alone diversity statement, and/or vision statement to frame your commitment to diversity and guide your work.

3. Get clarity on the climate and culture in the school.

“Understanding where you are going,” says a diversity practitioner, “means understanding where you have been.” The schools that have had success hiring teachers of color, or in diversifying their communities in any dimension, are schools that are no longer content to live with uncertainty. They want to know exactly how well, or how badly, they are doing in this regard. Some hire consultants who specialize in organizational diversity. Many hire directors of diversity, not just to coordinate diversity programs and support students of color but also to ensure that someone is being paid to view everything a school does through the lens of diversity — programs, curriculum, hiring, admissions, fund-raising, business practices, food service, etc. “Tradition” is an important word in the independent school world. But schools are looking carefully to distinguish between their deeply held values and unexamined habits so they can move forward with their diversity efforts.

4. Create a sense of urgency.

If the school community doesn’t feel a sense of urgency regarding hiring teachers of color, or diversifying the teaching staff in a variety of ways, things are unlikely to change any time soon. Finding the urgency in an independent school can be difficult for the simple reason that a school often can continue to function as it had in the past without diversifying its staff or student body. Following the economic recession of 2007, more than a few schools have felt the economic pressure to change in ways that attract more families. But when it comes to diversity, many school heads still find that they need to generate the urgency beyond the handful of believers — to emphasize the practical reasons and moral imperatives driving this change. A commitment to diversity requires that a school head be willing to get involved at every level and to help everyone in the school understand that hiring

people of color is an institutional strategic priority. It’s a matter of building momentum and then sustaining it year after year.

In his influential book, *Good to Great*, and the companion monograph, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, organizational expert Jim Collins uses the image of a flywheel as a metaphor for institutional momentum. Once you’ve done the work to get the flywheel spinning, you must focus on keeping it spinning. This metaphor is particularly apt for diversity efforts in independent schools. The work is continuous, and builds upon itself. Success leads to success as long as diversity remains a matter of institutional urgency.

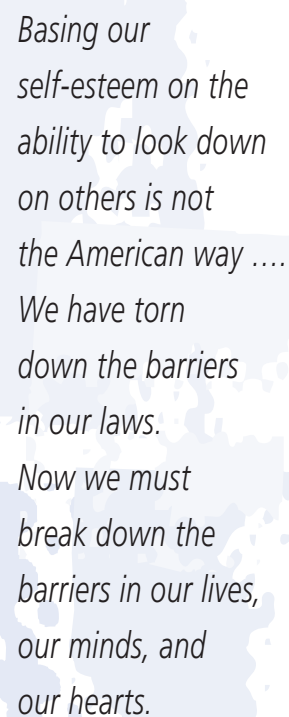
5. Make the case that hiring people of color relates to institutional excellence.

The logic is there — as outlined in the section on practical and moral reasons for diversifying the teaching staff — and it’s compelling. Schools find they need to express it clearly enough, loud enough, and often enough to convince everyone that they’re serious about change — that stasis is, in fact, failure.

6. Outline strategic issues related to hiring more teachers of color for the coming year(s).

A mission statement is a school’s lodestar, but its strategic plan — a step-by-step plan to achieve the mission — guides the daily work. Along with clarifying the mission regarding diversity, schools that have met with success have clarified the steps they needed to take to reach their goal.

Every school has a strategic plan for the way it will conduct all sorts of business, for the way the school will evolve in the coming year or years. Diversity initiatives should be threaded throughout these plans. If you need help in writing these plans, there are many diversity consultants who can help. If you have a director of diversity on staff, he or she can — and should — play a central role in the process.



Basing our self-esteem on the ability to look down on others is not the American way We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must break down the barriers in our lives, our minds, and our hearts.

— Bill Clinton, 1997

*We were walking
down the tree-lined
street [in Columbus,
Nebraska] when
suddenly we found
ourselves in the
midst of a sea of
white faces pointing,
snickering, whispering,
and starting at us....
I was not a stranger
to this mutual sense
of otherness, but
I was overwhelmed
by the strength
and lopsidedness
of the feeling.*

— Faye Wattleton

7. Be empathetic, but uncompromising.

If you're a school head, you need to be uncompromising because the mission statement says you must be uncompromising. But you also must be empathetic. All change comes hard. Change to a school's culture and climate, to its essential character, comes harder still. If you have a predominantly white faculty and you tell them that you plan to diversify the teaching staff in the coming years, you can bet that some teachers will feel threatened. You can bet that some will resist.

You should listen. You should care about the feelings of your teaching staff. You should give room for debate and discussion. But you should keep everyone moving in the direction you know to be right. This is probably the trickiest step; it's the area where things can coalesce or fall apart.

You should also form a strong working relationship with the school's director of diversity. Two articles in the Summer 2014 issue of *Independent School* highlight the importance of this relationship. "Without a strong, open, and honest relationship with the head of school, diversity practitioners have little leverage and lots of frustration," writes Sandra (Chap) Chapman, director of diversity and community at Little Red School House and Elisabeth Irwin School (New York). "Schools talk about the importance of the relationship between the head of school and the board chair. But they also need to talk about the all-important relationship between the head and the director of diversity — and how it can be developed."

In particular, Chapman says that she and her head of school, Phil Kassen, practice three cultural competency skills together: "(1) engage in inquiry and openness, (2) engage in responsive feedback, and (3) connect the personal to the cultural and societal."

In their article, Kimberly Ridley and Ralph Wales, assistant head for faculty professional growth and multicultural practice and head of school at Gordon School (Rhode Island), support this notion: "We believe that this active participation between head of school and lead diversity practitioner provides the professional fuel necessary to leverage real and lasting change."

The good news, here in the second decade of the twenty-first century, is that schools are increasingly getting comfortable with the idea of change — especially given the impact of technology on teaching and learning. A community's openness to change on one front can help on another.

8. Establish a hiring committee.

Some schools create a hiring committee that oversees all new appointments. Most schools involve key members of the administration and faculty when hiring new teachers, but few have a committee that oversees all hiring. Such a committee can monitor the school's process for hiring and make sure the various hiring teams know what they are looking for. One Massachusetts independent school has just such a committee, which includes the school's director of diversity. "For one, we talk about the dangers in self-replication — hiring people like ourselves — and how it happens," says the school's dean of faculty. "We talk about how to analyze a résumé and get clarity on what we are looking for. The temptation is to choose a candidate like oneself, whose experiences are more familiar. That tendency can work against diversity."

If there are structural reasons your school can't create a hiring committee, you should at least have an administrator or two — say, the dean of faculty or diversity director — who can monitor and guide the school's hiring decisions. Think of this person as the school's hiring manager. In one school, in which the departments do most of their own hiring, the dean of faculty works with department chairs to identify highly qualified candidates of color. With the department chairs, he discusses the department's specific needs and requisite qualifications and then proactively looks for candidates of color who fit those needs and qualifications. He also examines the racial diversity in each department as a way to ensure that efforts remain uniformly high in each academic discipline.

In the end, the hiring team or hiring manager can help the school "build" the faculty in the same way an admission director builds the student body — looking for the

right mix of talents and diversity. The team or person is able to examine the current faculty's strengths and weaknesses — ensuring, for instance, that teachers of color are working in key departments like history and English, not just in the modern language department. What matters, in other words, is not just the numbers of teachers of color but also the broad impact they have on the school academically and culturally.

9. Establish clear hiring procedures.

The hiring committee or hiring manager can do this work for the school. The important thing here is to make sure that the essential language in all job advertisements is the same and that they not only include a list of required skills for each position, but that they note the school's commitment to diversity. The director of diversity planning in one school noted that her school gets this message across three times in every job ad. Each ad begins with a thumbnail description of the school that includes the following sentence: "With a diverse national student body and faculty, [the school] maintains high academic standards within an inclusive community." After the description of the position, all ads note that, "Although teacher certification is not required, interest in working within a multicultural boarding community is." Finally, along with the school's general nondiscrimination clause, all ads reinforce the school's commitment to diversity by saying, "[The school] seeks candidates who would add to the racial, cultural, and gender diversity of the school community."

10. Advertise positions widely.

The advice of many schools that have had success hiring teachers of color is this: wean your school off traditional job fairs. Or at least reduce your dependency on them. Traditional independent school job fairs may offer you many candidates qualified to teach in your schools. They are nice one-stop shops. But they won't necessarily turn up the candidates of color you are looking for. The truth about independent school job fairs is that few people outside of the independent school world even know they exist.

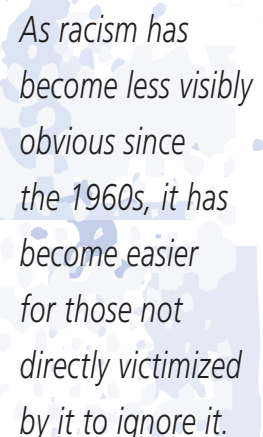
That said, it's nice to know that many of the organizations running job fairs for independent schools today are focusing more energy on finding diverse candidates — and they have gotten better at it over the past decade. A number of organizations are also offering job fairs focused on diversity. Some state and regional associations run diversity job fairs. In addition to its online employment

services, NEMNET, the National Education Minority Network, offers regional job fairs for schools and candidates of color. Most placement agencies today are aware of the need for more teachers of color in independent schools and are more than willing to work with schools in their diversity efforts. The consulting and placement firm StratéGenius focuses primarily on teachers and administrators of color.

Some schools also send recruiters to people of color job fairs that are designed for all professions, not just teaching. As one dean of faculty points out, with the latter approach you must think of it as a long-term strategy, since it takes time to establish a presence at such large events.

More and more candidates, of course, are finding teaching jobs through the Internet. For independent schools in New England, the AISNE job site is central. Other key job sites include the NAIS career center along with other state and regional association sites and People of Color in Independent Schools (POCIS) listservs. To get the candidates you are looking for, some schools also recommend that you reach beyond the independent school world and advertise in places where a large number of educators of color are apt to see your ad, including in major newspaper job sites and education job sites, such as *Education Week's*, primarily aimed at public school or charter school teachers.

In addition, some schools visit and recruit from African-American colleges and universities. Secondary schools — in particular, those who want candidates with Ph.D.'s in their fields — have been successful finding teachers of color through college and university job fairs. To this end, it helps to visit colleges and universities that don't make the *U.S. News and World Report* top-twenty list. These sometimes overlooked colleges and universities are full of engaging, smart, committed people who could contribute a great deal to an independent school community. And many of them have career centers for alumni where you can also list job openings online.



As racism has become less visibly obvious since the 1960s, it has become easier for those not directly victimized by it to ignore it.

— Clarence Page

11. Seek out candidates of color at job fairs.

When you attend a job fair for teachers, seek out teachers of color. Don't wait for candidates to come to you. Quite often there are good candidates in the room who haven't given your school much thought. Simply stopping by and saying hello can carry a lot of weight. As one school recruiter put it, "If there is a magical moment in turning someone's interest toward your school, it's this: one person expressing an interest in another."

12. Push teacher placement firms to find the candidates you want.

These firms earn revenue by placing teachers in independent schools. Most of them are trying to attract more candidates of color. But if you find you're not getting the candidates you want through placement agencies, you have to option of not using them. If you stop hiring teachers through these agencies until they start offering the candidates you want, they will soon start offering the candidates you want. You could also consider giving these firms an incentive by offering them extra money for finding you a candidate of color that you eventually hire.

The whole barrier exists because most people never come together and sit down at a table... join together, break bread together, and celebrate their differences and their likenesses.

— Oprah Winfrey

13. Know what to look for in résumés.

We have a tendency to hire candidates like ourselves, or choose the candidate with the most chock-a-block full résumé, reasoning that such a candidate must be the "most qualified." Schools that have had success hiring teachers of color have learned to think more carefully about the qualifications and qualities they really want — and to get training in better hiring practices.

If a candidate for an English position, for instance, attended an independent school and an Ivy League college, does this make him or her a more qualified candidate than the one who attended a public school and a

state university or a small liberal arts college? It depends. It's most important to get clarity about what qualities you are looking for. Often, the "better" résumé is judged better because the candidate is part of a privileged majority that comes with a number of advantages (access to an independent school education and an Ivy League college, and, perhaps, a valuable internship). But these may not be the most important factors — and certainly shouldn't turn you away from a candidate with a different experience.

Rather than getting caught up in college name recognition, it might be more important to examine a résumé for qualities that you seek in a diverse learning community such as resiliency, cross-cultural competency, deep love of one's subject area, a commitment to community, and experience working in a multicultural community.

As Beverly Daniel Tatum notes in *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*, "Schools concerned about meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student population should be looking specifically for teachers of all backgrounds with demonstrated experience in working with multiracial populations, with courses on their transcripts like Psychology of Racism; Race, Class Culture, and Gender in the Classroom; and Foundations of Multicultural Education, to name a few." The essential message is: Get clarity on exactly what qualifications are important and don't get sidetracked by résumé bling.

14. Understand the impact of unconscious bias in hiring.

In her 2010 article in *Independent School*, diversity consultant Christine Savini notes how "bias among the well-intentioned" can affect the hiring process. Examining case studies, Savini makes it clear that, without training, those in charge of hiring in independent schools can unconsciously dismiss candidates of color for specious reasons. One highly qualified candidate was ignored because she was born in Jamaica and attended a public high school and university in Louisiana. Without ever speaking with the candidate, department members said they didn't know how to evaluate public school experience, didn't know what this candidate might be able to coach, and wondered if the students would have trouble understanding this teacher's accent. After dragging their collective heels, the department members did eventually talk with the candidate and were impressed. By the time they were ready to hire this candidate, however, she had accepted a job at another school.

Schools must engage their faculty and administrators in conversations about unconscious bias, Savini writes, “Training on this subject cannot be optional.” This includes a focus on aversive racism — essentially, the ability to, on the one hand, deny personal prejudice and, on the other hand, let unconscious bias frame decision-making.

“Once we are aware of what unconscious bias is, how it is manifested, and how we can respond to it,” Savini concludes, “we can build an inclusive organization that gives everyone the opportunity to participate fully and contribute their talents, background, and viewpoints to our schools.”

15. Make your ads inclusive.

Along with using your job ads as a way to announce your school’s commitment to diversity, a school should also consider the other details of the ad. One school head, who has dramatically increased the number of teachers of color at his school in recent years, points out the near mathematical impossibility of hiring teachers of color based on the criteria noted in a typical job ad. If, for instance, you are looking for a teacher who “has familiarity with independent schools,” the odds of finding a teacher of color are low. “If 5 percent of the independent school graduates go on to become teachers, and 1 percent of the U.S. population attends independent schools, and 16 percent of this 1 percent are people of color, how can you possibly expect to find teachers of color familiar with independent schools? Schools like to hire teachers who fit a particular mold, but we can’t continue to do this if we want more teachers of color.”

In addition to the language of a job ad, consider the design of it. It doesn’t hurt to make it visually attractive and engaging.

16. Get to know more people of color for networking purposes.

As one school head points out, “A person responsible for hiring should put himself or herself in places, both professionally and personally, where he or she will have contact with people of color.” This should be an expectation for anyone responsible for hiring.

We all use networking in our lives — for friendship, support, and profit. You need to start establishing networks that will connect you to more people of color.

Besides doing this on a personal level, a school can make better efforts at connecting with its parents of color.

Many schools work hard to connect with their parents of color knowing full well that those parents can help the schools find more teachers of color. “You need parents as allies,” says a director of diversity. “It affects student retention, which can affect applicants and influence teachers of color to come here. It’s all connected.”

Now that schools are graduating a higher number of students of color, they should also make sure they keep close ties with these new alumni. If any of them enter the field of education, you’ll have a better chance of bringing them back to your school to teach if they feel connected.

Both your parent body and alumni can also help you identify good candidates of color through their own networks. If parents or alumni know you are looking for teachers of color and that you want their help, they’ll connect you to potential candidates fairly quickly.

The bottom line, as one dean of faculty put it, is that you need “to grow your own network.” It’s a constant and consistent effort that, over time, will increase the number of faculty of color and shift the culture of the school.

17. Make the school attractive to teachers of color in as many ways as possible.

It’s one thing to find candidates of color. It’s another to hire them (and still another to retain them). You obviously need to think carefully about the job from their point of view. Why should a teacher of color work at your school? It’s nice that you can point to the school’s low student-teacher ratio, the great success in college admissions, and the high degree of autonomy in the classroom. There are some fabulous perks to teaching in an independent school, and you should not overlook them. But this is not enough.

Peal Rock Kane and Alfonso Orsini, in an article on attracting and retaining teachers of color, note that there are specific things you can do to make your school



That the school puts community first in my title reflects the understanding that diversity and multicultural issues are integral part of the overall community.

— director of community and multicultural development

*We are fallible,
and should not
pretend that we
are anything else.
But we ought to
be aware of what
we are doing.*

*We have a profound
moral contract with
our students.*

*We insist, under the
law, that they become
thoughtful, informed
citizens. We must —
for their benefit —
model such
citizenship.*

— Theodore and Nancy
Faust Sizer, in their
book, *The Students
Are Watching*

while your school is in the process of becoming multicultural, you need to have carefully orchestrated forums for discussion of ideas as they relate to diversity.

Also, in the interviewing stage, many schools make sure that candidates of color meet with current teachers of color on campus. Although the candidates may be polite about it, they are definitely concerned about how they'll fit in to a predominantly white campus. And it helps them immensely to meet with current teachers of color to learn about their experiences at a school.

Your school's commitment to diversity must be palpable to candidates.

attractive to teachers of color. Their most important question, they say, is: "Will a candidate entering the school be greeted with warmth and acceptance and interest, or with a posture of exalted scrutiny?"

Teachers of color want a real voice in the school. They should feel respected and feel that they are contributing to the community in ways that are valued. They want a significant population of students of color and a multicultural curriculum — one that draws from the contributions of various races, ethnicities, cultures, and gender (something beyond Western literature as we've known it to be taught in schools over the past fifty or more years). If they don't see that these things are already in place (or coming), they are not likely to join your faculty.

It will also help if you conduct racial sensitivity workshops for all faculty and administrators. Especially

18. Consider the visual impact of your campus (your hidden curriculum).

It's a tough balance these days between having pride in a school's history and excluding people. If a school's entrance foyer is loaded with large portraits of white-haired white men, no matter how good they were in their day, the school will likely have a problem attracting teachers of color (or women). To the degree possible, the visual look of the campus should reflect the school's stated values. In some ways, schools should be less surprised by the difficulty of finding teachers of color than they should be by the fact that any teacher of color would choose to teach in a predominantly white institution. Even with all the benefits of teaching in an independent school, it takes a pretty big leap of faith.

19. Find ways to bring many people of color onto your campus annually.

Schools that offer summer institutes and conferences for educators can attract teachers of color to their campuses regularly. For many teachers of color, independent schools, even well known ones, are mysterious places. Helping to demystify independent education is a first step in recruiting teachers of color. Along with participating in the summer events, visiting teachers of color will also get a good sense of the school and the community. This, in turn, can make them good candidates for positions on the faculty when openings do occur.

Schools that offer after-school programs and summer school programs should also get in the practice of hiring teachers of color for those programs. It's another way to connect teachers of color with your school and for your school to discover promising candidates for future openings on the faculty. The faculty at one Massachusetts independent school's busy after-school program is now over 30 percent educators of color.

20. Mentor teachers of color in the candidate stage.

If you are finding young, promising candidates of color who have little practice in applying for jobs and little knowledge of independent schools, it is wise to connect them to experts — ideally through the school's home-grown network of friends and associates — who can help them develop their résumé and interview skills and knowledge about independent schools. The more the candidates know before they arrive on campus for interviews, the greater the chance of being selected for a position. And by offering help, you keep them interested in independent schools in general and your school in particular.

21. Don't forget good salaries and benefits.

Good teachers generally work out of a sense of concern for (and love of) children and an interest in helping society in some way. They are engaged in the process. They like being around young people and watching them develop physically, intellectually, and spiritually. But they are not martyrs. They want the security of a salary that will allow them to live in the community in which they teach. They want to eventually own a home. They want benefits that will protect them and support them in retirement. They want, as one school head puts it, to live with "economic dignity." Now that we suddenly seem to be in a buyer's market, a school can lose teachers quickly if the salary and benefits don't match their needs.

Because there is a limit to how high a school can go with salaries, some schools are doing a number of creative things to help teachers. Some schools help teachers with the moving costs so it's not a barrier to accepting a position. One Connecticut day school has bought housing in the area that the school can rent back to teachers at an affordable rate. The board of trustees at a California school has set up annual venture capital funds on behalf of the school's teachers.

22. Connect with local colleges and universities that offer degrees in education.

Some independent schools have found it helpful to connect with nearby colleges and universities with teacher-education programs and letting these institutions know of the school's interest in hiring more teachers of color. They also encourage students of color in these undergraduate and graduate programs to visit the independent school campus and perhaps fulfill their student-teaching requirement at the school. Some independent schools offer teacher-training programs leading toward state certification or an advanced degree. Attracting college students of color to your school is also a way of potentially attracting them to teach there in the future.

23. Be creative in your recruiting and hiring.

"It's important to be flexible about hiring," says a head of a Massachusetts school. "You don't always look to find someone who is the perfect fit. If a candidate of color would be good on your staff, you can find a way to make it work, just as long as job equity and pay equity are considered."

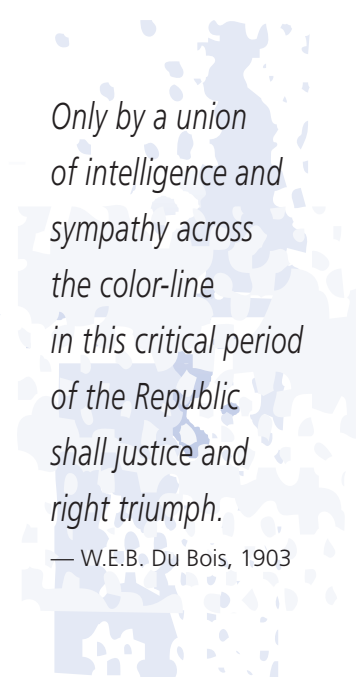
One school created a handful of teaching fellowships — full-time, multiyear appointments — which the school can use to hire teachers of color even when there is no position open in the faculty. The fellowships, some of them fully endowed, allow the school to be flexible in hiring teachers of color. In some cases, the fellowship can lead to full-time employment in the future.

Fellowships and internships are also good ways to bring promising young candidates to your campus. In fact, a diversity practitioner encourages all independent schools to create at least one internship for faculty of color each year as a way to give promising candidates more experience and a chance at a future full-time opening on the faculty.

When it comes to recruiting practices, some schools think creatively about tapping new sources and considering ways to involve others in the school community in the process. One school, for instance, likes to think of admission office events as potential teacher-recruiting events. When the school sends out a team to a job fair in San Francisco, it is likely to include an Asian-American teacher or administrator. If a team goes to Washington, DC, it is likely to include an African-American teacher or administrator. The idea is to think about the local audience and to consider all school events as potential recruiting opportunities.

24. Commit to conducting a search for all faculty positions.

A diversity director says that that too many schools tend to hire candidates from within a school — or hire "known" external candidates. This practice has a clear adverse effect on efforts to diversifying the faculty. Schools should commit to conducting an open search for every faculty position, she says, even if a good internal candidate exists. In the way, the schools can ensure that all new openings are opportunities for improving the diversity of the faculty.



*Only by a union
of intelligence and
sympathy across
the color-line
in this critical period
of the Republic
shall justice and
right triumph.*

— W.E.B. Du Bois, 1903

Retaining Faculty of Color

Hiring teachers of color and keeping them are connected but separate issues. If you follow the above steps for hiring teachers of color, you're also taking steps toward retaining them. If the school is indeed a welcoming place for teachers of color — if they feel their work is important, they feel they have something to contribute to the students and the community, they feel supported and fairly compensated, etc. — then they are likely to stick around, at least for an average length of time in this fairly peripatetic country.

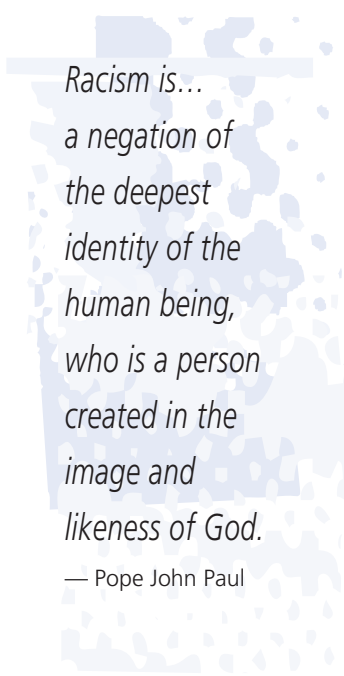
Yet it's also important to acknowledge that retaining teachers of color seems to be as difficult as attracting them these days. In fact, more recent interviews with diversity practitioners in schools reveal that retention is a serious problem for many schools. So it's clearly necessary to think carefully and proactively about taking steps to retain teachers of color.

The following are among the steps schools can take to help ensure that teachers of color stay around a while.

1. Create an environment that truly reflects your commitment to diversity.

For teachers of color, it's the overall package that matters. As noted earlier, the visual impact of the campus is important, as is the visual impact in the school publications. But that's just a starting point. What matters more is the way adults interact in your community and the school's

commitment to diversity. It's the old axiom: actions speak louder than words. What you *do* carries more weight than what you say. What is the percentage of students of color on campus? What is your commitment to a multicultural curriculum? Is your school community involved in anti-bias training? How many administrators of color help lead the school? Do you have a diversity director? Is the head supportive of the teachers of color? Are parents of color happy about their children's experience at the school? Etc.



*Racism is...
a negation of
the deepest
identity of the
human being,
who is a person
created in the
image and
likeness of God.*

— Pope John Paul

Retaining Teachers of Color

1. Create an environment that truly reflects your commitment to diversity.
2. Clarify your expectations of new teachers.
3. Provide ongoing support for teachers of color.
4. Provide ongoing diversity training for everyone.
5. Create an opportunity for growth and leadership.
6. Establish a meaningful relationship with your colleagues of color.
7. Be willing to grow as a community.
8. Increase your school's commitment to public service.
9. Analyze everything you do regarding diversity.
10. Give performance feedback to teachers of color in a timely fashion.
11. Be prepared to act decisively and consistently when an injustice has been identified by teachers of color.
12. Find ways to connect with public education.

A diversity director is particularly crucial these days. You're not looking for someone who can help coordinate diversity events (which matter) as much as you're looking for someone who has the power and authority to hold up everything a school does — all policies and practices — to the lens of diversity. The schools in which diversity directors have the most impact are schools that include them on key committees and have them reporting directly to the head. Even then, some schools think the title "diversity director" is too limiting. The director of community and multicultural development at a Massachusetts school says, "That the school puts community first in my title reflects the understanding that diversity and multicultural issues are an integral part of the overall community."

Some schools have worked out a good structure for oversight of the broad spectrum of diversity-related issues in the school. But a 2014 NAIS survey of diversity practitioners reveals that more schools than not are still in the process of clarifying and formalizing the structure. Many of the respondents to the survey, reports Amada Torres, NAIS vice-president for research, indicated that they are either the first or the second person to perform the role of diversity practitioner at their school (42 percent and 26 percent, respectively). And, among those, fewer than half perform the diversity function full-time. If your school is still in working out the parameters of oversight for diversity work, it's time make it a priority — to ensure that the community truly reflects your commitment to diversity.

It's widely agreed on that schools need to be working toward having a "critical mass" of teachers and students of color if they want to sustain a well-functioning multicultural institution. Harvard professor of education Charles Vert Willie, in his studies of critical mass, says that, for critical mass today, a school needs 25 percent student of color and 20 percent teachers of color. Achieving these numbers will help a great deal in retaining teachers of color.

Ultimately, a school's commitment to diversity will reveal itself in the school's commitment to its students — to helping each student become what one diversity consultant calls "the full expression of who one is."

"Not only do we need a facile climate in which children can gain greater insight into their identities," he says, "but we also must be careful to make our schools mindful, inclusive, and safe places — the three dimensions of equity. Are all children safe in our schools? Are they included in all aspects of school life? Do their parents feel welcome? Is there anything in the hierarchy that excludes, precludes, or secludes children?" Take care of this, and you'll find that teachers of color will want to stay.

2. Clarify your expectations of new teachers.

In the interviewing processes, of course, it's important to clarify the role of an in-coming teacher of color in your school and your expectations. You should also do this again after a teacher is hired. And make yourself available to all teachers of color to discuss the reality of their work — those points where what they expected and what is are at odds.

A flip side of this coin, a dean of faculty notes, is to be honest about everything. "Don't try to pretend everything is great," he says. "If there are problems, work to address them immediately." If a school is committed

to diversity over the long haul, it will be willing to acknowledge and address problems as they arise.

One classic mistake some schools make when they first try to diversify their teaching staffs is to hire teachers of color because of the diversity they bring to the school, but then expect them to fit into

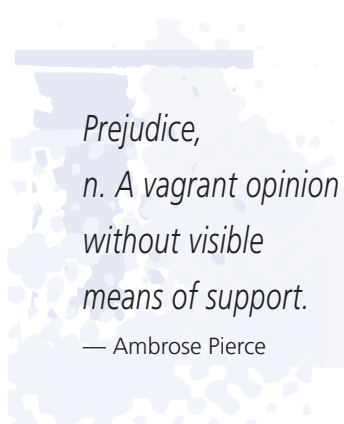
a climate and culture that for all intents and purposes excludes them. Along with clarifying your expectations of new teachers of color, schools need to clarify their expectations of all members of the community. You can't bring in teachers of color and then conduct business as usual. Bringing in teachers of color means your school is making a commitment to change on every level.

3. Provide ongoing support for teachers of color.

You can do this by establishing mentoring opportunities and networks of support for teachers of color. You can also set aside money and time for their professional development. This is especially important for new teachers of color with little experience. The head of a California elementary school says that her school offers separate faculty meetings for new teachers so they'll have a place where they can safely ask questions they might be afraid to ask among seasoned teachers. "We also have a network of parents and teachers and administrators," she says, "that works on diversity issues together so that no one ends up feeling like a lone ranger."

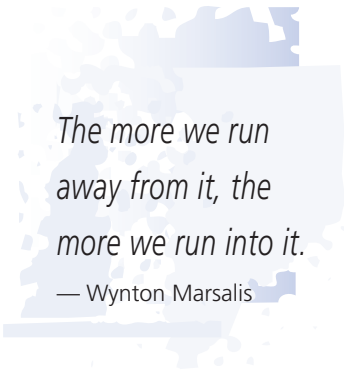
You can also create affinity groups on campus that include teachers, administrators, parents, and board members of color. The important thing is not to let teachers feel isolated in your community.

Regarding professional development, there's a lot a school can do. Send teachers of color every year to the NAIS People of Color Conference. Send oneself (if you are a head of school) and all key administrators and division heads to summer diversity institutes and workshops. Also encourage teachers of color to join the regional People of Color in Independent Schools (POCIS) group — for support, networking, and professional development.



*Prejudice,
n. A vagrant opinion
without visible
means of support.*

— Ambrose Pierce



*The more we run
away from it, the
more we run into it.*

— Wynton Marsalis

Also support professional development opportunities for teachers of color that don't focus on diversity. Good teachers have an insatiable appetite for developing their knowledge and skills in their particular field. A school's efforts to support that development will

be greatly appreciated. A school can also help teachers connect with summer programs, apply for NEH grants, enroll in graduate school courses — connect with any educational opportunity that will help them in their field and give them a reason to stick around.

Lists of professional development opportunities are available on the websites of state and regional associations of independent schools, as well as other places.

4. Provide ongoing diversity training for everyone.

Along with providing teachers of color opportunities for professional development, a school should also set aside time and money for all teachers to learn more about developing a multicultural community and about multicultural curricula. It's important that everyone understands that this is a process and it involves the entire community. For white educators, as noted, it's particularly important to learn about white identity and privilege. If you start to hear engaging, thoughtful conversations about diversity in a variety of settings, you know the issue is on the school's front burner, where it should be.

While some white educators will be eager to engage in this work, some no doubt will resist it, questioning especially its value as it relates to their teaching. The AISNE guide *From Assimilation to Inclusion* addresses the issue of resistance and offers suggestions about how to keep the school working together on diversity initiatives. For white educators, it's particularly important to understand how implicit bias — embedded stereotypes that influence decision-making without one's conscious knowledge — can negatively impact students of color in their classrooms. Among other works of research, a 2014 report from the Perception Institute, "The Science of Equality: Addressing Implicit Bias, Racial Anxiety, and Stereotype Threat in Education and Health Care," details the devastating impact of implicit bias on students of color nationally.

One head of school notes that it's particularly important for teachers to understand boys of color. The achievement gap based on race so often noted in public schools also exists in private and independent schools. Understanding how to work well with boys of color will not only help reduce this gap and help these students do well in school, it will also strengthen the school community and make the school more attractive to teachers of color.

In short, what matters most is that the head and other key administrators remain unwavering in their commitment to a school-wide approach to developing a well-functioning multicultural learning community that serves everyone equitably.

5. Create an opportunity for growth and leadership.

A diversity director points out that many educators of color are focused on a career track. So it makes sense to mentor them with this in mind. Beyond professional development in their given subject area, offer teachers of color as many opportunities as possible to act as leaders in your school. Actively encourage those with leadership potential to consider future division leadership or headship and connect them with mentors. But don't overwhelm teachers of color with responsibilities. And don't ever let them carry the weight for all diversity initiatives.

It's particularly important to think creatively here and avoid the trappings of stereotypes that would only allow a teacher of color to advance within the realm of diversity leadership. Teachers of color have a natural interest in diversity issues because the issues have an obvious and direct impact on their lives. If they are interested in this work, they deserve your support. But take conscious steps to make sure you're not steering them in this direction based on their race or preventing them from advancing in areas of school life that are of particular interest to them. Get them on a *real* promotion track. There are always opportunities for growth with a school — department chair, division head, committee chair, faculty representative to the board, etc. The goal is to offer opportunities for growth that fit the teachers' individual interests and demonstrate your appreciation.

6. Establish a meaningful relationship with your colleagues of color.

Get to know your teachers of color well. If you only talk with them at formal meetings, you can't really know them — or learn from them, or feel as if you're in the same community together.

There are ways you can connect with colleagues of color. Simply stopping to talk in the hall or on the walk between buildings helps. You can also make time in your schedule to visit their classrooms, go out for coffee, or lunch, or dinner, or work with them on school projects, or on extracurricular activities.

Some school heads establish periodic affinity dinners with the various racial groups within the school. This not only gives teachers of color in your school a chance to spend time with each other, it gives the head a chance to get to know teachers of color better, to listen to their concerns, and to share some of the school's thoughts about its diversity efforts.

A meaningful relationship, of course, must also extend to professional engagement. One director of diversity says that white administrators tend not to listen to her ideas. It's only when those same ideas are championed by someone who is white or male that they find traction. For all of us, professional satisfaction comes from deep engagement in the community. We need to know our work and our views are valued and acknowledged.

In addition to listening to colleagues of color, school leaders should also ask them about their experiences, both formally and informally. Every educator of color can tell you about the microaggressions they endure regularly in and out of school. By listening to colleagues of color, school leaders can better evaluate the school's diversity initiatives and, if needed, work harder to change the culture of the school for the better.

7. Be willing to grow as a community.

Schools that have a long history of being mostly white institutions — and have recently focused energy on diversity issues — have to accept the fact that they are figuring this out as they go. Even the best-laid plans can unravel. One can't anticipate everything. A willingness to engage in the process of being multicultural requires a willingness to grow, to encourage all teachers and administrators to work together — and not get caught up in fighting over issues — especially when things get hard. A school that is willing to grow is a school in which the administration has demonstrated a willingness to readjust its thinking and planning when needed. It requires good will.

As Plutarch wrote centuries ago, "What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality."

8. Increase your school's commitment to public service.

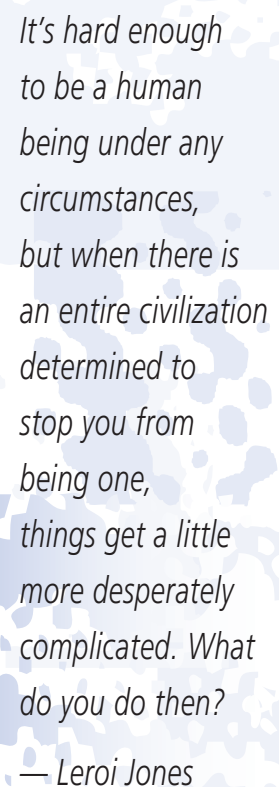
In his 2014 article in *Independent School*, former head of school Al Adams makes the link between diversity work and public purpose work in schools. In particular, he links what he describes as "four roads": affordability, inclusion, success, and public purpose. Public-purpose work doesn't directly concern itself with the diversity of a school, nor with the academic experience of students, but a commitment to diversity and public purpose acts to strengthen a school's connection to the large community — and in so doing, makes it a more attractive place for teachers of color and for families of color.

Adams notes a conversation with an African-American parent of a ninth-grader who told him, "If [the school] wasn't doing so much good public-purpose work, my daughter would not be here!" The same, no doubt, holds true for many teachers of color — as long as public-purpose work occurs concomitantly with diversity work.


In other words, serving the public purpose means not only helping people in need locally and internationally, but also establishing a multicultural community that can serve as model of cross-cultural connections in a divided world.

9. Analyze everything you do regarding diversity.

Pearl Rock Kane and Alfonso Orsini, in their 2004 book on people of color in independent schools, suggest that you be as analytical as possible about the whole thing. "Keep careful records of how the school is progressing in its goals to diversify," they write. "Review turnover of teachers of color over a ten-year period and reasons for leaving. Consider workload/salaries/rate of promotions compared to all faculty; percentages in senior level administrative positions." You should consider which departments have the most



It's hard enough to be a human being under any circumstances, but when there is an entire civilization determined to stop you from being one, things get a little more desperately complicated. What do you do then?
— Leroi Jones



*We need to
talk with each
other, honestly,
simply, caringly.*

— Paul Kivel

faculty of color and why this is so. You should review the school's mission statement and its long-range plans and consider the criteria you're using to judge your success. You should review all school literature. You should ask alumni of color to return to school to discuss their experiences there.

There is a tendency to dismiss the experiences of those who leave a school unhappily, saying they were not good fits for the school, or they didn't connect with the school culture. But it's just as likely that the school did not follow through on its promise to the teacher. By carefully analyzing what everyone is doing in relationship to the mission, you'll have a better sense of how to proceed to the next level.

10. Give performance feedback to teachers of color in a timely fashion.

Teachers of color want to know how they are doing — especially in the first few years in a school. Some schools offer formal performance evaluations for all teachers. In other schools, it's more informal. Both systems can work, as long as it happens regularly and is focused on professional growth.

Ralph Sneed, an English teacher at Phillips Exeter Academy (New Hampshire), wrote an article in *Independent School* about his work as the school's professional development coordinator, visiting classes of experienced teachers and talking with them afterward. "I've noticed that the most electrifying moments don't necessarily occur from their perusal of student evaluations, writing self-assessments, and reading the reports of their peer observers, all familiarly summative devices to a certain degree," he writes. "The simple truth is that growth happens when they *talk* to each other about what just happened in the classroom — regardless of the subject — whether it was triumphant, tragic, or just plain confusing."

All teachers crave a certain level of autonomy, but collegiality, connection, and the sharing of professional wisdom matter as well.

11. Be prepared to act decisively and consistently when an injustice has been identified by teachers of color.

There are few feelings worse than experiencing injustice, reporting it to those in charge, then listening as those in charge downplay the problem or dismiss it or suggest that you are exaggerating your claims. Large acts of injustice, of course, can lead to legal action. But teachers of color experience too many microaggressions in their lives. When they report them to you, they need you to listen and take action.

12. Find ways to connect with public education.

Kane and Orsini, writing in *Independent School*, note many of the above factors as reasons why schools either keep or lose teachers of color. A less obvious factor they discovered is that teachers of color were more likely to stay in independent schools that have ties to local public schools, because they feel less isolated in such a community. Many schools connect with the local community in a variety of ways. Here's another reason to do so consciously.

Conclusion

In the independent school community and elsewhere, there is so much respect for the power of education and the belief that schools can play an important role in both educating children for individual success in a globalized world and for moving this nation toward its ideals of equity and justice. But to educate the next generation of enlightened leaders and engaged citizens requires, first, a deep understanding of diversity issues in this nation and, second, the ability to translate that understanding into action. It requires, in other words, that educators figure out how to institutionalize that commitment. And institutionalizing that commitment means, among other things, having an engaged, diverse teaching staff that mirrors the nation at large.

The independent school community is certainly progressing. There is so much energy and hope among the people of color currently working in independent schools — as well as among their allies. There is so much spark among the students of color — as well as among *their* allies. But we're only part way there, and the road to developing high-functioning multicultural schools is long and difficult. Perhaps the most important message is: Don't despair. Don't back down.

Top Fourteen Ways to Drive People of Color from Your School

(Some silly, some not, ALL serious. Use the list to audit your school's policies, procedures, and culture. If you're serious about this work and you're doing any of these things, stop it.)

1. Hire a person of color as diversity director and let him or her worry about changing the school culture. Offer him or her little financial or staff support.
2. Hire a person of color as diversity director and let him or her focus on diversity events and nothing else.
3. Assume that the people of color on your campus are only interested in professional development that focuses on diversity.
4. Appoint a teacher of color, who already has a full teaching and coaching load, to be the diversity director on the side. The younger the better.
5. Expect teachers of color to "fit in" to your community without considering their interests or needs.
6. Don't examine your curriculum to consider the degree to which it includes and excludes the contributions of people of color to history, literature, art, science, etc.
7. Exclude people of color from top leadership positions.
8. Let teachers of color exclusively mentor and discipline students of color.
9. Don't develop a long-range plan to increase the diversity of your student body.
10. Don't socialize with teachers of color.
11. Don't let people tell their own stories.
12. When faculty and students of color gather together, stare at them and wonder aloud about what they're up to.
13. Brag about how "color-blind" your school is.
14. Never have more than one person of color on the faculty.



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