Guess who's not coming to dinner: A review of the policies and practices in three urban Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds

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GUESS WHO’S NOT COMING TO DINNER:
A REVIEW OF THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN
THREE URBAN IOWA SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO
RECRUIT TEACHERS FROM UNDERREPRESENTED_backgrounds

A Dissertation
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Approved:

Dr. Victoria L. Robinson, Committee Chair

Dr. Clemens L. Bartollas, Committee Member

Dr. Robert M. Boody, Committee Member

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Willie B. Barney Jr.
University of Northern Iowa
July 2007

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Approved:

Dr. Victoria Robinson, Committee Chair

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Willie B. Barney Jr.
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ABSTRACT

Although student diversity in public schools has increased at a rapid pace, teacher diversity has not matched the student pace. Schools in the United States have had a difficult time identifying strategies for the effective recruitment and hire of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. The shortage has left many questioning the merit of their efforts.

The purpose of this study was to identify the steps taken by Iowa’s urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Four research questions were examined using a qualitative research methodology. Using inquiry techniques, school district personnel participated in individual interviews and provided supporting documents to provide a better understanding of the policies and practices of their school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. The selected districts were members of the Urban Education Network of Iowa in the 2004-2005 school year.

Overall, the findings in this study of the selected Iowa urban districts were consistent with the research regarding the recruitment and hire of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. The following conclusions were drawn based on the results of this study: (a) all the districts appeared to put a lot of value on the importance of teacher diversity; (b) most of the strategies utilized by the selected districts tended to hit and attract the same populations that they have always attracted thus yielding minimal diversity; (c) there was a consistent failure among the studied districts to formalize, implement, and enforce a plan for recruiting and hiring of teachers from underrepresented
backgrounds; (d) the barriers identified for the most part seemed to be man made, system
driven, or deeply connected to the manner in which institutions do business; (e) many of
those recurrent and common barriers could be addressed through the collaborative efforts
of school districts, universities and colleges, and community organizations to address the
educational needs of the 21st Century.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation represents a number of important things to me. Looking back over my life, I can’t help but be thankful for having reached this point. Although there have been a number of incredible people that I have been blessed to have been connected to over the years, none of those people would have come into my life without God’s mercy. So I must start there with my thanks. God, I thank you for your guidance and direction for this is another step in my journey to fulfill the purpose that you planted in our hearts so many years ago in the garden. You have called us to be fruitful with the blessings that you have provided and I pray that you will continue to guide my life and allow me to obey your calling.

Next I have to thank my family. I learned along time ago that the term family is reflective of much more than blood. It is about love and commitment and God has blessed me with so many people over the years who have loved me and been committed to seeing me through some tough times none of which are more important to me than the woman the gave me life 33 years ago. Mom, this is for you. I love you and miss you dearly, but I know that you are watching over me with tears of joy. You laid the foundation for the value of education in my life and as you fought to stay a live just long enough to see me graduate from high school you maintained your enduring spirit to show us the importance of education and I can proudly say that you did it, Thank you Mom.

To my beautiful wife Jody. I know this hasn’t been the easiest journey, but I thank you for being my greatest fan and voice of reason. I thank you for never giving up on me and providing me with the encouragement to push on even when it would have
been easier to let me just give up. The strength you have shown in raising our beautiful children has been remarkable. You are an incredible woman and I am so blessed to be able to call you my wife and the mother of my children.

To my incredible children Isaiah, Kiana, Damarian, Anaya, Christian, and Jasmine thank you for the support over the years. I realize this process has taken some time away from you and increased our level of stress at times but I thank you for continuing to love me and bestowing a level of grace. I'm sure you will identify a number of ways to recoup the time we have lost over the years and I look forward to every minute of it.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Overview

The United States is one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world. The public schools are a great indicator of the United States’ ever-changing demographics. Statistics reveal that the student bodies of public schools are becoming more and more diverse. In 1999, Futrell reported that Nonwhite students accounted for 35% to 40% of the total student population and 70% of the inner city population. In 2006, Weaver reported that “forty-five percent of the nation’s children under 5 are racial or ethnic minorities, so the sweeping tide of change is inevitable” (para. 5). Weaver explains that the transformation of student demographics has really taken off over the last 30 years. Since 1980, “the number of Hispanic students increased by 61 percent, the highest growth rate of any ethnic group. The Black student population grew by 16 percent and other minority groups increased by 49 percent” (Weaver, para. 4). Shevin (2000) estimated that if the existing number of minority students in schools continued to grow at the current rate, minority students will very soon become the “numerical majority of K-12 students,” thus changing the face of the human capital that the United States will have to draw from (p. 34).

Over the years, the United States has had to make some drastic changes to adequately address its ever-changing needs. One major change in particular took place 50 years ago as a result of the Brown v. the Board of Education ruling on desegregation. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that “in the field of public education, the doctrine of
“separate but equal has no place” (para. 22). According to the courts, separation inherently denies the opportunity to study, to engage in discussions, and to exchange views with people from different backgrounds which are fundamental to a complete education (Supreme Court, 1954).

Although the 1954 *Brown v. the Board of Education* ruling brought student diversity to our public schools, it did not bring teacher diversity. With diversity being such an important aspect of the United States, the lack of representation of diversity within teaching is in complete contrast to the court’s justification for its ruling 50 years ago. Although a number of factors impact teacher diversity, the hiring policies and practices of schools play a pivotal role in the diversification process. This study will analyze select Iowa school districts for common patterns and differences in their policies and practices to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds.

**Justification for Study**

Although there have been countless public discussions on the importance of diversifying educational leadership in the state of Iowa, there has been limited and insufficient research on what is being done to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds to urban school districts in Iowa. What is being done to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds is important because of the role that education plays in the United States. Although research exists on what is being done in other states, research on what is actually being done in Iowa is limited (Hopton, 2003; Middleton, Mason, Stilwell, & Parker, 1998; Rettig & Khodavondi, 1998; Shultz, Colton, & Colton, 2001).
Modern schools have served as a gateway to the greater society. According to Hurn (1993), many theorists assert that schools play a key role in the development of a democratic society, which is based on "social justice and a more fulfilling life for all citizens" (p. 46). As the only mandatory institution for everyone in the United States, public schools serve as the last opportunity to impart the necessary skills for individuals to "improve their disadvantaged status" (Hurn, p. 37). Hurn further argues that "particularly in the United States, schools have been long seen as a great equalizer, as perhaps the most important institution that works to erase the handicaps of birth" (Hurn, p. 102). As Dervarics points out, "education continues to be a major vehicle for upward mobility... and attainment of a bachelor’s degree is the largest single factor responsible for creation of the present Black middle class" (1989, p. 3, as cited in Shultz et al., 2001, p. 208).

Although "schools have always been diverse...., social changes, legislative decisions, and educational innovations now make the heterogeneity of the classroom more apparent" (Shevin, 2000, p. 35). These changes have drastically "altered the makeup of the classroom" (Lewis, 1996, para.4). The descriptors of today’s students are very complex. One’s race, socioeconomic class, gender, and a wide range of other descriptors can play a very strong role in the experiences that students have connecting with school or a given community (Shevin). Unfortunately, failure to connect with the educational system has been on the rise for nonwhite students. In recent years, schools have seen increasingly high numbers of disconnected nonwhite students leaving the educational system. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)
data collected from the 2000 Census, revealed that the dropout rate for black students and Hispanics was three to four times greater than that of white students (2006, para. 8, Table A).

Iowa’s story is no better. The 2000 Census revealed that from 1990 to 2000 Iowa’s nonwhite population nearly doubled in size (Northwest Area Foundation, para. 2). According to the Iowa Department of Education Annual Condition of Education Report (2006), while the overall number of Iowa students decrease from the 1985-1986 school year to the 2005-2006 school year, the overall percentage of nonwhite students in public schools increased by 233% while the percent of White students decreased by 9.5% (IDOE, p. 31, Table 4). In non-public schools, the percent of nonwhite students increased by 98.3% while white students decreased by 26.9% (IDOE, p. 32, Table 5). Iowa, in addition to other states, has had a difficult time meeting the needs of its increasingly diverse population. In 2003, Jay Greene and Forster of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, reported that Iowa ranked 3rd in the nation with an overall graduation rate of (85%) but the gap between the graduation rates of Blacks (58%) and Whites (87%) in Iowa was the sixth largest in the nation (Table 1&2).

The discrepancy in achievement doesn’t stop with dropouts. According to Greene and Forster’s report, the majority of U.S. and Iowa nonwhite students that make it through graduation tend to only survive high school, instead of finishing high school in a position to successfully go on to college. According to Greene Forster, the percentages of white students in Iowa who graduate with “College Ready Transcripts” and are considered “College Ready” or in other words have taken the courses and have the skills
necessary for college success is more than double that of Black students in Iowa (2003, Table 8).

With the dropout rate for black students and Hispanics at three to four times greater than that of white students at the National level and approximately half of Iowa's African American students dropping out of school combined with a large number of students as Greene and Forster described marginally succeeding in school, under-classes of disheartened, unconnected, uneducated, unskilled people are created. Regardless of these dynamics, these young people are then expected to be patriotic, compassionate, and productive members of society while at the same time marginalized by society. According to Danielson, “success in school is a ticket to opportunity in the wider world” and “escaping from poverty virtually always necessitates at least a high-school diploma, and usually much more” (2002, p. 6). Given that many of these students come from cycles of impoverished backgrounds, a strong educational foundation is the “only reliable way of combating the social determinism that now condemns them to remain in the same social and educational condition as their parents” (Hirsch, 1988, xiii). To put it simply, the ever-increasing disengagement from education that many students are experiencing locks them into the same cycle of poverty that has trapped many of their parents. According to Chenoweth, “America is a diverse society in which educational differences have the potential to become a progressively larger source of inequality and social conflict” (1999, p. 16). The potential ramifications of the lack of academic success for nonwhite students could have dire consequences and may inevitably add them to a growing number of impoverished people that will require support through the welfare
system or managed through the criminal justice system (Komblum & Julian, 1995, p. 244).

Although there may be a number of reasons why nonwhite students have increasingly become disenfranchised or unconnected to the learning process, many argue that something or someone is missing from the school relationship. A quick look around schools in the United States will reveal a very startling trend. Nonwhite educators are quickly disappearing from our schools (Bennett, 2002). According to the NCES, there were over 3 million teachers in public K-12 education during the 1999-2000 school year (2005). Although 40% of the nation's students are nonwhite, the data collected from the 1999-2000 school year by NCES revealed that only about 15% of teachers come from nonwhite racial groups (NCES, Table 66).

Unfortunately, the numbers are not much better for Iowa. In Iowa, the Department of Education Condition of education reported that nonwhite teachers only accounted for 1.8% of Iowa educators (2006, p.57). This percentage is over 7 times less than the corresponding percentage of nonwhite students in Iowa (IDOE). As a result of this discrepancy, nonwhite educators have been identified as “underrepresented.” It has been argued that the limited involvement of nonwhites in the educational process in Iowa and the rest of the country “subsequently impairs opportunities for many students of color to experience positive school outcomes” (Ewing, 2001, p. 13). As mentioned earlier, the implications of continued failure on the part of schools to reach nonwhite students will affect much more than nonwhites; as the NEA points out, “such a crisis could lead to the failure of all American students” (NEA, 2003, para.2).
The above mentioned concerns combined with other issues led the Federal Government to enact the No Child Left Behind legislation. Although this legislation has several priorities, the top two priorities focus on improving the academic performance of disadvantaged students and boosting teacher quality. Both of these issues are central aspects of the diversification of teaching forces around the country.

With government mandated consequences for schools that fail to educate disadvantaged students and the rapidly increasing level of diversity and disenfranchisement among nonwhite students, it is imperative that schools identify strategies to meet the ever-increasing academic needs of their nonwhite students. Teachers play a very important role in this process. Considering the importance of the teacher-student relationship, more research is needed regarding strategies to diversify teaching staffs. This study will add to the literature base through a thick description and will provide direction for future research on the recruitment of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds in Iowa.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify the steps taken by select Iowa urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. The study will focus on identifying the commonalities and differences in the policies and practices of the school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. To do this, the study will focus on the following questions:
1. What are the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?

2. What are the recruiting procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?

3. How do the districts ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

4. What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

**Methodology**

This study was based on the works of Hopton (2003) and will utilize multiple qualitative approaches to collect case study data. The study data will be gathered from participants via structured interviews, and any documents relating to the recruitment of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds to the selected Iowa school districts. A data analysis approach will be used to identify themes or codes to assist in identifying the similarities and differences among the programs. Validity of the results will be sought through a triangulation of the data.

**Significance of Study**

The results of this study could be significant on several levels. First, the participants in this study could use the information gathered through interviews and documents to better understand the realities of what is truly happening in their district as compared to what is on paper. Second, the districts could gain a broader perspective of recruitment by looking at the common patterns and differences in the policies and practices of Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented
backgrounds. Third, the data collected from the interviews, supporting documents, and the overall results of the study could be used by educational leadership organizations in Iowa to make informed decisions concerning the appropriateness and effectiveness of current and future diversification initiatives. The fourth and final point that should be made is that, although the study itself was conducted within the State of Iowa and the participants came from Iowa’s urban school districts, the results of this study could be generalized to other school districts in Iowa, states around the country with similar demographics, and by universities or colleges seeking to address issues related to teacher diversity.

**Delimitations**

This study will identify and review the steps taken to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds by just three urban school districts in Iowa only. This study will include interviews with superintendents, directors of human resource, board members, and teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds from the selected school districts in Iowa.

**Limitations**

There are some limitations to this study. They include:

1. Iowa’s school districts range drastically from rural to urban and the districts studied were chosen from Iowa’s eight largest districts. Consequently, the study may be limited in terms of being generalized. Generalizations should be limited to school districts with similar demographics.
2. Documentation of responses may include both verbal and non-verbal communication. There may be some difficulty in documenting the non-verbal portions of the interviews.

3. There is limited diversity within Iowa’s educational leadership. With the interviewer’s ethnic background coming from an underrepresented group, the respondents from the majority may be more guarded or apt to respond with political correctness.

Definitions

As this study attempts to expand the research on the recruitment and retention of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds, it is important that the reader and writer work from a similar language base. For the purpose of this study, the terms below were defined as follows:

**Brown v. Board of Education.** Refers to the 1954 court case that came as a result of African American parents who sought to end the segregation of public schools on the grounds that racially “segregated schools are not equal and cannot be made equal, and that hence they are deprived of the equal protection of the law” as described by the 14th Amendment (para. 11). The court ruled that, “in the field of public education, the doctrine of ‘separate but equal has no place” and the process to integrate public schools began (para. 22).

**Culturally Relevant.** Refers to instruction that is modified to include specific knowledge about the culturally influenced and varied ways of thinking, believing,
learning, and communicating and how these variables impact the education process (Gay, 2000).

**Cultural Synchronization.** Refers to the quality of fit between the teacher and the students’ culture. A lack of synchronization “can cause a conflict between the child’s learning style and that of the white school system which emphasizes Eurocentric values” (Gregory, 2003, para. 6). Through high academic expectations, “the main goal is to work within the norms of the black culture while also helping these children to be successful in the traditional venues” (Gregory, para. 6).

**Ethnic Kinship.** Refers to a spoken or unspoken relationship based on customs, language, experiences, social views of a given group (Jones, 2002).

**Heterogeneity.** Represents the differences in the makeup of individuals in a given group. In people, it represents the differences in backgrounds and experiences of individuals as collective members of other groups and as individuals.

**Nonwhite.** This is not just an indication of skin color but rather an identification of students who have been identified as deriving any of their ethnic heritage from such categories as, Black or African American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or Pacific Islands. For the purpose of this study, the best examples of difference in both a historical and present context is provided in discussing the differences between African Americans and Whites or European Americans.

**Policy.** Policies provide a fundamental basis for action and serve as written principles to guide decision-making (We want a diverse staff serving our students).
Poverty. Owning nothing at all or having not enough for all the necessities of life (World Book Dictionary, 2003, p. 1632).

Procedures. How you do it. A series of clearly defined documented steps and decisions that explain or describe the who, what, and when of creating a diverse staff.

Recruit. Refers to the practice of seeking out or making an intentional effort to attract individuals for the purpose of employment.

Strategies. The actions that the district takes (We recruit from local colleges; we make our environment welcoming; etc.)

Teacher Candidates. Students in teacher education programs that are seeking at some point to become teachers.

Underrepresented. Inadequate representation or when a group of people are not represented in a given group in the same or similar percentage as they are represented in the greater population.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduces the study of the recruitment of underrepresented teachers to select Iowa school districts. This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion of the justification for this study, purpose of the study, research questions, methodology, and significance of the study, possible limitations, and definitions of the terms used in the study.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the historical context of “Race” in the United States, the importance of diversity in teaching, a detailed description of the theories
related to the dwindling numbers of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds, and what types of strategies are being utilized to diversify teaching staffs.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the methodology used in this study by outlining the population to be studied, the research design, the strategies to collect and analyze the data, and discussion of the pilot study performed for this study.

Chapter 4 provides the demographics for the districts involved in the study, a review of the data collection, results from the case studies as it relates to the four research questions presented, and how the data compares to the data collected through other studies of a similar nature.

Chapter 5 provides a brief summary and discussion of the findings, the conclusions drawn based on the results of this study, the implications of this study, and the recommendations that have been made in regards to future practice and further study.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Context of Race

Why does the race of the teacher matter? Although the scientific basis of race was once universally accepted as a reality, it “has been rejected as a valid construct by 80% of cultural anthropologists and 69% of physical anthropologists” (Lieberman et al., 2003, as cited in Lieberman & Kirk, 2004, p. 137). Race labels as they have been primarily used are based on phenotypic features. Phenotypic features are physical features that are affected by the environment and then genetically passed on to subsequent generations. An example of this is the “gradual change in a trait over geographic space, such as skin color: darkest near the equator and gradually becoming lighter with increasing distance from the equator” (Lieberman & Kirk, 2004, p. 137). The resulting colors of black, brown, red, yellow, and white are due to a single brown protein called melanin that colors the skin of all people (Hodgkinson, 1995, p. 174). “In general, people with ancestors from sunny regions have darker skin than people with ancestors from regions with less sunlight” (The Free Dictionary, n.d., para. 1). The darker the skin, the more protection one receives from skin cancer and other mutations in the skin as result of ultraviolet rays (The Free Dictionary, para. 3). Therefore, skin is not a defining identifier of a group of people. In fact, most of the other racial identifiers such as hair texture, eye color, nose, lip, and teeth size, etc. are all independent variables that show up in every group of people in every conceivable combination (Lopez, 1994). “Over the past 100,000 years or so, modern humans have migrated from Africa to other
parts of the world... this spread has left a distinct signature in our DNA” (Bamshad & Olson, 2003, para.6). The truth is, “90% of human genetic variation occurs within a population living on a given continent, whereas about 10% of the variation distinguishes continental populations” (Bamshad & Olson, para.5). With the earlier mentioned mobility and movement of people, that 10% variation is disappearing quickly. Given this information and evidence suggesting the origination of humanity in Africa, one could conclude that white people appear to be light skinned Black people. Unfortunately, socially it is not that simple. The concept of racial differences rests on something much more than the previously described phenotypic differences.

Ultimately, one’s skin tone does not depict one’s blackness, but rather blackness is the result of a societal belief that “individuals with a certain geographical, social-heritage should be labeled as such” (Yancey, 2003, p. 10). In America, race is not as tied to biology as it is sociology, and it plays a huge political and social role (Yancey). The United States is not alone in this. In various societies, race labels have been used by the majority as a way to identify and often to oppress members of the minority (Davis, 1995). The oppressive use of racial labels has not always been the norm. According to Morro (2000), “race is a relatively new concept. Ancient civilizations, though they encountered and included people from many different parts of the world, did not make social distinctions based on physical appearance” (para. 3). Human beings primarily distinguished themselves according to “families, clans, tribes, ethnic populations, nation states, etc,—and these groups have regularly been the source of discrimination and violence,” but this sort of distinguishing wasn’t based on the current concept of race (Jay,
1998, para. 7). “Before the age of exploration, group differences were largely based on language, religion, and geography” (Jay, para. 8). Prior to the 1500s, population characteristics such as language, customs, social behaviors, and other cultural characteristics were seen as ethnic or learned commonalities based on one’s origin group instead of innate or birth characteristics. In the 1500s, “Europeans began to develop what became known as ‘scientific racism,’ the attempt to construct a biological rather than cultural definition of race” (Jay, para. 9). It was believed that biological race predicted and determined “the cultural traits of people” (Jay, para. 9).

Although Europeans were very aware of the physical differences that existed between themselves and those that they encountered as they traveled around the world, it took time for racial classifications to take hold. According to Race timeline established provided by the Public Broadcast Service (PBS), prior to 1680, early colonial laws referred to “Christians” or “Englishmen” rather than “whites,” reflecting the greater importance of religious or national differences” (2003, para. 2). However, in 1676 laws began to appear that defined the differences between European indentured servants and Black slaves, thus “slavery becomes associated increasingly with Blackness” and there becomes a clear line between blacks and whites in America (PBS, para. 2). In 1705 courts throughout the south sought to further define whiteness by defining all those with blended parentage of the white slave owner and slave as mulatto. This helped further strengthen the concept of whiteness as a precious identity and only available to a select few. According to Jay:

Whiteness, then, emerged as what we now call a ‘pan-ethnic’ category, as a way of merging a variety of European ethnic populations into a single ‘race,’ so as to
distinguish them from people with whom they had very particular legal and political relations—Africans, Asians, American Indians—that were not equal to their relations with one another as whites. (para. 11)

As the social winds blew, the identification of who was considered white evolved to include various groups and exclude others. In the late 1880s, immigration increased to the US from southern and eastern Europe. “Many of the new arrivals were ‘ethnics’ employed in undesirable low-wage jobs and living in the urban ghetto” (PBS, 2003, para.4). Ethnic issues that existed between the European groups (Italians, Irish, etc.) prior to their arrival in the United States, combined with the fact that many of the new immigrants worked unskilled, industrial jobs like the African, Mexican, and Chinese Americans, caused them to be viewed “as not quite white” (PBS, para. 4). The 1790 Naturalization Act restricted “naturalized citizenship to whites,” which allowed them “full participation in American society” and fulfillment of the American Dream (PBS, para.5). Recognizing the importance of being identified as white, groups such as the Hebrews, Celts, and Italians worked to accumulate enough political and financial power to have their status changed (PBS, para. 4). Other groups recognizing the impact of their racial identification petitioned “the courts to be legally designated white” as well (PBS, para. 5). For example, the 1909 Halladjian Decision changed the ethnic status of Armenians from Asian to Caucasians and gave them “legal white status” (Arellano, 2000, para. 7). As time passed, the subjective nature of race continued to reveal itself as some groups of people were denied white status on the basis of science while others were denied white status even though science had identified them as Caucasian. By 1923, it became clear that the courts wanted to separate the “desirable immigrants from the
undesirable ones” and maintain the line between those of African and European decent (Braziel, 2000, para. 18).

To further maintain the distinction and control of who had access to the American Dream, many courts moved beyond the 1705 identification of who was a mulatto to identify several levels of blackness. In 1924, the Virginia courts finally decided to settle on the “Virginia Racial Purity Act” or the “one drop rule” (PBS, para. 6). The one drop rule was a law that identified anyone in the United States with black heritage, regardless of the amount, as black. These actions and laws only strengthened the idea that whiteness should be the idealized while anything else was inferior. The ideal of superiority needed to be protected, and these sorts of laws assisted in maintaining control.

The use of race for identification was one thing, but the use of race to socially divide groups of people is deeply rooted in the history and culture of United States as well. Following the Civil War, laws were enacted to maintain the separation of people based on race. For example, “Black Codes were laws passed by Southern state legislatures to define the legal place of blacks in society after the Civil war” (Moneyhon, n.d., para. 1). In 1866, “the intent of the legislation was to reaffirm the inferior position that slaves and free blacks had held” (Moneyhon, para. 1). In the North, apprenticeship laws, although not race specific but “primarily aimed at and enforced against blacks,” allowed for the apprenticing of minors to teach them a trade (Moneyhon, para. 5). Unfortunately, this reflected slavery in that the Master got free use of the apprentice’s labor and had the “power to inflict corporal punishment...
and could pursue runaways” (Moneyhon, para. 5). The “Black Codes left African Americans with little freedom” (McElrath, n.d., B, para. 5).

During the Reconstruction era, the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments and the Civil Rights Acts of 1875 provided African Americans with some great gains. Unfortunately, “rights dwindled after Reconstruction ended in 1877” and “whites in the North and South became less supportive of Civil Rights and racial tensions began to flare” (McElrath, n.d., A, para. 2). Early segregation laws, or “Jim Crow” laws as they were often referred to, existed from the 1880s through the 1960s in most of the United States. Following the Supreme Court’s ruling that “the Civil Rights Act of 1875 was unconstitutional” and its ruling “that the Fourteenth Amendment did not prohibit individuals and private organizations from discriminating on the basis of race,” the “Jim Crow” laws took flight (McElrath, A, para. 3). The segregation laws “restricted all aspects of life,” as “African American access to schools, restaurants, hospitals, and public places” was restricted if permitted at all (McElrath, A, para. 5). These restrictions affected the quality of education received by African Americans, and the courts continued to support actions limiting African Americans access to quality schools. In 1899, the Court ruled in “Cumming v. County Board of Education that separate schools were valid even if comparable schools for blacks were not available” (McElrath, A, para. 4). This ruling was in contradiction to the 14th Amendment that called for equality as the minimum standard. It was not until 55 years later, in 1954, when the Supreme Court used its decision in Brown v. Board of Education to rule that schools separated on the basis of race were unequal.
Although the 1954 court ruling struck a huge blow against racial division and strengthened the ensuing civil rights movement, the issue of race and its subjective nature is still ever present in the United States. In 1993, Collins and David noted that in the late 80's for the sake of the United States vital records, “infants born to white fathers were assigned to the race of the mother, whereas infants born to black fathers were assigned to the race of the fathers” (p. 1128). In essence, the “One Drop Rule” was still alive and well. According to Davis (1995), the racial divide is so strong particularly between Whites and Blacks in the United States that the “One Drop Rule” does not apply to any other group but “American blacks” (para. 5). Furthermore, Davis argues that this “rule is unique in that it is found only in the United States and not in any other nation in the world” (para. 5).

Ultimately, the true “classification of people into races involves cultural knowledge, not biological, and race is inherited according to cultural rules that stand in opposition to biology” (Marks, 1996, p. 123). “Race, then is what academics like to call a ‘socially constructed’ reality” (Jay, para. 16). According to Jay, “race is only real because certain social institutions and practices make it real” (para. 16). In essence, “race is real in the same way that a building or a religion or a political ideology is real, as each is the result of human effort, not a prescription from nature or God” (Jay, para. 16).

Ultimately, race and other relevant classifications are about power and control. Being a minority is not about numerical strength, but rather more about social, economic, and political strength. According to Komblum and Julian (1995), the principal characteristic of a minority group is its’ “subordinate status” (p. 263). It is very
important that the reader understands the ramifications of racial minority classifications, as these classifications greatly impact schooling. Clearly, regardless of whether or not race is a social construct, race can have overwhelming implications for students. Given that the experiences associated with race “can still be the force that makes or breaks someone’s life, or the life of a people or a nation” a diverse representation of teachers is an essential part of a quality educational experience (Jay, para. 16).

**Importance of Diversity in Teaching**

Little research is available on what is being done to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds to Iowa school districts. However, because teachers impact their students in a number of ways, there is a great deal of discussion on the importance of increasing ethnic diversity within the teaching profession. The National Education Association believes:

Multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools. The association deplores the current agenda of diminishing numbers of ethnic minority educators. The Association urges local and state affiliates and appropriate governing bodies and agencies to work to increase the number of ethnic-minority teachers and administrators to a percentage at least equal to, but not limited to, the percentage of the ethnic minorities in the general population. (NEA, 2003, para.4)

All good teachers have certain qualities about them that allow them to connect students to learning. A 1997 study identified that “the most important teacher qualities as viewed by students were instructor, role model, listener, and motivator” (Avery, Burling, & Counce, p. 20). Although all teachers impact those around them, it is important to look at the impact of nonwhite teachers as instructors, role models, listeners, mediators, connectors and motivators on white and nonwhite students, as well as other teachers. This
is important because what people see and experience in school assists in the development of their fundamental beliefs about school, others, and, most importantly, themselves.

As Role Models

As role models for nonwhite students, teachers from underrepresented backgrounds send the message that school is for all students. Researchers have argued that “Black students from all socio-economic backgrounds, develop oppositional identities which lead them to view schooling as a form of forced assimilation...black students and other non-voluntary minorities (e.g. Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans) come to equate academic success with acting white” (Noguera, 2001, p. 18). The teacher’s mere presence can say, “you can be a teacher, or some other profession” (Branch, 2001, p. 254). According to Gursky, “if they don’t see their own kind in positions of leadership, they have no one to aspire to be like” (2002B, p. 11; Hegler, 1997).

Diversity within teaching is not just about meeting the needs of students from underrepresented groups. According to Hegler (1997), diversity is important because it “provides opportunities to see the world from a perspective other than a familiar one, allowing us to discover our fit in the larger schema” (p. 74). As Haberman (1989) explains, “low income minority youths aren’t the only people who need to see minority role models; middle class white youngsters can also benefit from the experience of having black or Hispanic teachers” (as cited in Rettig & Khodavandi, 1998). Nonwhite teachers provide positive examples of underrepresented populations to all students and teachers, regardless of their backgrounds. As Arredondo (1999) points out, true
knowledge of others is an “interactive process” that requires people to go beyond the abstract in order for them to base their experience and knowledge on reality and not stereotypes or myths (as cited in Hanson & Stone, 2002, p. 163). Given the current state of global affairs, students must learn how to function in environments that are ever-changing because the potential for having to deal with differences has increased (Thomas, 2003, p. 51). Experiences with diverse leadership can assist students in productively managing the differences that they encounter.

For other teachers, nonwhite teachers can provide examples of “successful ways to interact with, motivate, and instruct” nonwhite students and their families (Adair, 1984, as cited in Collier, 2002, p. 51). The life experiences and knowledge that many nonwhite teachers bring with them can greatly assist their white colleagues in connecting and establishing productive educational relationships. These relationships are important because as Myer points out, “education affects society” (as cited in Hurn, 1993, p. 189).

A diverse representation of educational leadership both inside and outside of the classroom is needed for all. With the understanding that “race is increasingly accepted as a social construction unconnected to individuals’ intellectual, physical, or emotional capacity,” teachers have the opportunity to positively influence each student’s beliefs about not only themselves but others (Omi, Winant, 1993, as cited by Carr & Klassen, 1997; Duarte, 2000; Futrell, 1999). Branch (2001), makes this point:

Though teachers are not paid nearly what they are worth, they are still held in high esteem by much of the populace. To many, they are intellectual giants; they impart truth to very young students. Now children of all races are developing these positive notions about an overwhelming number of European-American teachers and very few teachers of color. European American teachers, principals, parents, and counselors could possibly have their early-formed impressions about
the exaggerated intelligence of European-American folk confirmed by their over-abundance in the profession. Similarly, erroneous assumptions about the intelligence of African-Americans, Latinos, and other people of color may be reinforced merely by their absences as teachers in the nation's classrooms. (p. 257)

Thomas adds that:

White children, and others of European-Ancestry, also need the kind of exposure to positive images of African Americans to act as an antidote to the images they find on television, in the movies, and images foisted upon us by rap music. (2003, p. 52)

Martinez advises, “without visible examples of diversity, broadened thinking and experience are not only out of sight, but unfortunately out of mind” (1988, p. 13).

Role as Mediators

In addition to serving as important role models, nonwhite teachers tend to have a good understanding of how “race and culture interact to cause educational problems for many ethnic minority students” (Banks & Lynch, 1986, as cited in Carr & Klassen, 1997, p. 68). It is important that teachers have the ability to relate both the “formal—as well as the hidden—curriculum” to students and their families (Carr & Klassen, p. 67). As Adair (1984) points out, teachers have to be able to serve as “interpreters of the school culture” (as cited in Collier, p. 51). Eubanks & Weaver (1999) explain that educators from underrepresented groups can serve as “valuable resources for the school community in bridging the cultural gap between the school environment and students’ home/community environments” (as cited in Hanson & Stone, 2002, p. 163). In 1982, Smith argued that the break down in connections between schools and homes was not the result of whites working with nonwhites, but rather, the loss of informal connections that once existed between “teachers and minority parents and their children through such institutions as
churches, clubs, and other community organizations” (as cited in Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 391). This suggests that an increase in teachers from these communities would assist in reestablishing the above mentioned informal connections and thus reconnecting students.

Role as Motivators

Research shows that students taught by effective teachers are more likely to perform better than students taught by ineffective teachers. A study of low performing students by Sanders and Rivers (1996) identified that students taught by the “least effective teachers... gained about 14 points each year” while students “taught by the most effective teachers... gained more than 53 points” on standardized tests (as cited in Haycock, 2002, p. 12). Researchers argue that a teacher’s effectiveness is strengthened by his or her ability to connect with students (Barnes, 2000; Bennett, 2002; Danielson, 2002; & Gursky, 2002B). Clearly, nonwhite students can learn from white teachers. However, with that said, teachers who are able to understand their students’ experiences, where they come from, and can connect that understanding to the learning process are in a much better position to respond to their students needs than teachers who can not make these connections (Villegas as cited in Duarte, 2000, p. 20). Those types of connections seem to be easier understood by nonwhite teachers than white teachers thus making the establishment of those connections a little bit harder for nonwhite teachers.

An additional component of the teacher-student relationship is that research has shown that nonwhite teachers and leaders tend to maintain higher expectations for achievement and behavior than their counterparts (Padron, 1994 as cited in Bennett,
According to Grayson and Martin (1997), “the necessity of high expectations for all students has been identified repeatedly as an essential factor for educational success at all levels” (p. 4). For example, Collier (2002) asserts that “teacher expectations and commitment to student success tend to be higher for black students when...ethnicity, cultural, and social norms are shared by the teacher and students” (p. 53). According to Thomas Dee, a writer for the National Bureau of Economic Research, these higher expectations are meaningful because they transfer into higher achievement (Gursky, B).

According to data from a randomized experiment utilized in Project STAR, a landmark study from Tennessee, there appears to be a correlation between “teachers, race, and student achievement” (Gursky, A, p. 11). Specifically, Gursky quotes Dee as writing, “a year with the same race teacher increased students’ math and reading scores by about 4 percentile points” (2002A, p. 11).

Role as Connectors

Although not directly tied to race, Carr asserts that the types of achievement results mentioned above are the result of relationships that are established between students and their teachers. In particular, Carr suggests that the effectiveness of many teachers from diverse backgrounds is connected to a set of carried experiences that allow many of the teachers to connect at deeper levels with students from similar backgrounds (1997). Jones (2002) describes this kind of a relationship as a sort of “Ethnic Kinship” (p. 16). Foster (1993) described this “kinship” as “exhibited behaviors that resemble family ties” (as cited in Collier, 2002, p. 52). Irvine (1990) refers to this connection as “cultural synchronization” (as cited in Nuby & Doebler, 2000, p. 125).
Nuby, and Doebler all stress that there appears to be an inherent sense of safety and comfort that emerges from relationships where individuals share similar cultural backgrounds. This emergent sense of understanding, safety, and trust assists nonwhite students in "attaining success both academically and socially" (Martinez, 1991, p.24). Additionally, those teachers feel compelled to serve as "protectors from systematic injustice" that have plagued the U.S. society historically (Adair, as cited in Collier, p. 51).

Additionally, the ability to understand where students come from better prepares the teacher to develop and utilize a "culturally-relevant pedagogy" that is key to understanding where the students can go and what they need to know (Mitchell, 1998, as cited in Collier, 2002, p. 51). Hanson and Stone argue that the ability to understand where nonwhite students are coming from and where they are headed is rooted in the teachers' personal experiences with the "institutional, systematic, and personal barriers" that so many people of similar backgrounds experience (2002, p. 164). It is those personal experiences that assist teachers from underrepresented backgrounds in "identifying, understanding, and eliminating those barriers for students from similar backgrounds" (Hanson & Stone, 2002, p. 164). As Aubry points out, the standard mode of operation for most US schools revolves around a "mono-cultural Euro-American world view which tends to only benefit white students" (1997, p. A7). It is very difficult for a lot of individuals from privileged backgrounds to understand how operating in this manner impacts nonwhites. According to McIntosh (1989):

White power and privilege is like an invisible, weightless knapsack of special provisions (e.g., affirmation of white culture values, beliefs), tools (e.g., arrival at school with all the accouterments of the culture of power), and maps (knowledge and practice of behaviors considered acceptable or “right” as judged by those in
power). Many students of color have no context within which to feel powerful or privileged in schools—it is a struggle for many simply to remain in the classroom under such oppressive conditions that whites are simply oblivious to as relevant factors. (as cited in Ewing, 2001, p. 16)

Ultimately teacher diversification is about improving schools in order to get the most out of our society (Avery et al., 1997, p. 19). As Barnes asks, “why ignore the talents of a large number of our citizens who can help sustain our competitiveness in a global economy” (2000, p. 11)? Nonwhites need to be a part of the knowledge constructing process in order to assist in providing the appropriate cultural framework to “make instruction culturally relevant for students of color” (Branch, 2001, p. 254). Charles Evers was once quoted saying that he became a Republican “because there weren’t no black folks there. Wherever there’s that kind of money and power around and there ain’t no black folks, then somebody [African American] has got to step up so that we won’t be forgotten” (as cited in Thomas, 2003, p. 50).

Evers’s statements apply to education as well. The educational system in the United State is too powerful for the needs of its richly diverse society to be overlooked because there are only certain groups controlling it. This is not to say that groups of people are intentionally overlooked but rather they are the victims of people operating within what they know (i.e. White Privilege). Latham points out, “it is only natural for teachers to filter the curriculum through their own cultural experiences and to teach in the same way they were taught” (1999, p. 84). Unfortunately, this “reduces the likelihood that teachers will connect learning to all students in a meaningful way (Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996, as cited in Latham, 1999, p. 84).
Educational leaders must become aware that being blind to what is happening is not only outdated, but extremely detrimental to not only the success of students in the United States, but to a democratic society as well. As Thomas Jefferson pointed out over 200 years ago, an educated citizenry is critical to the “survival of a democracy” (Danielson, 2002, p. 5). With that said, a new approach is clearly needed. Albert Einstein is credited with saying, “we can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them” (as cited in “Quotes to Inspire,” n.d., para.34). Additionally, Einstein advised that “the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over and over again, but expecting a different result” (as cited in “Quotes to Inspire,” n.d., para.25). Diversity within teaching provides for diversity within thought. Diversity within thought provides for diversity within solutions to problems and strategies for meeting the needs of students. Teachers from underrepresented backgrounds are needed to help the educational system break out of the same pattern of repetitive thinking as described by Einstein. According to Futrell, diversity within teaching can enhance “our students’ understanding of the intellectual, social, political, and economic complexity of our democratic society” (1999, p. 30). The United States is not a country where one size fits all. As the American Association of College for Teacher Education (AACTE) points out:

A quality education requires that all students be exposed to the variety of that represent the nation at large, such exposure can be accomplished only via a multiethnic teaching force in which racial and ethnic groups are included at a level of parity with their numbers in the population. (1987, p. 18)

Although this does not mean that white teachers are unable to meet the needs of nonwhite students, it does mean that white educators must be cognizant of issues that have been
inherently identified in relationships in which individuals have a shared or common history. Good teaching and leadership regardless of the educator’s ethnic background will include this awareness.

Theories Related to Dwindling Numbers

Brown v. the Board of Education

Prior to the 1954 ruling of Brown v. the Board of Education, the teaching profession served as a powerful avenue for nonwhites to enter the middle class. Additionally, legalized segregation provided job security for African Americans involved in education. Limited opportunities in other professions for employment “caused generations of family members to encourage entry into education as a solid pathway into the black middle class” (Collier, 2002, p. 49).

Although the education profession was once seen as tremendous professional opportunity for African Americans, that changed when various white educational leaders and the Brown v. the Board of Education ruling identified black schools as inferior, while white schools were considered to be inherently superior (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). Although the 1954 ruling brought nonwhite and white students together, it did not provide the same opportunities to the “82,000 African American teachers” that prior to the ruling “were responsible for the education of 2 million African American children” (Hawkins, 1994, as cited by Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 388). In fact, some researchers argue that it may have had the opposite effect. According to Irvine, after the black schools were taken over by “white school boards and superintendents” the face of the black educational experience as a whole changed (as cited in Collier, 2002, p. 50).
38,000 black educators in 17 states lost their jobs between 1954 and 1965 (Holmes, 1990 as cited in Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 389). Additionally in the years following the desegregation of schools, the number of African Americans enrolling in teacher preparation programs declined by 66% with an additional 21,515 losing their jobs in the 1980s (Smith, as cited in Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 388; Kunjufu, 2002, p. ix). Although at one point African American teachers represented approximately 18% of all teachers nationally (Bennett, 2002) they have now dwindled down to approximately 7% of all teachers with an additional 2% of teachers that have been defined as “other” (National Education Association, 2003). In contrast, white teachers in 1996 accounted for 90.7% of the nation’s teachers, and most of the nation’s teachers are females (74.4%) (National Education Association, 2003).

The immediate future does not look much different. Currently, the number of white females has risen to comprise 85% of the students in teacher education programs (Gursky, 2002B) while white college students, male and female as a whole, only account for 68.3% of the total college population (National Education Association, 2003). The National Association of State Boards of Education characterized the typical graduate of a teacher education program as “white, female, 21 years old, speaks only English, from a small town and wanting to teach in the same” (p. 14, as cited in Latham, 1999, p. 84).

University Failure

Unfortunately, according to Gursky, the problem is only expected to get worse as “the black teachers who joined the profession in sizeable numbers back in the 1960s are reaching retirement age, and they’re not being replaced by a comparable number of new
minority educators” (Gursky, 2002A, p. 10). The task of improving the numbers of nonwhite students in teaching programs has been very difficult for most colleges and universities (Bennett, 2002).

Although researchers site a number of current issues as the reason for the lack of diversity in teaching, some researchers argue that the admission policies of universities and teaching programs play a huge role in the declining numbers (Branch, 2001; Nuby & Doebler, 2000). According to Smith (1987), “disproportionate numbers of minority candidates are being screened from the teaching profession” (as cited in Branch, 2002, p. 257, & NEA). As Branch (2001) points out, tests that are designed to measure quality and capability are important, but the tests should be relevant to information that is essential to teaching effectiveness (p. 257). Instead of measuring teaching effectiveness, paper and pencil tests serve as gate keepers to educational programs and certification (Branch). “Effective teaching requires many skills not measured by scores on multiple choice tests of reading and mathematics” (Vegas, Murname, & Williett, 2001, p. 427).

Historically, standardized tests have been purported to be biased against nonwhites as the tests tend to measure “European-American cultural knowledge” instead of relevant general knowledge (Kemple et al. as cited in Branch, 2001, p. 261). As Branch (2001) points out:

Preventing individuals who cannot pass basic-knowledge tests from becoming teachers is appropriate, but test makers, and those who use them to screen out candidates, must be certain that the knowledge that is being tested relates directly to teaching effectiveness. (p. 256)
Primary and Secondary School Failure

On the flip side, some researchers argue that colleges and universities are limited in their student selection. The limitation is the result of the failure of elementary and secondary schools to adequately prepare students as a whole, especially nonwhite students, for college (NEA, 2003; Vegas et al., 2001). As the White House points out, “too many of our neediest students are being left behind” as “nearly 70% of inner city fourth graders,” who are primarily nonwhite, are “unable to read at a basic level on national reading tests,” (Bush, 2001, p. 3).

Unfortunately, “just as African American and Hispanic students are overrepresented in vocational and special education programs, they are underrepresented in advanced placement programs” (Futrell, 1999, p. 31). Through the use of the College Board’s research, one can see that black students who take entrance exams like the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) tend to not take the same academic classes as the white students who take the test (“This wasn’t Supposed,” 1999). While almost every student who takes the SAT has had some level of Algebra, white students are more likely than black students to have completed courses in geometry and other high levels of math courses such as trigonometry and calculus (“This wasn’t Supposed,” p. 95). According to the board research, the same could be said in regards to the English, science, and social study subject areas. Although there are a number of possible reasons for the limited involvement of African American students in higher level classes, the role of the teacher and guidance counselor can not be over looked. Whether the lack of involvement by African American students in the higher level courses is the result of teachers and
counselors failing to encourage students to take higher level classes or failing to make the appropriate recommendations, there appears to be a breakdown in providing students with the necessary direction. Clearly, this is an area in which additional research is needed.

In addition to the lack of African American student representation in higher level courses, a large number of “black students across the board are not being adequately schooled to take the tests” (“This wasn’t Supposed,” 1999, p. 96). Slater believes “the extreme differences in school quality in black and white neighborhoods undoubtedly explains much of the differences in the SAT test scores of even the brightest black and white students” (1996, p. 73). How can students be expected to pass state and national tests if they have not been adequately prepared?

Furthermore, this is a bigger issue than just increasing the number of underrepresented teachers. Many of these students begin life economically disadvantaged and in order for them to break the cycle of poverty, it is essential that they acquire the “academic background, skills, and knowledge that are prerequisites to succeeding in college” (Futrell, 1999, p. 31). Unfortunately, the chances of nonwhite students receiving the appropriate skills are slim. According to Kovach and Gordon (1997), nonwhite students tend to find themselves “in schools where the overall achievement is low” (p. 248). In fact with 1 in 3 African-Americans living in poverty as compared to 1 in 10 whites, many of these students are regularly bombarded with “lack of employment opportunities, disorderly and stressful environments, poor health care, children born by children, and highly fragmented patterns of service” (Kovach & Gordan,
When one considers living in these sorts of conditions, it should come as no surprise that the most disadvantaged nonwhite students are three times more likely to be in special education classes as white students and only half as likely to be in classes for the gifted and talented (Trent, 1990, as cited in Nuby, & Doebler, 2000).

For those students that escape the pressures of their environments, they find themselves battling the doubts of the Euro-American educational system in their ability to learn. Although it is not politically correct to say, throughout this country's history, there have been doubts about nonwhites' ability to learn. As Holmes argues, it was during the years following the 1954 ruling that "the problems of low self-esteem, decreasing aspirations, ability grouping and tracking, assignments to educable mentally retarded classes and other systematic victimizations of black youngsters developed" (as cited in Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 390). The doubts in these students' ability are then masked in political correctness by hiding a system of inequalities that leads to educators routinely turning small gaps into larger ones and then turning around and blaming the results on the children, their families, and the environments that they come from (Hart, Jacobi, 1992, as cited in Hudson & Holmes, 1994, p. 390). Based on ingrained beliefs about certain people, Danielson points out, "educators know that school success is not expected of some students..." and "the initially high hopes of some students might have been undermined over time by low expectations and an unchallenging curriculum" (2002, p. 6). Furthermore as Danielson points out, some teachers believe "deep down and perhaps subconsciously, that poor or minority students are incapable..." (p. 31). George W. Bush has often referred to this as the "soft bigotry of low expectations". Kornblum and
Julian (1995) argue that teachers who have little training working with “disadvantaged children” have the “expectation that poor children will read, speak, and behave poorly and perform poorly on tests, and that their parents and home life do not encourage academic achievement” and “these expectations become self fulfilling prophecies” (p. 243). This needs to change as Miller and Grayson (1990) argue:

Most educators would agree that the major areas of influence on academic achievement of students are the curriculum content and materials, the learning environment, and the types of expectations, interactions, and behaviors to which students are subjected.” (p. 18)

To compound the problem of low expectations, Haycock (2002) argues, “poor and minority students are considerably more likely than other students to have uncertified teachers” (p. 11). Furthermore, the best teachers tend to seek stronger performing and better paying districts in the suburbs while the poorer districts in the cities tend to get what is left over (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1999; Bradley, 1999). With seventy percent of nonwhite students attending urban schools, it is clear which teachers they receive in this culture of de facto segregation (Collier, 2002, p. 50). For many of these students, segregation is still in effect as “sixty-six percent of black and seventy-three percent of Hispanic children attend predominantly minority schools” because of socio-economic issues (Kornblum & Julian, 1995, p. 260). Kornblum and Julian go on to state, “the quality of predominantly minority schools is often inferior to that of predominately white schools” (p. 239). All of these issues create barriers that can prevent an overwhelming number of students from graduating from high school let alone put them in a position to go to college. According to Kornblum and Julian, the isolation of blacks and other groups “from better jobs and educational opportunities, has produced an
‘under-class,’ that is, a class of people who are not only poor and undereducated but are being enticed into lives of petty crime and welfare dependency because of their isolation and limited access to legitimate opportunities” (p. 279).

Declining Perception of the Teaching Profession

Another emerging theory focuses on a declining perception of teaching. As mentioned earlier, teaching was once held as a profession of high esteem. As Collier points out, prior to the decline in nonwhite teaching numbers, “an African-American male seen wearing a suit in public was generally assumed to be one of two things—a preacher or a teacher” (2002, p. 49). Now, because there are so few role models to look up to, “many minority students do not consider teaching as a viable career choice” (Rettig, 1998, p. 9). It is difficult if not impossible to envision oneself being something that one has never seen. The lack of viable role-models only serves to entrench the stigma that school is not for nonwhites. So instead of pulling them in, many students feel as though they are being pushed away.

Additionally the lack of representation in the teaching ranks makes it difficult for nonwhites to “gain access to the power structures that control systems” (Shen, Wegenke, & Cooley, 2003, p. 113). Although at one point historically black colleges maintained a steady flow of “talent rich” teachers, the best and the brightest are choosing other professions (Collier, 2002). Gordon (1994) found in her study that the “superstars of color” are not entering teaching because of “low salaries and prestige” (as cited in Barnes, 2000, p. 10). When it comes to the prestige of the profession, students learn early on about “the low salaries, the crowed classrooms, students’ lack of respect for
teachers, and poor working conditions that they witnessed firsthand” (Jorgenson, 2001, p. 64). Additionally, Rettig suggests, “today’s students undoubtedly notice their teachers’ job satisfaction or dissatisfaction” (1998, p. 9).

As a result of these early experiences, many students believe that there is much more to be gained from other professions in the areas of business, law, and medicine. Schools need to realize that they are competing against not only other institutions for nonwhite students, but they are also competing against “corporations, law firms, and the like, all who want” to diversify also (Thomas, 2003, p. 58).

Of those who enter teaching, “one in five” decide that it is not for them and they choose to leave within the first five years (Duarte, 2000, p. 19). According to Branch (2001), this is partly because other professions recruit young teachers for their innovation and effectiveness (p. 255). The skills that young teachers acquire in school and on the job make them viable candidates to “acquire jobs in other professions that offer higher salaries” with less stress (Branch, p. 255; Gallegos, 2000; Hudson & Holmes, 1994). The NEA argues that low teacher salaries send a message that teaching is a profession of low prestige, low importance, and low social value. To top it all off, Rettig argues that the teaching profession tends to receive little respect from “students, parents, administrators, the general public” and more recently the government (1998, p. 10). As a result, “teaching does not rank high on the list of career choices” (Gallegos, p. 29). As Drew asserts, “the profession won’t attract young people… until people find education and teaching valuable,” (as cited in Gursky, 2002A, p. 10).
To combat the low perception of the education profession, many researchers believe that educational advocates must do a better job expressing the need for teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds and clarifying the opportunities that exist (Nuby & Doebler, 2000, p. 126). According to Futrell, we need to find ways to return to the days in which education was seen as a way to “contribute to the community and to make a difference in the lives of children who would define the future” (1999, p. 30).

Unfortunately, the majority of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds that are seeking to make a difference end up in inner city schools where poverty, violence, and various other conditions make it extremely difficult to find satisfaction in their efforts. As a result, the harsh realities of life often extinguish the flames of altruism and send educators to seek “opportunities of more money, less stress, and better working conditions” (Branch, 2001, p. 256).

Lack of Funding

Finally, even when students make it through high school, ensure that they are prepared for college, and have a strong interest in teaching, financial obstacles still remain. During the 1980's, huge cuts were made in several programs that were designed to assist disadvantaged groups. Martinez (1988) argued that during Regan’s first few years in office, funds appropriated for educational programs, “especially entitlement programs supporting minorities and low income groups,” were redirected (p. 10&11). Currently, there remains a lack of adequate financial support to encourage nonwhite students to enter teaching as a profession.
Clearly, the issues surrounding access to appropriate school preparation, possible bias in admission and graduation policies, student career choice, and funding are studies in and of their own. A more intensive study than presented here would be required to appropriately address these areas and their impact. With that said, there needs to be more discussion on the role that secondary schools play in properly preparing nonwhite students for college and on the belief that college admission and graduation policies are bias. In addition, more research needs to be performed to identify the reasons that students are choosing not to enter teaching as a profession. Moreover at a deeper level, changes need to be made immediately before another generation of bright students is lost. However for this study, what is important is the identification of what is being done to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds.

**What Approaches are Being Used to Increase Diversity**

For generations, school systems have been seen as the battlegrounds for addressing social ills. In the 1980's school districts, colleges, and even the federal government began to notice that a problem existed in regards to teacher diversity. According to Bennett (2002), programs designed to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds became more prevalent during the late 1980's. According to the National Education Association (NEA), actions to increase teacher diversity tend to fall into four categories: (a) early prospective teacher identification initiatives, (b) aggressive recruitment activities, (c) financial aid/support, and (d) social and economic support.
Early Prospective Teacher Identification Initiatives

Early prospective teacher identification initiatives include the “Grow your Own” type approaches where students are identified as early as junior high and high school (Fielder, 1996; Fluckiger & Thompson, 2000). According to AACTE, these years are important as “many students decide to go to college by junior high school” (as cited by the Legislative Office of Education Oversight (LOEO), 1997, p. 8). The goal of College Exposure Programs and Teaching Experiences is to expose junior high school and high school students to teaching as a viable career early. Today’s students make early choices in regards to their academic performance and the courses that they will take while in high school. Their early academic choices play a large role later in the opportunities that students will have after high school. Unfortunately, many of the choices are predicated on the opportunities that are available to them.

According to Donnelly, “educational opportunities for minorities must be improved at the elementary and secondary levels” (1998, para. 8). Schools must take steps to connect and address the ever-changing needs of an increasingly diverse population. The establishment of early relationships with students assists in the mentoring that has been historically missing from the academic experience of many students from disadvantaged backgrounds. According to the AACTE, “many students decide to go to college by junior high school (as cited by the LOEO, 1997, p. 8). Programs that are designed to connect with students early on can assist students in overcoming problems related to “access, academic preparation, sense of efficacy, and other influences” that hinder the achievement of many students (Middleton et al., 1988, p. 15). The NEA
promotes the use of “counseling, motivational workshops, summer preparatory courses, courses in educational theory and practice, and a promise of future financial support” assists in connecting students to teaching as a profession (Dunne, 2000, para. 10). These programs can be either district initiated or done in collaboration with a college or university. Talented and interested students can be identified via surveys, and through teacher, counselor, administrator, and community referrals.

Aggressive Recruitment Activities

According to the NEA, recruitment can be strengthened by “holding orientations, recruiting transfer students from two year colleges, sponsoring future teachers clubs, organizing media campaigns in minority communities, encouraging on campus students to change their majors, and recruiting minorities to teaching from business and the military sector” (NEA). This can also involve the certification of Nonwhite Paraprofessionals, the recruitment of non-teaching majors to switch to the teaching major, and certification of college graduates with other degrees as teachers. Haberman (1999) argues that “the primary place to seek minority candidates is in the expanding pool of mature adults with college degrees who already reside in the particular metropolitan area (p. 208). Additionally, Haberman states that “there are untapped pools of highly qualified African Americans who can and will effectively teach urban children” (p. 208). An additional source of teachers from diverse backgrounds are the colleges/universities and any other institutions that traditionally serve African American, Latino American, or Native American as these institutions “award close to half of the
bachelor's degrees in education earned by African Americans and Latinos” (Gursky, 2002A, p. 11).

Financial Aid

Currently, the standard approaches to diversification fail to adequately address the needs. As the concern over the lack of diversity in teaching increases, there will be an increased need for creative responses to the problem. According to the AACTE, there is a need for:

1. A national scholarship program for minority students who enter teaching,
2. State scholarship programs,
3. Targeted high school work-study programs,
4. Targeted college work-study programs,
5. A program stressing the need for better articulation between two-year and four year institutions,
6. Assistantships and grants programs,
7. Loan repayment incentive programs,
8. Support programs for reentry and career changes,
9. Special support programs for minorities accepting teaching jobs in ethnically diverse communities, and
10. An institutional grant program to research teacher evaluation models for its teachers (Donnelly, 1998, para.10).

With a lack of economic power overwhelmingly present in the lives of many minorities, it is no surprise that participants in a study by Nuby and Doebler (2000) “indicated that
scholarships for black students and other minorities serve to attract highly talented students" (p. 129). In a study performed by Avery et al. (1997), “if offered a scholarship more than 49% of those surveyed would select teacher education” (p. 19). By offering the above mentioned assistance, states and districts get their investment back when the teacher returns to a given district to teach. As cited in the Minority Teachers of Illinois Scholarship program, “if the teaching obligation is not fulfilled, the scholarship converts to a loan, and the recipient must repay the entire amount plus interest” (“Minority Teachers,” n.d., para. 3). For most, this is a win/win opportunity.

Social and Economic Support

Other creative ideas call for individual school districts to offer incentives to prospective employees to encourage diverse candidates to relocate and take jobs within the district. These incentives have included signing bonuses and the willingness to pay moving expenses (Jorgenson, 2001). For new graduates on tight budgets, these sorts of incentives can be the perk that leads a teacher to choose one district over another.

Additionally, there have been attempts to establish support networks that allow individuals from diverse backgrounds to connect and assist with the various culturally related transitions. Some districts have sought to make institutional changes that make them and their communities more inviting. Whether it is through diversity/multicultural sensitivity training, a restructuring of strategic goals and hiring policy, or through the establishment of support groups, some institutions have sought to find ways to tap into a diverse group of educators. As Jorgenson suggests, “a school system with a reputation
for valuing cultural diversity is far more likely to attract ethnic applicants than one that
makes little effort to welcome or support them” (2001, p. 66).

Some researchers argue for districts to work towards speeding up the application
process for underrepresented candidates. Jorgenson argues that “districts need to make
sure that their application process prioritizes the hiring of ethnic candidates so that
paperwork is not lost in the shuffle” (2001, p. 66). This level of prioritizing places the
district in a strong place to react to the opportunity to hire potential candidates before
they are lost to other districts with a similar diversification goal.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the historical context of “Race” in the U.S., the importance
of diversity in teaching, a detailed description of the theories related to the dwindling
numbers of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds, and what types of
strategies are being utilized to diversify teaching staffs.

The importance of education can be summed up best by Supreme Court in 1954
when it ruled on the Brown v. Board of Education case:

Today, education is perhaps the most important function of the state and local
governments. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for
education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our
democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public
responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of
good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to
cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him
to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child
may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an
education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a
right which must be made available to all on equal terms. (Supreme Court,
para.10)

There is still much to be done to fulfill the hopes of the 1954 ruling.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the steps taken by select Iowa urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. This study is a modified replication of the study conducted by Hopton (2003). Through multiple qualitative approaches this study collected case study data. The study data was gathered from participants via interviews and through the review of artifacts or documents relating to the recruitment of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds to the selected Iowa school districts.

Research Questions

Based on the review of literature and on a similar study that was performed by Hopton (2003), this study plans to analyze select State of Iowa school districts for common patterns and differences in their policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. To do this, this study focused on the following questions:

1. What are the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

2. What are the recruiting procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

3. How does the district ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

4. What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?
Population

The population of this study came from the eight largest school districts in the State of Iowa, known as the Urban Education Network of Iowa. The Urban Education Network (UEN) of Iowa is comprised of Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Iowa City, Sioux City, and Waterloo. The UEN was created to serve as a "support and information system, sharing mutual concerns and a priorities which impact the education of all children" (UEN, 2005, para. 1). According to the UEN, the eight UEN districts:

- Enroll 25.4% of Iowa's 485,011 K-12 students
- Administer 45.0% (2946) of Iowa's 6,565 College Board, Advanced Placement examinations
- Enroll 36.45% (1,640) of Iowa's students taking Advanced Student Placement examinations (4,499)
- Enrolled Iowa's top male and top female scholars 22 of the past 24 years
- Enroll 54.1% of Iowa's K-12 students of color
- Employ 23.6% of Iowa's K-12 certified staff
- Enroll 50% of Iowa's limited English speaking students
- Serve 35.1% of Iowa's K-12 students receiving free/reduced price lunches (UEN, 2005).
- According to the Iowa Department of Education's Iowa Public School's report on district race data, the UEN schools serve approximately 70% of Iowa's PreK-12 African American students (2007A).
The above mentioned facts combined with the UEN districts’ commitment to developing and maintaining “efficient and effective teaching and learning” make the UEN districts great environments for case studies on what districts are doing to diversify teaching staffs (UEN, 2005, para. 2). The study is strengthened by the UEN’s acknowledgement “that ethnicity, race, gender and socioeconomic status are significant educational factors” (UEN, para. 2).

The amount of diversity in the UEN districts, particularly in three of the districts, is key to addressing the issues associated with diversity. As mentioned earlier, a strong example of racial/ethnic differences in the United States can be identified in relation to the differences between European Americans and African Americans. According to the Northwest Area Foundation’s study on race, African Americans are the largest nonwhite ethnic group in the State of Iowa. Given this, the study looked at the three schools within the UEN that serve the largest percent of African American students. Due to some difficulties, one of the districts was unable to participate, so one of the districts with the next largest African American population of students was utilized. In order to maintain the anonymity of each district, the districts were only identified as District A, B, and C and respondents from each district were identified as respondents from District A, B, and C respectively.

**Research Design**

The data collection process involved the use of qualitative research. Qualitative research seeks understanding through an interactive process in which meaning is established by the participants (Stake, 1995, p. 37). Data is collected via face to face
interactions to allow the researcher to describe and analyze from a holistic perspective “people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions” about a given event or experience (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p. 395). In qualitative research, “reality is a social construction, that is, individuals or groups derive or ascribe meanings to specific entities, such as events, persons, processes, or objects” (McMillan & Schumacher, p. 396). It is this reality that qualitative research seeks to uncover and describe through an inductive process in which categories and patterns emerge.

In this study, a qualitative approach was chosen to assist in describing and exploring what is being done to recruit nonwhite teachers to Iowa school districts. The qualitative approach utilized for this study was appropriate as it allowed the investigator to investigate who, what, and why, and the results regarding the organizations’ processes, decisions, programs, and events (Yin, 1989).

Case Study

The data for this study was gathered through the use of multiple case studies. Case studies “refer to the collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular participant or small group” (Becker et al., 2005, para.2). Case studies are not about identifying cause and effect but rather they focus on exploration and description (Becker et al.). Case studies seek to satisfy “the three tenets of the qualitative method: describing, understanding, and explaining” (Tellis, 1997, p. 3).

The primary goal of case study research is to provide a “thick description” of the “entity being evaluated, the circumstances under which it is used, the characteristics of
the people involved in it, and the nature of the community” (Becker et al., 2005, para.2). Case study research has been used “extensively, particularly in government and in evaluative situations” (Tellis, 1997, p. 3). According to Tellis, quantitative techniques tend “to obscure some of the important information” while qualitative case studies allow researchers to identify the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and educational initiatives (Tellis, p. 3).

The use of qualitative interviews assisted the researcher in gaining the above mentioned holistic understanding. Qualitative interviews are effective for discovering and identifying aspects of a program that can not be seen (Patton, 1990). Qualitative interviewing is different from closed interviews or questionnaires in that qualitative interviewing seeks to “understand how people in a setting view the setting, to learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences” instead of forcing “respondents to fit their knowledge, experiences, and feelings into the evaluator’s categories” (Patton, 1982, p. 166).

Through a deeper look, qualitative interviewing allows the researcher to discover;

1. What does the program look and feel like to the people involved?
2. What are the experiences of program participants?
3. What thoughts do people knowledgeable about the program have concerning program operations, processes, and outcomes?
4. What do people know about the program?
5. What are their expectations?
6. What features of the program are most salient to the people involved?
7. What changes do participants perceive in themselves as a result of their involvement in the program? (Patton, 1990, p. 279)

These questions are asked with the assumption that the participants “perspective is meaningful, knowable, and capable of being made explicit” (Patton, 1982, p. 161). Patton’s questions assisted the researcher in identifying what was being done to recruit nonwhite teachers to Iowa school districts.

Patton (1990) identifies three main approaches to qualitative interviewing. The approaches are:

1. The informal conversational interview is very spontaneous and the respondent may not even know that an interview is happening.

2. The general interview guide approach follows a general outline of topics, but the interviewer may vary from interview to interview on how and when questions are asked.

3. The standardized open-ended interview uses a very strict script with no variations in the questions or sequencing of the questions.

This study primarily utilized the standardized open-ended approach for the interviews. The standardized format allowed the researcher to utilize a prearranged sequence of questions to attain comprehensive and comparable data from everyone interviewed. Additionally, the standardized approach reduces interviewer effects and “bias that comes from having different interviews for different people” (Patton, p. 281). Finally, the standardized approach provides for a systematic approach for the subsequent organization and analysis of the data (Dereshiwsky, 1999).
As mentioned previously, multiple case studies were utilized to “strengthen the results...thus increasing confidence in the robustness of the theory” (Tellis, 1997, p. 4). According to Yin (1984), validity can be acquired through triangulation or the use of “multiple sources of evidence” (p. 89). Triangulation has its roots in “celestial navigation” (Stake, 1995, p. 109). Sailors at sea would utilize multiple points in the sky to calculate their location based on where the points of data intersected. Although qualitative researchers are not seeking to identify location, they are attempting to identify meaning, and according to Stake (1995), “the approach is the same” (p. 110). Instead of using points in the sky, researchers acquire data from multiple methods including, but not limited to documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts (Yin, 1984). In qualitative research, the researcher studies one subject by sorting through the data from at least two sources “to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 3).

To ensure the quality of the research design, Yin advises that three areas of validity should be addressed, construct, external, and reliability (1994, p. 33). In order to address construct validity, this study utilized multiple sources of evidence and maintained a chain of evidence. For each district, multiple respondents were interviewed and asked the same questions. The data from the multiple interviews was examined in connection with any relevant documents that addressed policies and practices to recruit nonwhite teachers. The steps taken to acquire data were documented to show a clear chain of evidence that can be later assessed.
The external validity can be identified in the extent that the study can be generalized. Schools around the country vary greatly from state to state, city to city, and from one side of town to the other. Although the results of this study can not be broadly applied to every school or school district, the replicative nature of the study and the cross evaluation of data allows the researcher “to see if what we are observing and reporting carries the same meaning when found under different circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. 113). The resulting description “is valid because researchers go through this process and rely on multiple forms of evidence rather than a single incident or data point in the study” (Creswell & Miller, p. 3). Therefore, some of the results can be generalized given the right contexts.

The reliability of this design rests in that the “operations” of the study “such as the data collection procedures can be repeated” (Yin, 1994, p. 33). A description of the steps taken will be provided in the data collection section of this study. The procedures are documented in this study in a manner that allows the reader to replicate the study. Additionally, access to the case study database will be provided in the form of narratives from the interviews and an annotated bibliography of any supporting documents that may be acquired. In combination with any acquired supporting documents, “the investigator, along with any other interested party, can then use this database to compose the actual case study report” (Yin, 1994, p. 98). The reliability of the study will be further strengthened through the maintenance of chain of evidence log. This will allow the “reader of the case study...to follow the derivation of any evidence from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusions” (Yin, 2003, p. 105).
There are three possible limitations. One limitation of the design is that generalizations may not be applicable to all schools. As Stake (1995) points out, “the real business of case study is particularization, not generalization. However, we take a particular case and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different but what it is, what it does” (p. 8). Through this discovery, “people can learn much that is general from single cases” which provides “a new opportunity to modify old generalizations” that each of us holds about a given subject (Stake, p. 85).

An additional limitation can be found in the interview process. The structured interview format provides little flexibility in adjusting the interview to individuals or circumstances (Patton, 1990). Additionally, it may be difficult to accurately interpret any of the subject’s non-verbal communications as they emerge during the interviews.

A final limitation may be racially connected. Given the lack of diversity in the educational ranks around the state, most, if not all, of the subjects interviewed were of European decent. As Jones encountered, some of the subjects may be uncomfortable “discussing their perceptions” of diversity with a nonwhite researcher (Jones, 2002, p. 12). This discomfort may lead to guarded or exaggerated responses.

Data Collection

The procedures discussed in this section have been adapted from Hopton (2003) and were applied to both the pilot study, and where deemed appropriate, to the research case studies. Prior to beginning the pilot study and case studies, the superintendent’s secretaries from each of the selected UEN districts were contacted by telephone regarding the nature of the study. The initial contacts were made on February 15, 2005.
up district and pilot study district was contacted on February 16, 2005. After providing each of the superintendents with a brief description of the study, a follow up letter was sent to the superintendents and the secretaries explaining everything that was discussed during the phone call along with any other pertinent information regarding the study. A “Cooperation Agreement” form letter was included with the follow-up letter. Each of the districts returned a signed copy of the “Cooperation Agreement” letter.

From each district, interviews were scheduled with the superintendent, director of recruitment, school board member, principal, and a nonwhite teacher that had been in the district for no more than three years. Each of these personnel categories were included as they represent the hiring hierarchy that exists within the State of Iowa public school system and therefore encompasses those who may have an understanding of the hiring process and the policies and practices of the district to hire teachers from underrepresented backgrounds.

During the interviews, the participants were each asked a standard pre-identified set of questions. Additionally, all documents regarding the districts’ policies and procedures as they relate to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds were requested and reviewed. The timeline for the interviews was developed in collaboration with the participants.

To assist in maintaining consistency, the discussion centered primarily on secondary teachers. The hiring strategies and application process differ between secondary and elementary hiring. The biggest difference between secondary and elementary hiring is that secondary education tends to be more content or subject
specific. Educators with the appropriate qualifications to teach high school tend to additionally be qualified to work in other professions that are related to their subject matter. Elementary teachers tend to be less content specific and thus are limited by their degree status to the education profession. Therefore, districts are limited to competing against each other to recruit and hire elementary professionals but are forced to compete against multiple professions, in addition to other districts, for secondary professionals which means the level of competition to attract teachers from underrepresented backgrounds would be greater.

Pilot Study

After the Human Study Board approved the study, a pilot study of the questions to be used during the district interviews was conducted. To ensure that Hopton’s (2003) instrument and the data analysis procedures previously described were appropriate for this particular study, a pilot study was conducted with a district with similar characteristics as the districts in the studies.

On February 16, 2005 the associate superintendent of the pilot study district was contacted to request the district’s involvement in the study. On March 9, 2005 the researcher began the interviews. The individuals interviewed received a copy of the questions and a consent letter.

The pilot study was performed in a district located in Southeast Iowa. At the time of the pilot study, there were 10,732 students in the district. The districts’ student demographics are: 74.01% of the students were European American, 12.14% of the students were African American (fastest growing group), 7.35% of the students were
Asian American, 6.01% of the students were Hispanic American, and 0.48% of the students were American Indian. There were 857 administrative and certified staff members in the district. Of that total, 96.2% were European American. Teachers from underrepresented backgrounds were identified as: 1.6% were African Americans, 0.81% were Hispanic Americans, 1% were Asian Americans, and 0.23% were American Indians (04/05 Pilot District Enrollment data).

The researcher reviewed the responses and the adapted instrument was found to be acceptable. Since this is a replication of a Hopton’s study and most of the questions have been previously tested and adjusted by Hopton, the pilot focused primarily on providing the researcher with an opportunity to gain comfort in implementing the procedures and revising the strategies for implementation as appropriate.

Following the completion of the pilot study and after the selected districts agreed to proceed with the study, a follow-up conversation took place to schedule each of the interviews and the remaining details regarding the study’s needs were shared. Although all of the districts agreed to participate in the study, one district failed to arrange the interviews and was subsequently replaced by a back-up district.

Data Analysis

A data analysis approach was used in this study to identify themes or codes to assist in identifying similarities and differences among the programs. Analysis allowed the researcher to evaluate the identified characteristics for trends and patterns. As Stake (1995) points out, “analysis simply means taking something, apart” (p. 71). As the information is taken apart, the trends and patterns were analyzed and placed into
categories or coded according to their meaning and connotation (Weber, 1990, as cited in Stemler, 2001, para. 11). The analysis process was “a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations” (Stake, p. 71).

The categorization or coding of data can take place in two ways, emergent and a priori. In emergent coding, codes can emerge from the data as it is reviewed. In a priori coding, the codes can be pre-defined prior to analysis. In a priori coding, “professional colleagues agree on the categories, and the coding is applied to the data” (Stemler, para.13). The data is then broken down according to how it fits into the pre-defined categories.

This study utilized a blend of the approaches. It initially utilized a priori coding, as “the patterns will be known in advance, drawn from the research questions” which served as a “template for the analysis” (Stake, 1995, p. 78). The researcher was not locked into the pre-identified themes but rather began there and then sought to identify other themes as they emerged. Janesick (1994) recommends the following approach:

1. Locate within the personal experience, or self-story, key phrases and statements that speak directly to the phenomenon in question.
2. Interpret the meaning of these phrases as an informed reader.
3. Inspect these meanings for what they reveal about the essential, recurring features of the phenomenon being studied.
4. Offer a tentative statement or definition of the phenomenon in terms of the essential reoccurring features. (p. 215)
According to Patton (1990), "data interpretation and analysis involve making sense out of what people have said, looking for patterns, putting together what is said in one place with what is said in another place, and integrating what different people have said" (p. 347). The data in this research came from the multiple interviews and the documents that became available. Each of the interviews was recorded, transcribed, and reviewed. The transcribed interviews and acquired documents were initially evaluated for major themes that were identified according to how they addressed the following questions:

1. What are the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit nonwhite teacher candidates?
2. What are the recruiting procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit nonwhite teacher candidates?
3. How do the districts ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?
4. What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

Although the research questions served as a template, the data was read multiple times, line by line for meaningful units of information. As Stake advised, it was “useful to use pre-established codes” and “to go through the data separately looking for new ones” (p. 79). Ryan and Bernard (n.d.) refer to this as “Pawing” and additionally recommend the “Cutting and Sorting” approach in which the key quotes are cut from the transcriptions “making sure to maintain some of the context in which it occurred” and then placing it within categories of similar expressions (p. 8). According to Ryan and
Bernard, the cutting and sorting approach is very helpful in identifying “sub-themes within these major themes” and this approach proved true for this study (p. 10).

Summary

As discussed throughout the first, second, and third chapters of this paper, this study is designed to identify the commonalities and differences in the policies and practices of the school districts to recruit and hire teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. Chapter 3 outlined the population of districts that the data was collected from, the research design for the study, the data collection process, the implementation of a pilot study, and the data analysis approach utilized in this study. The results of the analysis of the interviews and other supporting documents will be discussed at length in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze the data that have been collected as a part of this study. Once again, these data were collected using an adapted process developed by Hopton (2003) with the purpose of identifying the policies and practices of select school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Throughout the first section of this chapter, information pertaining to the respondents is presented. This information includes steps taken to acquire the data as well as district demographics. Then, in the second section of this chapter, the participants' answers are provided and discussed in relation to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 on page 46. The third and final section will then compares this study to similar studies by other researchers.

District Demographics

The districts selected for this study were selected from the eight largest and most ethnically diverse districts in the state of Iowa. Additionally, the districts were further identified according to the percentage of African American students. District A is located in Eastern Iowa. There are 15,987 students in the district. The district's population breaks down as follows: 69.14% of the students are European American, 19.4% of the students are African American, 8.04% of the students are Hispanic American, 2.66% of the students are Asian American, and .76% of the students are American Indian. There are 1353 administrative and certified staff members in the district. Of that total, 93.5% are European American. Administrative and certified staff
members from underrepresented backgrounds break down as follows: 3.54% are African Americans, 2.07% are Hispanic Americans, .52% are American Indians, and .37% are Asian Americans (04/05 District A Enrollment Data & Teacher of Color Percentages 00-01 School Year).

District B, located in central Iowa, has 10,472 students. The district's population breaks down as follows: 65.33% of the students are European American, 26.93% of the students are African American, 6.08% of the students are Hispanic American, 1.19% of the students are Asian American, and .47% of the students are American Indian. There are 854 full-time administrative and certified staff members in the district. Of that total, 91.10% are European American. Administrative and certified staff members from underrepresented backgrounds break down as follows: 8.31% are African Americans, .23% are Hispanic Americans, .23% are Asian Americans, and .12% are American Indians (04/05 District B Enrollment Data).

District C, located in central Iowa, has 17,307 students. The district's population breaks down as follows: 81.96% of the students are European American, 12.64% of the students are African American, 2.58% of the students are Hispanic American, 2.26% of the students are Asian American, and .55% of the students are American Indian. There are 2,700 employees in the district. Of the administrative and certified staff members in the district, 89.9% are European American. Administrative and certified staff members from underrepresented backgrounds break down as follows: 6.9% are African Americans, 1.3% are Hispanic Americans, 1.9% are Asian Americans, and there are no are American Indians (05/06 District C Enrollment Data).
Data Collection

The superintendent's secretaries from each of the selected UEN districts were contacted on February 15, 2005, by telephone. A back-up district was contacted on February 16, 2005. The initial contact provided the secretaries with a brief explanation of the study. The researcher advised the secretaries that upon research approval, a follow-up contact would be made to schedule the interviews for the study. Additionally, the secretaries were informed that a follow-up letter and a district consent form would be e-mailed later that day. If the districts agreed to participate in the study, the secretaries were asked to fax a signed copy of the consent form to the University of Northern Iowa Graduate College and to the researcher. The secretaries were also asked to mail a hard copy to the researcher as well. All of the consents were received within days.

After receiving approval to proceed from the districts, Human Studies Review, and the research dissertation committee, the researcher contacted the selected districts to schedule interviews. A follow-up e-mail was sent to each district re-explaining the interview needs and the window within which the interviews would need to be performed. This window took into consideration the importance of getting access to participants prior to the end of the school year and summer vacation. Districts set-up the interviews and contacted the researcher.

Each of the interviews was scheduled in half-hour increments and consisted of a brief explanation of the study and a participant agreement form; each participant was provided a copy of the questions that would be asked prior to the interview. The researcher requested any relevant materials regarding the recruitment of underrepresented
teachers from the human resources (HR) directors prior to, during, and after the interviews.

District A

District A was contacted on May 4, 2005. District A responded on May 12 and the interviews were scheduled for June 7. However, that morning while en route, the researcher was advised that the district did not have a teacher to be interviewed, the HR director canceled, and the school board member had been scheduled for late that afternoon. Upon arrival, the researcher was able to have the district schedule a teacher, and so interviews were conducted with the superintendent, a principal, and a teacher.

The superintendent interview was performed at the central administration building. The superintendent of District A was a Caucasian male who had come out of retirement from another district to serve as an interim superintendent in District A. Superintendent A explained that he is primarily responsible for the management of personnel and addressing the Board of Directors' wants and desires. District A’s superintendent was very cooperative and willing to share his knowledge of the district and previous experiences. Superintendent A advised that since his tenure had been a short one in the district, most of his involvement with addressing the recruitment of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds had been more at the discussion level of what the district might do to increase the district’s teacher diversity. Superintendent A advised that the efforts within the district had not been very successful and that this was an area of the “operation” that needed to be evaluated. He advised that
the district had been having discussions as to whether it would be worth the expense to recruit nationally from institutions with a "significant number of minorities."

Superintendent A discussed his previous experiences in other districts with recruiting and advised that the availability of nonwhite teachers is limited and that it was a difficult task to convince people to leave warmer areas for Iowa's cooler climate. Superintendent A advised that accountability of recruitment can be ensured by "looking at the data," making it a priority, and making sure that the resumes of "nonwhite" teachers are reviewed. He feels that these steps are important because "we need them in the classroom and as trainees for management positions within the school district" as it is "good for our students." According to Superintendent A:

A diverse staff can help promote the appreciation of and the respect for diversity within your district and also in the community, it demonstrates that the district is going beyond verbiage, professional, competent, nonwhites can make a real positive contribution to what you're attempting to do within your school district.

Superintendent A stated that there were no policies in place to support the diversification of its teaching staff besides the general "non-bias, nonsexist" policies implemented by the district. If given the opportunity without financial constraints, Superintendent A would like to recruit nationally, offer signing bonuses, and offer salary bonuses that go beyond what the contract currently permits.

For the second interview in District A, the researcher went to the teacher's building for the teacher interview. The teacher interviewed was an African American woman in her first year of teaching in the district who primarily teaches regular education classes. District A's teacher came to the district from the South. She had not been recruited by the district but rather came to the district after her husband took a job with a
local business. The transfer led the teacher to seek employment in the district and she was hired just prior to the beginning of the school year. Teacher A initially seemed slightly guarded, and it was discovered that she was unaware of why she had been asked to meet with the researcher. Following an explanation of the study and her role, she appeared more comfortable.

Teacher A advised that teacher diversity is a very important issue “because students need role models, someone that they can relate to, that they feel understands where they’re coming from.” Additionally, she advised:

It’s intimidating … being the only certified African American teacher in the building. When I go to meetings, there are maybe a couple other people there that are African American, but most of the time, I’m the only one in the department. I mean, I’m talking about this is a district-wide meeting. There may be one other person.

She further explained that this may be “why people leave.”

When it came to representation within her district, Teacher A felt that Caucasian teachers were well represented but that there needed to be more Hispanic and African American representation. She wasn’t aware of any steps taken by the district to address this need and advised that this issue “definitely needed more attention.” When asked why she thinks the imbalance exists, Teacher A explained that she wasn’t sure “if the pool wasn’t available” or if those completing their degrees in Iowa were leaving, since she really didn’t feel like she had been in Iowa long enough to assess the situation. Regardless of the reasons for the imbalance, Teacher A thought that “if they would just start any type of programs that recruited minorities” or hired someone to “be in charge of recruiting minorities,” things would be different. Currently, she believed that the
incentives that the district offers teachers in general were "really low." With a master's degree, she thought her pay was insufficient to "even pay" for her schooling and that financial changes might help.

Following the teacher interview, the researcher returned to the central administration building for the principal interview. The principal interviewed from District A was a Caucasian male in his first year as a building principal and in his fifth year in the district. He is responsible for the "overall functioning and operation of the school, personnel, budget, severe student discipline issues, staff development," and other high school duties. Principal A appeared very relaxed and willing to share the experiences he has had with recruitment. Given the increasing amount of diversity within District A, Principal A believes that it is "very important" to have "people of color in leadership positions and in teaching positions." Principal A advised that it is:

Important for all students not just students of color ... to have role models that they can look up to in those leadership types of positions ... quite frankly an African American student might not feel comfortable talking to a Caucasian person and to have someone with a similar cultural background could be helpful in some of the issues that they're facing outside of school.

Although he hadn't had any direct experience with recruiting, he was aware that the district is able to set aside positions to hire minority staff and that this policy has been in place at least as long as he had been in the district. He does, however, look at any data that indicate race in application materials and then attempts to follow through with hiring. Principal A explained that the most effective strategy to recruit staff has been to market the community and to talk about what it has to offer.
When Principal A was asked about possible barriers that may make recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds difficult, Principal A explained that it appeared to be a combination of things. He advised that at the city level, he has heard there may not be enough “cultural activities” available in the area to attract diverse candidates. In addition to discussing the city concerns, Principal A was also aware that some district level concerns existed as well. Issue number one was tied to Principal A’s perception that overall the district’s “teacher and administrative pay is down on the list” so general recruitment was hindered. When it came to directly addressing the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, Principal A explained that “one of the big struggles is, we’re not getting applicants and so we need to take a step back and truly go into these other places” to “find folks that are willing to come this way.” Principal A questions whether the district has made an “earnest effort to go to the South or to the city of Chicago or Gary, Indiana, or other places where a higher population of African Americans or whomever live, to get and actively recruit specific people here.” He felt that “it’s been a number of years, I think, that we’ve really made a concerted effort to go to those different areas.” If money were not an issue, Principal A believes that districts should attempt to recruit nationally, offer moving stipends, and sell the district, the town, and the Midwest to candidates at mostly black colleges. He advised that the district really needs to take recruitment to a “deeper and/or higher level to actively recruit underrepresented people to come to the district.”

Interviews with the school board member and HR director were scheduled on June 23 and performed on June 27, 2005, in a conference room at the central
administration building. The school board member (SBM) interview took place first.

SBM A was a Caucasian male with children in the district who had been serving as the
director of the school board for approximately 3 years. His primary responsibility has
been to “set policy, hire a superintendent, and try to direct the school district in a way that
benefits all the kids.” He advised that teacher diversity was:

Very important because you know when you go into the real world, not
everybody looks like you and it’s important for my kids I think to have that kind
of experience. Not just from the people they sit with, at the desk and do their
work every day but from the people that are teaching them.

SBM A believed that he had been involved indirectly with the recruitment of
diverse teachers through the process of hiring a superintendent because they ask the
superintendent how he or she would go about creating a diverse staff. Additionally,
SBM A felt that “the district has a commitment to diversity” as it is in their mission
statement and their Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. He said that they are
proud of the diversity of in their student body and they “recognize the need to have a
diverse faculty in order to meet the needs” of their kids to “really fulfill our mission.”

SBM A explained that the district has policies in place that “forbid discrimination on the
basis of race, creed, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, and all those types of things.”

According to SBM A, the district tries “to put policies in place that encourage and
promote recruiting diverse faculty through an affirmative action policy that is reviewed.”
Additionally, he believed that the district sends out materials to historical black colleges
and attends recruiting fairs in both Iowa and Illinois. When it comes to ensuring that
recruitment practices are implemented, SBM A stated, “I don’t have any data to know
that that’s being done, so I don’t think the board does enough to assure that.” He went
on to state, “we probably need to be more diligent in requesting information” as “there really isn’t a board policy in place that requires an annual report on that.” He stated that the interview experience had been helpful:

Because it’s made me realize that perhaps as a board member, perhaps we’re not doing enough to actively pursue that, and you know we need to make sure that our administration understands that we as a board value that and we want to make sure that we’re doing everything we can to implement and monitor and properly evaluate that so we can continue to identify strategies that help us, that can help us be successful at that.

SBM A was hopeful that when a permanent superintendent is hired, more will be done.

Although he was hopeful that things would improve, he explained that efforts to diversify are hindered by the district’s starting pay because people can go to other states and “make $10,000 more a year.” As in the Principal A interview, SBM A stated that more effort should be spent emphasizing the quality of life, students, and schools in the district but he was unsure “if you’re ever going to be able to beat out money.” He went on to explain that “there might be some cultural issues going on ... I see pay as our biggest detriment.” As mentioned by Superintendent A, SBM A also believed that weather may be an additional barrier to recruitment. He thought that the district could increase its effectiveness “by sending people to historically black colleges or to other places that have significant minority populations going through getting their education degree.” He placed a lot of value in face-to-face conversations “because I think it really shows a depth of caring and a depth of dedication” whereas, “a piece of paper is cold.”

The final interview in District A was performed with the HR Director (HRD), a white female who had been in the district for 2 years. She is responsible for “employment issues, negotiating the teachers’ contract, maintenance of all employee
records, hiring, recruitment, retention, selection, processing, and orientation." HRD A is involved in all recruitment efforts in the district. Prior to beginning the interview, HRD A asked multiple questions regarding the goal of the study and the presentation of data as she was concerned with how the district would be portrayed.

After her initial concerns regarding the study were addressed, HRD A explained that it is “absolutely critical” that the teaching population reflect the student population because it is “imperative that we learn how to work with other people who are different from ourselves and that we learn how to value them, and respect them” to help students “understand the real world.” Her involvement allows her to be creative with the approaches being used and to oversee what is being done. She went on to explain that data on percentages of underrepresented teachers and students were provided to the school board director last year. Attempts to address the concerns raised by the data have included trips to recruitment fairs at two Iowa universities, one university in Illinois, and an AEA event. Additionally she contacts candidates who contact the district, posts positions on the Web, and networks with HR directors in other areas. Other strategies include speaking with student teachers at a local university and providing college students with the opportunity to do their student teaching within the district.

Additional steps described by HRD A involved the “Master contract, which addresses the reserving of 8 positions per year for affirmative action positions, which takes vacancies really apart from our usual transfer procedures and sets them aside to give us an opportunity to look at minority candidates to fill those positions.” As mentioned by Principal A, this policy has been in effect for a while. In each of these
interactions, HRD A advised that it is important to share what the district has to offer in the way of salaries and benefits. As with Principal A and SBM A, HRD A placed a lot of importance on emphasizing to prospective employees that their money will go a lot further in District A than in the bigger cities like Chicago. For example, she stated:

Right now in [city] our people who take family insurance only pay $30 a month for family insurance. And if they don’t take $30 a month then they are going to get total comp, they are going to get, you know, a significant amount, you know, in their paycheck because they are not taking the family insurance, because we’ve tried to equalize that. Even though their salaries look better and stuff, cost of living is going to be much greater there.

For HRD A it is a “matter of making sure you know what you have to offer and making sure that you present it in a manner that they understand it and they can see the benefit to them.” In addition to addressing cost of living matters, HRD A talked about selling the community as being “very metro without seeming like a very large city.

Additionally, she believes that it is important for prospective employees to know that the district is close enough to small towns that “if people want to live out in smaller locations, but still be a part of us, there are a lot of other locations.” According to HRD A, teams or individuals meeting with candidates should be willing to talk about what the community as a whole has to offer, “what it’s like to live here, what is there to do, are there young people my age to mingle with, where do you go, what do you do” in addition to “issues in regards to the economics, cost of living, etc.”

To further strengthen recruitment efforts, she explained that she would like to revitalize the “recruitment committee to take a really strong look at what we are currently doing in terms of the recruitment efforts, and how we can expand upon them, and yet still make sure again that we get some really positive return for our investment.” She said
that the district can't afford to attempt to implement efforts that are not fruitful, but the
district can't afford not to try either. She advised that districts should make sure potential
employees understand the district and all that it has to offer. People coming from other
areas of the country “don’t have a clue about [city], Iowa.” HRD A said that districts
need to look at forming partnerships with community groups to help bring in candidates
from out of town to interview for positions, to see the schools, and to see the community.
She also stressed the importance of retention efforts, that the district should not only
bring people in but also try to keep them. She advised:

You have to make sure again that your salary and benefits stay competitive, that
you do things to recognize and reward your teachers because it’s not just about
salary benefits as you get into this and are in it for a while, it’s about how the
system recognizes you, appreciates you. Do some things in terms of service
awards or, you know, teacher of the year, board recognitions. I mean what can
we do that will also provide that positive reinforcement and incentive in regard to,
this district appreciates you and appreciates the service that you’re providing.

Unfortunately, the district is unable to have these meaningful discussions,
according to HRD A. The difficulty, she said, is “we’re not seeing a great many minority
candidates at the teacher recruitment fairs.” HRD A is concerned about the challenge the
district has “in the face of declining numbers of candidates” in all of teaching, let alone
“the availability of minority candidates.” Furthermore, she is concerned that the few
nonwhite teachers available tend to be “generally looking at the larger markets.” She
wasn’t sure if this is because of salaries, benefits, the lure of the bigger city, or the
availability of signing bonuses. She liked the idea of offering higher salaries, bonuses,
-etc. She stated, “we’ve got to really work hard to bring them up,” but questioned whether
current teachers in the district would “support that or understand the need for it.”
Another approach she mentioned was to begin working with the community or other organizations to offer free rent in “cooperation with federal apartment complexes in the city.” She suggested that the district should connect with teachers from smaller areas or states, “like bring them into an urban setting from Montana because their salaries were so low.” However, HRD A recognized the difficulty of recruiting from other areas and advised that districts need to “be realistic about how, how far people are going to go from home.” HRD A’s previous experience indicated that “the best recruiting ... was like three hours” from the district because it appeared to not be that far from home. However, she stated:

You also have to look at other options. Because again if your trying to recruit minority candidates, there may not be as many of them here and we may need to again be prepared to travel and go other places and do what we can to see if we can make this an interesting option for them, because that’s what it’s all about.

It was important for HRD A that the researcher understand that the district recognizes “how important this initiative is to try to attract minority candidates” to their “profession and district” and that none of them “underestimate that importance.”

In addition to the interviews, supporting documents were requested from District A, including its negotiated agreement and affirmative action plan. The negotiated agreement revealed that District A reserves the ability to hold back “8 vacancies for the purpose of meeting the District’s Affirmative Action Goals.” According to the agreement, the ability to fill these eight vacancies will supersede any other staffing criteria except for cases where the “end result is the layoff of personnel.” The ability to fill eight positions each year with teachers from underrepresented backgrounds was identified by both Principal A and HRD A.
Additional support of what was said in the interviews was found in District A's affirmative action plan: "It is the policy of the district to affirmatively recruit women and men of diverse racial/ethnic groups and persons with disabilities for job categories where they are underrepresented." District A's plan goes on to advise that "additional emphasis shall be given to seeking, identifying, and encouraging applicants from protected class groups" through efforts "to ensure that job opportunities are called to the specific attention of members of protected classes." The specific procedures described by District A's affirmative action plan to "actively recruit protected class persons and make every attempt to hire, retain, and promote qualified persons" were described as follows:

1. Hiring efforts are to be monitored by program director of equity.

2. Every advertisement will include the phrase "Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer" and every job posting will state that the district "will recruit, hire and promote without regards to gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, creed, age, marital status, veteran status, or disability" (p. 16).

3. Recruitment shall take place on site at colleges, universities, and other educational institutions with efforts directed "where there are high percentages of protected class persons" (p. 16). Once sites are identified, the plan calls for the establishment of partnerships with the "identified colleges and universities, including mentoring opportunities" (p. 24).

4. The district will "encourage its employees to refer protected class applicants for employment" and "maintain contact with local protected class organizations in an
effort to apprise them of current employment opportunities and trends and to
recruit protected class members into the district” (p. 16).

5. The plan also calls for the district to “explore best practices and develop
employment incentive opportunities for positions” and “professional growth
opportunities for classified, certified, and administrative positions with emphasis
on persons of color” (District A’s Affirmative Action Plan, p. 25).

In the area of accountability, District A’s affirmative action plan provides a detailed
description of who is accountable for ensuring the implementation of effective policies
and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. According to the
plan, the superintendent is responsible for the overall “effective implementation of the
plan” (p. 3). The district administrators are to ensure that “employees are not
discriminated against in any aspect or condition of employment” and that “equal
employment opportunity and affirmative action standards are included in the performance
evaluations of those directly supervised” (p. 4). The program director of equity is in
charge of developing, implementing, and monitoring the plan and policies. Through
monitoring efforts, the equity director is to “identify problem areas and measures for
corrective efforts” through the establishment of goals and objectives (p. 4). The equity
director is also in charge of putting together a diverse equity committee and must
communicate the affirmative action plan both “internally and externally” (p. 4). The
equity committee is then in charge of monitoring and providing “feedback to the district
regarding affirmative action and equity efforts” (p. 4). The committee is to also review
policies related to “equity efforts and make recommendations for change” in the areas of
equity, the multicultural/ gender/fair education, equal employment, and affirmative action (p. 5). According to the plan, all “recommendations shall be made to the Associate Director of Staff Development, Superintendent’s Team, and the Board of Education” (p. 5).

District B

Interviews for District B were scheduled at the district administration building on May 6, 2005, with the HR director and with the superintendent for June 8. Due to a corrupted tape, the first two introductory answers of the superintendent interview were lost and a follow-up phone contact was made on January 31, 2007. The principal was also scheduled for an interview on June 8 at the principal’s school. The teacher and school board member were interviewed on June 8 and 9, respectively, at the district administration building.

The interviews in District B began in the morning prior to the beginning of the school day. The first interview took place at a middle school with the principal of the largest middle school in District B. Principal B was a Caucasian female in her fifth year of administration in the district but first year as a head administrator. Prior to taking an administrative position, Principal B had taught high school classes in the district. She is responsible for a number of tasks ranging from “scheduling, focus of instruction, making sure that the teachers have what they need and the tools so that they can do their jobs, management, budget, discipline and all those kinds of things that fit into that.”

Principal B was very open and willing to share her perspectives on teacher diversity, her role in recruiting from both a professional and personal perspective. She
said that recruitment is important “because everybody needs somebody that they can relate to.” Principal B pointed out that the ability to relate is more than race but that race can play a big role in one’s ability to relate to the experiences of the students being served. For example, although she is able to relate to students, she stated:

I don’t know that there’s a lot of people in this world that are Caucasian that have ever been in a situation where they’ve walked in a room and they’re the only Caucasian person there, whereas that happens over and over and over again to minority students or people in the world, they have no idea what that feels like.

Principal B stated that the ability for educators to relate to these types of experiences is important to her both professionally and personally.

Although she believed “there is a necessity for the recruitment” of diverse teachers, she hadn’t “been involved in that particular recruitment.” From Principal B’s perspective, recruitment “mainly comes through HR,” as principals communicate needs to the district and the district “does the posting and gets all the applicants and then sends us people that we can interview, people that they feel would be good for the position.” The only recruitment that Principal B had been involved in consisted mostly of word of mouth. If she encounters someone good, she refers them and tells them to apply. She wasn’t aware of “any extra incentives,” but she was aware “that based on contract just to have equity, [HR director] can hire a number of positions with minority groups to help with the equity so you have a balanced staff within the district.” Principal B was not sure of how many positions the HR director could hire in that manner, but she did discuss one instance in which she was able to hire a teacher utilizing this approach. When it came to knowing specifically about recruitment practices and policies, Principal B explained she
knew the district had things in place but was “not aware of what they are or how they monitor it.”

From her perspective, a number of factors affect recruiting, one of which is what the district has to offer. Principal B believed that people choose districts based on whether “the district is attractive to start with, as far as how they pay and their benefits.... If the district is not offering things anyway, you are going to go where you can make the money and where it’s comfortable.” She explained that this is the case “for any person,” no matter what the person's background.

Additional issues associated with the hiring of a diverse staff include “the number of applicants available.” Principal B believed this is a nationwide societal issue. She said what she is “seeing more and more over the years, is that people with really good skills have a lot more to choose from. They don’t have to go into education, which is usually not a well paid position and they can make a lot more money somewhere else.” Principal B stated:

There are recruitment incentives in other areas that are by far more attractive. So you’d have to have, and I’m not saying people don’t, but there has to be a true passion that this is what I want to do to stay in education, knowing that you’re never going to have the huge financial gains that you might have in another field.

When discussing the experiences of a young African American male she knew who considered education as a profession, Principal B pointed out that “the financial end wasn’t there. He did a lot better not going into education.” She concluded that “until something changes about how we view teachers as professionals and pay them as professionals, we’re not going to get them. I mean because he had lots of choices quite honestly.” Principal B noted that “being African American would open, where lots of
times in life it closes doors, when you’re out looking for a position somewhere, there are some doors that open because of that.” She argued that this is the case “because people do want to have a balance, whether it’s federally mandated or they just feel they need to have it.” She explained that the young African American man she was discussing had “good skills, he has a wonderful education, he can pick and choose what he wants to do, and the financial end of it just wasn’t there in education.”

When asked to think outside the box to overcome the barriers that make increasing teacher diversity difficult, Principal B said that you have to “remember equity” in regard to the impact on other staff, as they will begin to ask, “How come?” She believed that recruitment and the use of monetary incentives, “puts the person who is getting the monetary incentive on a bad footing with the other folks that have been around a long time.” Principal B believed that the district “has to make themselves attractive as far as having incentives for everyone.” She recommended that the district should work to develop “a reputation of caring about all teachers” with “a passion for education so that people want to come here” and “when people ask about [city] you get, ‘that’s a great place to work.’” Principal B argued, “That’s going be a better incentive than trying to say, if you come and teach in [city] and you’re African American, we’re going to give you a $10,000 signing bonus” as “that just sets yourself up for inequities in other ways.” Ultimately, Principal B would like District B to focus more on “making themselves more attractive as far as health benefits, the base wages, and some of the personal things” that lead people “to feel like you care about them as individuals.”
Following the early morning interview with Principal B, the second interview took place with the HR Director (HRD) at the central administrative building. HRD B seemed very open and excited about some of the recent initiatives that the district had taken on. The HR Director was an African American woman who had been in the position for approximately 10 years and had served in the district in other capacities prior to becoming the HR director. She reported that she is primarily in charge of administering all HR policies, hiring and discipline and termination of employees, equity programs, and ultimately ensuring equitable distribution of resources and educational experiences.

In regard to the recruitment of nonwhite teachers, HRD B felt that District B needs to diversify because nonwhite teachers serve as role models for possibilities and open the door for future jobs. She explained that “kids need to see themselves. Kids need to know what the options are.” HRD B talked about an African American student who was the daughter of a city official who had been in her school when she was a principal. She said that the student:

Had a really good African American teacher and the last conference her mother says to me, that’s just great. I said, "What?" Well, she had talked about being a doctor, now she wants to be a teacher. She never saw herself as a teacher because she’d never seen a teacher that looked like her. That’s the greatest compliment that we could ever have and one of the reasons she made that determination is because she had a teacher of color who was an incredible teacher, who was a role model for her.

HRD B explained that for “the non-minority kids in the room, they now see the possibilities for minority students. So when they see another minority student, they see
their colleagues as having the same options that they have.” This is especially important for District B because most of their students “are city bound” and most of the kids will “never get out to see those things.”

As to recruitment efforts, HRD B explained that board policy states that everyone is responsible for recruitment. However, HRD B believed she is “basically in charge of all the recruitment for the district.” Being involved in all aspects of recruitment allowed her to ensure “the integrity is there in terms of making sure that the people are really out for the same thing” and “making sure that we’re all saying the same thing about being here in [city].” When HRD B has the opportunity to attend teachers’ fairs and other outreach opportunities, she believes that it is her obligation to provide a diverse perspective of what District B has to offer. HRD B said that many times people seem shocked to discover that “there are black folks in Iowa.” To help get this point across, the district at times sends out a diverse recruitment team with fliers and a display “that focuses on equity, to let people know that we are a diverse community.” HRD B felt that since District B is “not a large metropolitan area” and “we are a state that is not seen as having any diversity,” that she needed to share that District B has “a very diverse community.” HRD B wanted people to know this “because all teachers need to recognize and appreciate that diversity. If they see it and they don’t appreciate diversity, they’ll walk on to the next booth and that’s what I would want them to do.” She stated, “When I am at a fair and I see someone of color that doesn’t come to my table, I’m going to get them the first opportunity I get, because they need to recognize us as an option.”
According to HRD B, the most effective recruiting strategies have been approaches that involve recruiting people who have ties to Iowa. She thought that “Iowa is unique” and “people of color who are raised in Iowa, have a unique perspective on the world.” She argued that “in order for a person of color to be successful for long periods of time and say this is my home, they have to be able to hook to the Iowa values.” She believed that they have to be able to see that “this is a great place to raise kids” that they don’t have to lock their door, but at the same time they shouldn’t “expect to be able to go to the club and see a big name; it’s a different environment.”

One such approach used by the district to recruit teachers connected to Iowa involved recruiting from local colleges. The district tapped into the Regents institutions--the University of Iowa, UNI, and Iowa State University--to identify diverse candidates in the teacher education programs by meeting with the education reps from the Board of Regents. By identifying diverse teaching candidates early, she was able to make “connections with them before they graduate.”

To take a more proactive approach, the district has developed a “grow your own” program. According to HRD B, “we have a number of African American students in our district that have potential to be incredible teachers. They have the heart. They are really bright kids that could be good teachers.” Once a month, HRD B’s administrative assistant (licensed teacher) meets with a group of middle and high school students to increase the students’ level of interest in teaching. The program allows students to get field experiences, get on campuses, plan lessons, learn about lesson design, do practice lessons in classrooms, volunteer, and shadow teachers. Depending on when they join the
program, students can potentially complete these experiences over a 4-to-6-year period. According to HRD B, those sticking with the program throughout high school “are choosing to continue they’re education as a teacher.” HRD B saw the program as “very promising” and said that the district planned to hire its first graduate from the program. HRD B explained that not all of the students in the program are African American but it is the district’s perspective that even if you are “not a minority, you need to understand the perspective of multiculturalism because that will make you a better teacher.”

Another program that District B utilized to diversify its staff originated approximately 15 years ago through a dialog among district members in which a collaborative effort was identified between the district and a college located nearby. The college “got the money together through a grant and started providing coursework for cohorts.” The collaboration has attempted to identify “the most reasonable group of people to get through in education.” According to HRD B, they looked “for people who may have wanted to complete an education but for some reason or another, they weren’t able to complete.” Additionally, the district wanted to find “people who have experience in schools” like associates, so that they could “have a reasonable expectation that they’d be successful as a teacher.” It is HRD B’s contention that “they know what happens in school, they know what happens in [city] schools, because they’re our employees,” and consequently they are more likely to be successful in the district. HRD B values this connection, as it allows the course instructor to “talk about the theory of what’s supposed to happen” with students, then “balance that with what they see is really happening,” and then they can “talk about what really should happen.” HRD B felt that “they’ve had the
real experiences, we just need to hang the conceptual framework on top of that.” HRD B said that if students don’t make it in the education program, they help them identify another field. She explained, at the time of the interview, the district had hired “14 people who have graduated out of that program” and there were “at least that many in the program.”

Some indirect approaches to recruiting include, starting “study circles with teachers to talk about race issues” and “getting into workplace diversity because many times it’s not the interactions that teachers have with kids that make minority teachers not choose the building, it’s the interactions that their colleagues have with them.” HRD B stated that “we all need to be more culturally competent so we can provide a setting where all teachers are valued, particularly minority teachers.” She stated that when the district identifies that people aren’t “walking that walk, the whole organization needs to focus on those things and figure out what it is” and decide if “we need staff development” or if there are the “wrong people in the wrong seats on the bus.” HRD B noted it is hard enough “being the only minority teacher in a building, particularly when you’re the first minority teacher in that building,” let alone having to operate in an environment that is not ready for diversity. She went on to explain, “There’s this level of expectation that’s just out of control” and it’s “too much pressure for anyone.” According to HRD B, “the pressure of being a new teacher is enough, having to deal with some of those cultural issues is more than a new teacher should have to deal with.” She believes it is important to “have a welcoming environment and one way to do that, is to become more culturally competent, as many times people don’t recognize what they they’re doing.”
Additional steps involve providing teachers with opportunities to grow. HRD B believed that it is important that teachers know that you will do everything you can “to help make them successful and follow their career path as far as they want it to go.” She was concerned that at times, “stars” have been lost to other districts. Although HRD B felt that her district had a decent amount of diversity, she recognized that there are some buildings with less diversity and that she loses people who come in with a “passion” to serve a “critical mass” of students with backgrounds similar to their own, even though there are buildings with less diversity that could benefit from their leadership as well. HRD B was concerned that “the schools with the highest number of low-socioeconomic kids are all led by people of color,” whereas that was the complete opposite makeup of the leadership in schools with students of higher-socioeconomic standing. HRD B didn’t “want the minority staff to feel that they have to do that, because that’s hard work.” She advised that “if it’s a choice, that’s fine, but if it’s something we’re doing, I don’t want anybody to think that’s the only place they can be.”

The policy that District B has in place to strengthen the above mentioned strategies involved the negotiated contract. According to HRD B, the policy had been around for approximately 3 years and gave HRD B the ability “to hire outside of the contract, ten teachers of color a year.” The contract required all positions to be posted and that internally candidates got the option to transfer before the position could be publicly posted. The ability to hire outside of the contract allowed her to fill available positions with “a minority candidate.” She explained that her goal was to fill those 10 spots each year. “If I can, and that’s very difficult, if we can do that every year, we will
move to a point of equity in the district around staffing.” She explained that last year, four or five positions were filled outside the contract and the policy came under fire. She felt that this was because of how the whole bargaining process works, as “the general teacher population really doesn’t know what’s in the contract unless it’s something that impacts them.” She said that some teachers thought it was unfair, but the district had “contract language to support it.” Although the district has additional policies to address equal opportunity, HRD B says, “there aren’t any other policies that address recruitment.”

To ensure that diversity issues were being addressed, HRD B looked at a report that showed an overall breakdown of the staff. The report allows the district to look at “how many minority staff members, faculty members, any employment group” are in the district. HRD B used the data to assist them in “setting goals” for their identified need areas. For example, as they looked at achievement data and information from the ACT, they discovered the need for a greater counselor presence in the lives of their students. Having discovered the need, the district began to look at whether they could increase counselor diversity. Recognizing that they couldn’t just create more counselors, the district looked at strategies to train “the existing ones” to help address some of the needs.

Given the above mentioned strategies and policy, HRD B believed the “greatest barrier” to recruitment “is the shortage” itself. She talked about shortages in two areas. The first area of shortage identified in the district was in the area of teacher diversity. HRD B explained that “it’s very hard to recruit minorities when there isn’t a critical mass
of minority staff” in the district in the first place. She pointed out that “no one wants to be the only one.”

The second shortage issue is the overall national shortage. For HRD B, the reality was that “many of those people who chose to be teachers are now choosing to do other things.” At one point, she said:

Education was on the forefront in terms of recruiting and other departments are stepping up to the plate so there’s competition. There are fewer Iowa kids of color, matriculating through the system, through the Regents system, so there’re fewer students to fight over.

An additional concern associated with the national shortage was the geographical location of the city. She believed that most young people want to be in more contemporary cities like “Chicago, Minneapolis, and Houston.” Additionally, it is difficult to pull people away from metropolitan areas. HRD B stated, “I try to look at fairs that may have some minority recruits like historically black colleges and institutions,” but “that has not served us well.” She argued that Iowa just does not win out when people are weighing their decisions: “Now let’s see, do I stay in Atlanta or do I go to Iowa? Do I stay in New Orleans or do I go to Iowa?” During a recent tour of a “group of five historically black colleges in Arkansas,” she “didn’t get one.” She said that even when she is able to recruit away from those areas, they “teach for a couple of years, but then it’s like the ones that stay are the ones that get married here. So I’m seriously thinking about some kind of dating service. It’s just hard to keep them connected.” Even in spite of the odds, HRD B did believe that success could be garnered by recruiting from Midwest cities like “the Chicago’s, the Minneapolis’s, and maybe St. Louis’s of the world,” as they are close to Iowa and thus Midwestern in nature.
Thinking outside of the box, HRD B would like to utilize signing bonuses or be able to offer to cover moving expenses, as she has seen information indicating that “signing bonuses have worked in a number of communities” to hire in difficult times. HRD B would also like to spend additional funds on highlighting the district. As mentioned earlier, HRD B was very interested in keeping the best and brightest in the district. To this end, she was very interested in having deeper conversations with some of the “stars” that she has lost to other Iowa cities in hopes, as she stated, of discovering what “makes principals and teachers make decisions not to be here.”

The third interview in District B was with the superintendent. The initial superintendent interview was performed at the central administration building, and the follow-up was done via telephone. The superintendent of District B was a Caucasian male who had been in the district for 3 years. He identified his primary responsibilities as “being the educational leader” who ensured “financial solvency” while “working with the community.” District B’s superintendent was very accommodating and very excited about the changes that he was seeing in his district. Superintendent B noted that most of his involvement with addressing the recruitment of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds had been to make sure the district “is trying really hard to provide incentives for underrepresented groups that come.” He stated that it is “my responsibility to just keep pushing that envelope as hard as we can.” He explained that he works more directly with the administrative side of recruitment than teacher recruitment. “I am hiring administrators that are qualified and great, that are African American.” Superintendent B said that although “I can’t put an ad in the paper that says
we’re going to have a preference for one or the other,” the district was going to do what it could to diversify. He advised that “if we don’t bring great models in for our young folks to be teachers and to be good administrators that are African American, then we’re not doing our job. We need to be able to show everybody that you, you can do this too.” He went on to say, "If all kids ever see is people that are non-minority or non-underrepresented populations teaching in a school system, then they’re never going to believe that they can do that either.” Superintendent B stated that we need to be able to demonstrate, both in "who teaches here and in our behavior and our actions all the time that it’s crucial and important” that “we celebrate the fact that we have great diversity in our system.” For Superintendent B, the complete fulfillment of that goal would be “to mirror our teaching staff and our administrative staff with the exact population of the kids in our district.”

Superintendent B felt very good about the progress that had been made in the area of administration but not as good about the level of diversity within his teaching population. He explained:

Our African American population is 27.6%. Our total minority population is around 34%. The second highest group being the Hispanic population, which is really growing fairly quickly for us. Although it’s only 6%, it changed from 4%, and then 5%, and then 6% in three consecutive years. Our administrative team is 32% African American. So as we take at a look at those 42 people that represent that team, we exceed the minority populations of African Americans in the district. That isn’t the case in our teaching population though.

HRD B further explained that the district really struggles “in trying to get teachers to be able to come to [city].”
When it came to ensuring that recruitment strategies are being implemented, Superintendent B explained that “we’re not that big here that I can’t just say to [HR director] and the crew that’s working, what are we doing, how are we doing it, who are we talking to”. He said that the HR Director “documents exactly where they go, what they do, and how that’s working, and what’s going on.” He explained that accountability rests in watching “what we’re doing” and “I want to see the numbers.” He stated:

The effectiveness is in the result of; do we have more people hired that come in. It’s as simple as that. If we go out and we try very hard and we don’t get anybody, then we’re not doing the right thing. We need to retool and try something else.

Some of the strategies identified by Superintendent B have been to sell the district. He explained that people need to know that they are needed by the district and they want to know “what’s there, are there other people in [city] that are African American, are there other people in [city] that are Hispanic, because they’re not going to want to be the only person in that whole city usually.” Superintendent B noted that the teachers’ experience working at the school was one thing, but that "we need to address the other two thirds of their world outside of school,” which is just as important. In addition to selling the community, Superintendent B stated that the district provided moving expenses for employees relocating to the area. He explained:

We don’t advertise this, and you're not going to find it in the journal anywhere or in any policy but for groups of people that are underrepresented that want to move and live in [city]. Now if they want to live in [another city] or [another city], this wouldn’t apply, but we’ll pay their moving expenses. We’re willing to pay for up to a certain amount of money, I think it’s up to $5,000 or $3,000, something like that, but plenty to be able to move, so moving to our district isn’t going to cost them anything.” Again, he explained, “that’s not in our contract, that’s not anywhere.
Additional strategies discussed by Superintendent B were continued work with area colleges to identify possible candidates and then taking the necessary steps to place people into buildings “that they’re going to succeed” in. Superintendent B discussed an additional strategy in which the district identifies and seeks to encourage high school students who are potentially going to college to enter education as a profession. According to Superintendent B, the indicator of success would be “if half those kids succeed and go on and get that done.” An additional strategy that Superintendent B was looking into was:

The ability to move some people from the step that they might be on to a little bit higher step, but we again have to stay within the contract to do that. My work with [HR director] and the team is being able to push hard to be able to say, what are we going to do, to be able to do that.

As mentioned by HRD B, Superintendent B identified a policy within the contract that provides the district with the ability to hire outside the contract and place qualified nonwhite teachers in positions without addressing in-district interest first. He explained:

For instance, if we have four openings, we have language in there right now that allows us through diversity to be able to transfer people in diverse populations, underrepresented and diversity issues to certain places to do things and not let people that aren’t in underrepresented groups do that.

He went on to explain that this approach, if necessary, allowed central administration to move people currently within the district around to areas in which they need certain personnel without going through a formal process and opening positions up to everyone.

Even with the above-mentioned strategies in place, Superintendent B reported that salary and weather serve as barriers to recruiting. He noted that “some of the schools in the South are paying more for entry level than Iowa’s paying, not just here, [another city]
or anywhere else. So why would you want to come to Iowa and freeze and make $1,000 less?” The difficulty was not in just competing against southern states. Superintendent B pointed out that in “Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, a beginning teacher will make almost $10,000 more in their first year.” He stated:

If I owe whatever, $50,000, I can go to another state and make $10,000 more a year and pay my loans off a heck of a lot quicker than I can if I come to Iowa and make $26,000 or $27,000 a year. So, that’s a big barrier not just for us here in [city] but for Iowa as a whole.

An additional barrier identified by Superintendent B was that the area colleges and universities aren’t overly diverse and “so we don’t have that many people going into the business that are right here.” So the district has had to convince people that the district was the right place for them. Although the district worked hard to sell the community, the superintendent thought that there are certain aspects of the community that make it hard for people to wholeheartedly sell it. The biggest “struggle” was with saying that there are great opportunities in the community, although there are visible images of “the have's and the have not's” in the community. The district had made progress toward addressing the existing academic gaps, but the clear discrepancies within the community could make the district a difficult sell.

One of the biggest obstacles discussed by Superintendent B was the perceived importance of teacher diversity within the state. He pointed out that on the whole, “Iowa is not a diverse state,” so teacher diversity is “important in some schools in this state and not in others.” He added, “How can we do a better job” addressing teacher diversity when it is “not a topic” that “anybody’s going to have a big seminar about, because it’s only important to about five schools.” Superintendent B concluded that although more
districts have been identified as having urban settings, they are “not that diverse of settings,” so teacher diversity is “not that important for Iowa, and that’s a struggle for me and it’s a struggle for us.”

Thinking outside of the box, Superintendent B believed that several factors would assist the district in overcoming some of the above-mentioned barriers. He said that currently districts are able to hire in the areas of “tech education, math, and science” and bring people in at different points on the salary schedule but the law doesn’t allow the same for diversity issues. Superintendent B felt that differentiated pay should be at least allowed to hire diverse candidates until the teacher diversity “is equal to that of the kids.” He thought that this would help increase the districts success because he believed, “people will move here if they’re going to make more money than they can make somewhere else.” Recognizing “there’s more than just money” involved with recruitment, Superintendent B noted that additional strategies should be implemented to strengthen how the district goes about showing people that they are wanted and that the district is willing to do what it takes to bring them in.

The next interview for District B took place with Teacher B at the central administration building. Teacher B was a biracial woman who had been with the district for 3 years serving as a high school Spanish teacher for 2 years and a lead teacher in the elementary school for 1 year. Teacher B was a product of the district and stayed in contact with district personnel as she went through the teacher education program. Upon graduation, she took a position in another district, but the district’s HR director stayed in touch, and Teacher B was given a job when she decided to return to the district.
Teacher B was very willing to talk about her perspective as a student, teacher, and parent. She noted that it “was very important to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations. It benefits not only the kids but the teachers as they can learn from each other.” Teacher B believed that “teachers coming from different places can identify more with kids who are coming from different situations” in contrast to “teachers who are coming from maybe small town Iowa.” Although she expressed that it is possible for teachers to learn to work with students from diverse backgrounds, she felt that many teachers “can’t necessarily identify with these kids and what they’ve been through and how there are different things that they need in order to learn, in order to be successful in the classroom.” It was her belief that having “people from diverse backgrounds” would lead students to receive “a better overall education.” She said, “It just helps students if you have a person who has grown up in the inner-city and they can talk to you about that.” This is important, she said, “even for kids here in [city] who think that they’re in an inner-city,” as it serves as “a connection that can be made right away.” She noted that research indicates “that teenagers need at least seven adults in their life that they have that connection with, and if they can make those connections at school, that’s such a powerful tool to keep them there.” Teacher B pointed out that teacher diversity is important not just in diverse districts, “but everywhere.” She truly believed that “you would see the connection between student success and the diversifying of teachers within schools.”

Teacher B indicated that the balance between student diversity and teacher diversity “wasn’t even close” in District B. She pointed out that besides Caucasians,
other groups were adequately represented within the teaching ranks. Teacher B contended that there clearly is a need for more African American teachers; however, she noted that with the “influx of Hispanic students,” there needs to be more focus on bringing in Latino educators. She said the district doesn’t have Latino people “that are teachers or even support staff within schools.” She was concerned that Latino students don’t have anyone “that they can look up to and that can help them feel connected to the schools.” She pointed out that this is a huge problem in light of the fact that Latinos have “the number one drop-out rate of anyone.” Teacher B felt that the same could be said for Bosnians in the district. When asked why those gaps exist, Teacher B explained that she has been told that people do not feel they can necessarily raise a family in the community. "It almost can be seen as a stifling community where there’s not a lot to do for young people and teenagers.” She believes that is why “a lot of people go to bigger cities and they don’t stay here. When you can go to a bigger city where there is going to be more to do, you’re going to feel more connected with your community.” Given these concerns, “why would you stay here?” Although an additional concern for Teacher B was pay, the central theme for her rested in what the community had to offer and “the connections” that could be made.

Teacher B wasn’t “sure specifically what [city] does” to address teacher diversity. She was aware that the district attended area college teacher fairs and knew the HR director attempted to get people to at least visit the district, but given the limited amount of diversity at those institutions hosting the teacher fairs, she was “not sure that it’s directly targeted toward minority students.”
Although Teacher B felt that more should be done to increase teacher diversity, she was quick to point out that race was not the most important aspect of the teacher, but rather the “quality” of the teacher. Although she said, “You shouldn’t be hired because we need another black teacher,” she went on to state that the district “should make it a policy to try harder” to bring diversity in. One way of doing that would be to place more emphasis on addressing teacher pay; for her this was a “major” issue, however, the broader issue for Teacher B was what the community has to offer. She believed that people want to know “is this a place where I can raise my family, what are the schools like, not only the school that I’d be working in but the schools that my kids would be attending.” Teacher B would like the community to have more for families to do and believed “it would be helpful if the district worked with the larger companies in the area” to develop these expanded opportunities. In addition to creating more to do, Teacher B felt that an additional benefit of the partnerships would be the creation of professional opportunities (jobs) for “spouses or older children” that may be coming to the community with the prospective employee. Teacher B believed additional partnerships should be made with area colleges to increase diversity and thus “lure them to stay in this community.”

The final interview in District B was performed with the school board member at the central administration building. SBM B was an African American woman in her second year on the school board. Prior to retirement, SBM B had been a teacher in the district. She had been recruited to the district back in the 1960s and taught in District B for 33 years. Her primary responsibilities on the school board were assisting with the
“development of policies, approval of policies, and overseeing the whole district starting
with the superintendent.” As a result of some concerns regarding teacher diversity, SBM
B was encouraged to run for the school board. She said, “I saw that we were not going
forward, we were going backwards. We don’t have as many people of color that we
really need to have. In fact some buildings don’t have anyone of color in the building.”
So she thought, “OK, I’m going run for school board and see what I can do.” Upon
taking her seat on the school board, SBM B said that she is “constantly asking why we
don’t have a person of color in every building” and planned to do this as long as she was
on the board. SBM believed that this is important because “a person living in [District B]
is not in an isolated area. Even if you live in a certain part of town, you’re still going to
come into contact with people from a different culture.” SBM B considered exposure to
diversity as very important and believed every school “should have one, or two, or three
staff persons of a different race.” Additionally, she stated:

We need a balance as far as if you have a building with a large representative
population of people of color, I think that there should be a balance in the staff. If
you have a building where you may have 0.2% people of color, I think that you
should have at least one person on that staff, not the custodian but one person on
the staff of color.

SBM B had this opinion because when she first came to the district she “was the first
African American teacher those students had ever seen.” She explained that “at that time,
they had about two African American students” at the elementary school:

And when those kids would see me, they would just wave. It was like, oh, there
is a teacher that looks a lot like me and I think that’s really important because
young kids get it in their head that if they don’t see anyone that looks like them,
maybe they can’t, you know, obtain that type of occupation.
As a school board member, SBM B was aware of some of the strategies utilized by the district to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. The first strategy identified by SBM B was the district's grow-your-own program. She said, "I think it’s important that we do have a grow-your-own-teacher program." She also explained that she felt that it was "a good program." An additional strategy discussed by SBM B was the district attendance at area teacher fairs and the district’s attempt "to talk up the whole environment, the city and the advantages you will have if you move to a place like [city] or relocated to a place like [city]." SBM B explained that when she thought about the district’s focus on area teacher fairs, she reflected on what brought her to District B and asked herself, "I was recruited from an all black college in Arkansas, Little Rock, Arkansas, why can’t we do those types of things?" Given these views, SBM B encouraged the HR director to travel to the South to recruit, and she was able to assist with this trip. SBM B was not aware of any district policies regarding teacher recruitment and diversity that supported the above-mentioned strategies.

In regard to ensuring that recruitment practices are implemented, SBM B stated, "it is evaluated, I guess [superintendent] and [HR director] will be doing that but, as far as a board member, I have not had any type of communication on the evaluation of how well we are doing as far as recruiting." She went on to say, "I wish we did have an evaluation format and maybe after a few years, we may monitor that more closely because right now it’s basically left up to Human Resources."

SBM B discussed her perception of the obstacles that District B faces in recruitment. Some of those obstacles became quite apparent during the trip to recruit in
the South. As the team prepared to leave, she said, they were very optimistic. However, they quickly realized that “all of the recruiters were looking for the same types of teachers.” An additional obstacle emerged regarding salary. SBM B recalled that when she was recruited to the district 30-plus years ago, the district did well in recruiting because it “paid more” than other areas that had recruited her. During the recent recruiting trip, to the team’s “amazement,” it was discovered that “most all of the large districts paid more than [District B] and some of the even smaller districts’ beginning salaries were better than [District B].” This caused the team to ask themselves, “Why would a person leave their home state and come to an unknown place and get less money?” SBM B explained that when she came to District B, she didn’t know much about the communities that recruited her, and the pay that each district offered her impacted her decision. According to SBM B, the higher salary:

Was the only reason I came, because when you’re starting out, you need every penny you can get. So that was the only reason I came, because they were paying more money. In fact, when I graduated back in the day, [District B] was paying me $2,000 more than I would have made where I was, so naturally that was a draw for me, but it’s not anymore.

She explained that “our salary is not competitive with many other states.”

An additional barrier for the district was the lack of nonwhite teachers available. She observed, “The supply is not there, the demand is great, but the supply is not there.” SBM B believed that people don’t see the value of being a teacher or what a “rewarding occupation” teaching can be. Additionally, SBM B also wondered whether or not the process that people must go through to become educators, “deters a lot of individuals from going into education.”
To overcome these barriers, SBM B suggested that one approach would be for the district to send out “a team of individuals to go out to all the areas that we felt would have people that were in the educational field.” She went on to explain that it would be nice to “not have a cap on how much we can spend.” SBM B also believed that the district would benefit from having “a better salary scale to offer” potential employees. Additionally, since most young teachers are just “getting out of school and they’re broke,” SBM would like the district to be able to provide “funds to help them relocate and find housing.” She said, “Those things will help a person feel better about coming to a strange land, like [city].” SBM saw the importance of having a “support system” in place to make sure they “would always have someone that they could call upon if they had problems or questions,” to address “the little things that people don’t think about.” This is the kind of experience and information, she said, that would lead a prospective employee to say, “That’s a nice place. They’re really going to be looking out for me, I won’t be so lonely there or whatever, like I was.” To take matters a step further, SBM B advised that the district should share the positive points of the district, such as, “we are building new schools and we have a lot to offer them” and “we have the latest equipment in all the new buildings that we are building.”

An additional strategy identified by SBM B was an expanded focus on the district’s grow-your-own program. She understood that because so many kids in the area grew up and chose to “relocate to another area,” that the district could not just depend on the students in the area. Notwithstanding, SBM B would like to see the district's grow-your-own program expanded “a bit more” to get “more staff people involved.” She
explained that currently “it’s just [college professor] up at [local college] in the [teaching program] and [the HR director’s assistant] and [HR director] and I think that is it with that program.” She believed that “it could really be successful if we had mentors of teachers in the classroom talking to these young people to encourage them.” She advised that the program could be further strengthened by matching

Them up with one teacher each semester and then the next semester a different teacher. I think that would really help them and they may decide, yep, I’m going to stay with this, I’m going to be a teacher just like, Mr. Barney, or whatever.

SBM B truly believed that “we need more exposure in that area.”

Finally, SBM B stated:

It’s important that we keep this on the front burner. Just like you doing this survey, I think you are really bringing an awareness to our district indirectly just by you doing this. If we keep individuals like you, individuals like myself, bringing this issue up, then the district will know that we really need to do a better job. We really do. We cannot just depend on what we have in this area.

In addition to the interviews, District B supplied its negotiated agreement, affirmative action plan, and a copy of a brochure explaining the district’s grow-your-own program. A review of District B’s negotiated agreement and affirmative action plan supported a number of items identified in the interviews. An examination of the negotiated agreement found that in the area of staff reduction, District B reserves the right to determine, for employees with not more than 4 years of seniority, who will be “laid off after giving consideration to the employee’s qualifications and the Affirmative Action program needs of the district.” In regard to filling vacancies, the district reserves the ability to exempt up to 10 vacancies from the seniority-based and voluntary transfer-based staffing selection “for the purpose of meeting the District’s Affirmative Action
Goals.” The agreement advises that “none of these vacancies will be the result of layoffs or involuntary transfers.” The ability to fill 10 positions each year with teachers from underrepresented backgrounds was identified by Principal B, HRD B, and Superintendent B.

Additional support of the interviews was found in District B’s affirmative action plan, according to which, the district “promotes equal employment and affirmative action to attain a workforce that is representative of the ethnic and gender diversity of our learning community” (p. 2). District B’s plan goes on to state that the “plan reflects the district’s efforts to address existing workforce imbalances and plan for the realization of our goals” (p. 3). The affirmative action plan provided specific strategies to “take affirmative action in major job categories where women, men, minorities, and persons with disabilities are underrepresented” (p. 8). The strategies were described as follows:

a. Work with the Iowa Association of School Personnel Administrators to develop minority recruitment consortium.

b. Use the National Employment Minority Network to identify and recruit minority professionals to the district.

c. Work closer with Historically Black Colleges, Universities, and other programs that produce significant numbers of teacher candidates.

d. Go to National Minority Recruitment Fairs.

e. Provide resources to the district’s secondary level grow-your-own program.

f. Address the needs of the district’s college-level grow-your-own program.
g. Advertise positions with media both locally and externally that may have substantial diversity.

h. Increase diversity in the district’s non-certified positions.

i. Look at the exit interviews to identify why people leave the district.

j. Continue training staff to adequately address diversity needs. (p. 43).

In the area of accountability, District B’s affirmative action plan provides a detailed description of who is accountable for ensuring the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. According to the plan, the school board will appoint an affirmative action coordinator who will write the affirmative action plan, update it as needed, and “the affirmative action plan shall be reviewed by the Board at least every two years” (p. 8). No other information was identified that described further accountability for District B.

District C

The third district identified was contacted to setup interviews on May 4, 2005. After not hearing back, the researcher sent a follow-up email on May 17 and spoke with the superintendent’s secretary on May 23, who explained that she had become busy and failed to schedule the interviews. Another follow-up email sent on June 9 to both the secretary and the superintendent explained that the interviews could be spread out and performed on multiple days. On June 13, the researcher was advised over the telephone that the interviews had not been scheduled. After consulting with the dissertation committee, the researcher replaced the district with District C, using the same identification criteria as previously used. District C was contacted on June 13, and all of
the interviews except the teacher interview were scheduled for June 23 at the administrative building. Upon beginning the interview with the secondary administrator, it was learned that the participant was not a building principal, but rather served in a central office position as the head of secondary administration. During the interview and during other conversations, another principal was identified to fulfill the secondary principal interview. The teacher interview, made directly with the teacher on June 15, was scheduled for June 27 at a coffee shop. The additional interview with the secondary principal was arranged on June 28 and was performed on July 6 at the participant’s building.

The superintendent interview was performed at the central administration building. The superintendent of District C was a Caucasian male who had served as superintendent for 1 year. Superintendent C reported that he is primarily responsible for “the administrative leadership of the district” through the development and maintenance of the district’s “vision and mission.” District C’s superintendent was very welcoming and willing to share his knowledge of the district, his previous experiences, and his vision for the district. He explained that teacher diversity is “very important.” “On the surface it’s obvious our world is becoming certainly more diverse and you can’t create diversity where you don’t have it.” Additionally Superintendent C observed, “You can’t prepare kids to live in a diverse world if they’re not exposed to that.” He went on to explain:

On a personal level, I’ve worked in an affluent district with almost no minority representation both in the student body and in the teaching staff and I’ve worked in a district that had about 45% of our students that were minority kids with a fair percentage of minority individuals instructing or in administrative positions and I believe that’s the greatest preparation for the next step into their lives.
Superintendent C especially saw the importance of diverse leadership in the lives of students from underrepresented backgrounds. For example, although he recognized that “there’s all kinds of communities within” the African American population “and you can’t paint everyone with the same brush,” he believes that African Americans “generally as a group of people, are underrepresented in about everything that we do” in regard to “all the positive things and are overrepresented in many of the negative things.” According to Superintendent C, this misrepresentation makes the issues associated with the lack of diverse leadership more than “just a school district issue” and expands it into “a community and a national issue” as diversity within all areas represents endless possibilities for all.

Superintendent C explained that most of his experience addressing teacher diversity was in another state where they had a strategic plan “that dealt directly with the recruitment or increasing the diversity within our employee force or workforce.” He noted that District C had been working to include a similar goal in its strategic plan. On his wall, he pointed out a draft of the plan where goal 3 called for the district to “develop a diverse workforce.” Superintendent C stated that this was a “formal statement that we’re going to put some energy and time to make that happen.” He said that in the district where he had worked before, they “developed specific action plans and involved a number of folks from the community and within our school district to increase the candidate pool and then to grow our own.” That district, he explained, made recruiting trips and had some success with programs designed “to help identify promising minority students as they came through our district, to keep tabs on them so to speak and to build
up a communication network” in hopes “of bringing them back to the district where they grew up and graduated.” Superintendent C also explained that the district took steps to increase personal networking because they believed “that everyone in the district was a potential recruiter.” He reported that his previous district “had as much success by word of mouth” as with most of the other programs. Superintendent C explained that he planned to implement in District C strategies similar to the ones that had been successful in his previous district.

In regard to current strategies and policies being implemented in District C to address teacher diversity, Superintendent C explained, “There’s been some personal involvement here, but I don’t believe there’s been a formal plan. I think it’s mostly word of mouth.” He explained that there has been some “attendance at recruiting fairs, but I’ve not seen evidence of an organized plan.” Superintendent C noted that although “our policy does not specifically address” teacher diversity, he planned to lead the district toward “getting a goal” and then the district would “build the action plans under that.” He pointed out that “there’ll be a very formal approach along with the informal approaches.” Superintendent C believed that the district has “opened that door” in regard to addressing teacher diversity as “the board has adopted those goals and one of those goals speaks very directly at increasing the presence of diversity in our teaching and throughout our employees and I think that’s going to be the driver that helps us.”

Superintendent C ensured that the current goals are met by looking at the data that emerges from the hiring process. He believed there needs to be “regular reporting of
progress regarding those plans and strategies” and asserted that these sorts of evaluations need to be ongoing, as it is “too easy for another year to go by” with no change.

An additional level of accountability was apparent from looking at a description of the applicant pool and who actually was selected for the interview pool. Superintendent C recognized that even if the district had a diverse applicant pool, people:

Have a tendency sometimes to hire people that look and talk the game like we do. It’s easy to talk and I suspect that there is a lot that exists on paper in a lot of school districts, but really going back and making sure that you’re actively pursuing what you say you are takes more, and I think data helps advise us in that regard.

Superintendent C observed that a number of factors make addressing teacher diversity difficult. For example, the overall numbers of African Americans that “get to go to college” is small and the “percentage” of “those that elect education is even smaller,” thus creating a very limited supply of available African American teachers. According to Superintendent C, a conflict then emerges because there is a high demand for a limited supply of diverse teachers.

Superintendent C noted that additional problems can surface when you attempt to bring “minority candidates into a largely majority community…there has to be a lot of dialogue, a lot of understanding, addressing what can be some misconceptions, avoiding assumptions, those kinds of things” in order to create a safe place for people. He explained that this is important because there is a level of “apathy” or indifference “that probably resides in all of our populations.” That apathy is magnified by the tendency, previously discussed by Superintendent C, of educational leaders to hire people similar to themselves. In Superintendent C’s experience, “If we don’t aggressively and actively
pursue through strategies to make things happen, they’re just not going to happen. There are too many people, too comfortable with the way things are,” and that makes the change difficult.

To address some of these barriers, Superintendent C recommended that teacher recruitment “has to be a community-wide” endeavor involving a commitment on behalf of the district and the community it serves. At the district level, the district has to be aware of and address the previously mentioned tendency for people “to hire people similar to themselves.” One strategy identified by Superintendent C was for the district to take control of some hiring in order to place more emphasis on “an enriched minority presence.” At the building level, he would like to have an increased “central office presence on some of the selection committees” to assist with ensuring an “objective selection process.”

As mentioned previously, Superintendent C believed that true success is related to connections established within the community. He observed that “having candidates come to you or even starting employment with you is one thing, but having them stay in a community that maybe new to them” is another. To assist with this transition, he stressed the importance that the community understand and support the need for increased teacher diversity and the importance of developing a community where people feel connected. In order to do this, you have to assist people in “overcoming the status quo in a lot of places.” He went on to explain, “I think we have some well-intentioned people that don’t realize the kind of difficulty of what we’re trying to do,” and so districts should be
“spreading that awareness and getting good people involved to help you.” In regard to helping people get connected, he advised:

Sometimes the farther away someone is coming in to the community, the greater the chance is they may leave you after a year or two. So I think developing that kind of inner-related sort of approach within the community, working with the churches, businesses, banks, all those kinds of the things to really help people.

He felt that the community approach is extremely important in districts similar to District C, where the community population is not overly diverse. He explained:

It takes some effort to get them connected in settings where they feel comfortable and have some commonalities and those kinds of things. It’s not just bringing them here, signing them up, and then you’re on your own. I think it has to go much further than that with some very good induction and mentoring strategies early on.

Following the superintendent interview, the HR director for District C was interviewed at the central administration office. HRD C was a white female who had served as the Executive Director of Human Resources in the district for 3 years. Her responsibilities ranged from addressing district needs through hiring, addressing a wide range of employee needs, to handling contract negotiations and other bargaining issues. HRD C seemed very open and genuine throughout the interview. At times, she tearfully discussed her concerns and hopes for the district. She believed the balance of diversity between student and teacher populations “is critical.” When discussing the importance of teacher diversity, HRD C explained that it is “not only good for kids, it’s good for all of us.” She added that a local president of a company explained that:

If we have all of the same people, all of the same engineers from the same university taught by the same professors and ask them to do something new and unique, we’re not going to get anything new and unique. We have to have different people at the table.
HRD C observed, “if we’re going to take kids where they need to be, we’ve got to have everybody at the table, helping us get there.”

Although HRD C had attended recruitment fairs at UNI and Iowa and spoken with student teachers at Iowa, most of her involvement with the recruitment of diverse candidates had been done informally. She explained, “We don’t have any formal strategies other than make as many contacts as you can and try to talk to people about the district.” HRD C advised that most of the district’s strategies to recruit teachers from diverse backgrounds are based on “the standard way that we would recruit all people.” She went on to explain they “try to keep our salaries up, try to keep our benefits up, try to talk with people about once you come to [city], you tend to stay because it’s a great place to work.” To strengthen recruitment at the building level, HRD C tried to meet with the district principals to discuss and provide “some training on what are good equitable recruiting practices.” On a final note, HRD C recommended the district place additional attention on keeping staff once they have been hired. HRD C asserted “retention has a lot to do with recruiting” because it creates a natural network for new hires and is a visible representation that the district is true to the commitment of having a diverse staff.

Although HRD C said that there were no formal policies in place, she spoke highly of the “key strategic goals” that the current superintendent had begun to put in place. Even though the district was just getting started with the goal, HRD C believed that the goal and the efforts behind the goal would take them a “long ways” because the goal is calling for them “to establish a diversified workforce that uses exemplary professional practices and to start measuring it and holding people accountable to it.”
HRD C contended that the current efforts to recruit are hindered by the lack of students interested in becoming educators. She explained that because the numbers are so low, “we tend to fight over the candidates that we have and recruit them away from each other and then gloat, and that’s not effective.” She went on to explain that it can be difficult to “retain people once they’re here and make them feel comfortable.”

In regards to barriers associated with the implementation of a recruitment program, HRD C stated, “a major barrier is we just don’t have any one person assigned to take care of it. We just all shake our heads and worry about it.” An additional concern identified was the importance of having a diverse recruitment team, since it can be difficult to recruit “someone who’s nonwhite when you have a bunch of white people sitting at the table.” A final concern identified by HRD C was similar to one identified by Superintendent C: the possibility of “a backlash” from people who don’t understand “why we’re doing what we’re doing and why we want to place such emphasis on this.”

HRD C was very aware that a lack of understanding could lead to unfair evaluations of recruitment efforts. For example, “if you do some recruiting, and then for the same reasons a white person would be unsuccessful, a nonwhite person is unsuccessful, and then suddenly everyone’s pointing to the recruiting and saying, see, see what this kind of goal gets us.”

Thinking outside of the box, HRD C believed the district would be strengthened greatly by finding “a dynamic individual who is nonwhite and pay them what it takes to come here and do nothing but recruit high quality staff members.” She would “give them an office, give them the resources, allow them to go where they need to go, give them the
resources for the retention and to help these people get certified, and to grow our own.”
In conclusion, HRD C believed that in spite of the difficulties that might emerge as the
district continues to address its’ diversity goal, the district needs “to say, our goals are
still good.”

The third interview in the district took place with a school board member who
happened to be the school board president for District C. SBM C was A Caucasian
woman who had been a part of the school board for 2 years, whose primary
responsibilities in the district are to assist with setting the agenda and facilitating board
meetings, conducting any hearings that involved student expulsions or terminations of
staff or employees, and meeting with the media or other community members when
requested. Although SBM C had not been a part of any teacher recruitment efforts, she
did feel that teacher diversity is “huge.” She went on to explain, “as we shape young
people in the educational environment, they need role models. They need people that
represent to them the good things in life and what they should be doing.” To SBM C,
teacher diversity represented “opportunity and hope that there are really great things out
there.” She believed that this was especially important in District C, where, she stated:

We have a very poor district and in some of our schools, 97% of students are on
free and reduced lunch. That’s a huge population of students and they are a mix
of all kinds of kids in there. So we need people that look like our students that
come from the cultures that our students come from, so that they cannot only
learn about our culture, but we can also learn about theirs.

SBM C was unsure of what steps were being taken to diversify the district. She
explained, “I don’t know if they’re advertising outside of the district. I don’t know if
they’re specifically targeting and recruiting minorities, I don’t know.” Although she was
unsure of what specific recruitment strategies were being implemented in the district, she
did recall a meeting 18 months prior in which the human resource director was asked to
provide “a brief explanation of hiring practices, adherence to policies, and recruitment of
a diverse staff.” SBM C felt as though the meeting was valuable and was looking
forward to having yearly meetings to discuss the district’s status. In regard to results of
hiring efforts, SBM C explained that the school board approves “all employment
contracts so we see on a monthly basis the kinds of people that we’re hiring and then
every year she’s to give us a report about her recruitment efforts.” She added, “since
we’ve targeted a more diverse staff, we hope that that will be included in that report
also.”

In addition to the yearly meetings with the human resource director, SBM C
explained that the superintendent was recently hired with one of his goals/objectives to
“increase the diversity in staff.” She noted that this would be one of the areas that the
superintendent would be evaluated on. Although SBM C was unaware of any strategies
or policies addressing teacher diversity, she did say that she was hopeful that these two
steps would lead to more dialogue regarding teacher diversity and stated that after they
receive their report in the fall, “we are going to have a policy.” She went on to state, “if
we do have a policy, I’m not sure exactly what it states and I’m certainly not sure that it’s
followed.”

SBM C believed that one of the biggest barriers to increasing teacher diversity
was “the thought that you can’t do it.” After setting goals to increase diversity in her
district, SBM C explained that she heard a board member say, “You can go ahead and set it but it will never be done.” She explained:

Statements like that to me are huge obstacles because the expectation isn’t really there. It’s there in words, but it’s not there in expected action. So when you go to monitor the progress of something like that, if you never had the expectation of seeing that to begin with, at the end of the year and movement has not been made, or very little, you go, "See, I knew we couldn’t meet that anyway.

An additional barrier identified by SBM C was the physical topography of Iowa. However, she pointed out that a broader issue is connected to the amount of competition that exists over the limited pool of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. She observed, “the pool of people that are interested in education is kind of small to begin with.” She went on to explain, given the shrinking number in general, “it’s hard to attract men (whether they’re of color or not) to a K-6 environment and it’s increasingly harder to attract the best and the brightest.” SBM C asserted that “the overall value of education is low” and she didn’t feel that “society values it at the level that they should,” thus affecting the compensation that teachers receive in Iowa as compared with other professions.

To overcome the above-mentioned barriers, SBM C recommended that because Iowa doesn’t have “lakes, oceans, vistas, or mountains,” recruiters should focus on the “quality of life, quality of education, sense of community and friendliness to attract people.” She went on to explain that when recruiting, it is not “good enough to put an ad in the surrounding papers.” She stated that you have to go “into other states” and Actively seek out different groups. To say that you advertised across the state or you threw it on the Net, well, that hits a traditional group of people that regularly use those means of communication. I would really like to see some creative recruiting efforts.
Some of those creative approaches identified by SMB C included the expansion of a
grow-your-own program. To SBM C, these sorts of efforts would require the district to
financially support programs that provide counseling and “the kind of grooming, the kind
of pushing, and the kind of focusing to try to help students choose a career path maybe
that would go into education or auxiliary services to education that might enhance the
environment.” An additional approach identified by SBM C was to offer incentive pay,
which, she said, would “attract good teachers to high poverty schools that have
underperforming students.” She further believed that the district should offer
“professional development with opportunities for expanded educational degrees” and
allow teachers to move around the district “so people don’t feel stale and feel like they’re
growing in their environment.” SBM C also discussed the importance of addressing
diversity within the leadership as a way to increase overall diversity. She observed that
“it can’t just be in the school staff, it really has to be something that’s embraced
throughout the entire system” and within the community.

The fourth interview, with a teacher from District C, took place at a local coffee
shop. Teacher C seemed very comfortable throughout the interview process. Teacher C,
from the Middle East, was in her third year of teaching. Teacher C was not recruited to
the district but joined it after moving to the area with her husband. She subbed initially
and then discovered that a job was going to become available. She explained that she
called the district multiple times about the upcoming position but was advised that no
positions were available. Teacher C reported that she “insisted” that there was a job and
dropped off her resume. She was contacted a few weeks later for an interview and was subsequently hired by the district.

Teacher C’s time in the district had allowed her to see that “it is very important” for the district to seek a balance in the diversity of its teacher population that correlates with that of its student population. Teacher C explained that the student body in District C is “extremely diverse and I don’t see the diversity in the staff members.” She noted that although the “principle of diversity” is important within the district, the lack of it within the teaching ranks does not fulfill the district’s value of diversity. Specifically, Teacher C believed that there needs to be an increase in the number of African American and Asian teachers, since those are the areas in which she sees the biggest discrepancies between student and staff diversity. She remarked that America is a “melting pot” and teachers “deal with students from different backgrounds and different socioeconomic standing and so we need to be aware of where they’re coming from and what they have to deal with before they come to the classroom.” Teacher C pointed out that a lack of understanding of difference is prevalent in society in general, and if “teachers don’t make students feel comfortable and make them feel like they exist, I’m afraid they are distancing them ... because they are leaving.” As a result, Teacher C believed that the issue “needs more attention” and the increase of teacher diversity could assist the educational system in connecting with students from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

When asked why she thinks the imbalance exists between teacher diversity and student diversity, Teacher C explained that she was “not sure.” However, she said that it would be rare to find a colleague with a background similar to hers (Middle Eastern) in
the area because she believes that “most teachers from the Middle East will go to California or Detroit, where major populations from the Eastern community are.” She related that when she tells other Middle Eastern “teachers about Iowa, they say what are you doing there?” Teacher C was unaware of any other barriers to recruitment beyond the tendency of groups of people to go to areas where there are people of similar backgrounds. Additionally, she was not aware of any policies or strategies utilized within the district to address teacher diversity.

To improve teacher diversity, Teacher C would like to see the district go to colleges, meet with seniors before they graduate, and talk to them about coming to teach in the district. She believed that the district should work with teacher education programs to assign student teachers from diverse backgrounds to perform their student teaching experiences in the district. She also said that it is important that the district work to improve the “staff’s view of diversity.” She stated:

> It wouldn’t hurt to when we have all those staff meetings to, for example, introduce an idea on how to deal with this person from this particular background or to take a couple hours to learn about our students’ backgrounds before we meet them. I think that would help tremendously... As an educator, I don’t know how to get to that student unless I know where that student is coming from.

She advised that not only do teachers need to make “it a priority to learn about students backgrounds,” but it is also important that the district “educate teachers about other teachers and their backgrounds, what they eat, how they smell, or how they look.” She observed that although the staff members whom she works with are “amazing” when it comes to diversity issues, she recognized that “you can still feel that it isn’t 100%, that there is something going on.” She explained, “I think teachers need to be aware of that
and the best place to introduce that is in faculty meetings especially those in-service days where the group meets to discuss things on how to improve the climate.” Teacher C believed that to truly address school climate and diversity issues, teachers should look at “improving our personal views of each other and the students.”

The fifth interview for District C was with a junior high principal, who was highly recommended by the superintendent’s secretary and by the school board president. They said that Principal C had been the most successful in regard to attracting diverse teachers. The interview took place at the principal’s building in the library because the building was undergoing some renovations. Principal C was a Caucasian female in her 3rd year at the building but in her 13th year in the district. She was very welcoming and willing to discuss what she knew about the district, her building, her role in the building, and her staff. Additionally, since the interview took place in a common area of Principal C’s building, there was a lot of staff traffic through the area and Principal C took time to introduce members of her staff from underrepresented backgrounds. Principal C described her primary responsibilities as “attracting and retaining quality staff members, teachers, paras, and secretaries.” She also sought to maintain a “safe and orderly environment” while managing curriculum and instruction and “everything that goes into running a building.”

Principal C said that teacher diversity is “very important” and “maybe even more so in schools that don’t have any diversity.” As for her building where “34%” of her “kids are African American,” she believed that it is extremely important for the students have to “African American males” as role models. She explained that she has “a lot of
kids who don’t have parents or don’t have dads in the home ... so I make sure that I hire as many men as I can.” She added that it’s as important for white kids to have African American teachers as it is for African American kids.” Principal C noted that when she initially took over the building, “it wasn’t cool for African American kids to do well in school.” She said that the first time she did an honor roll assembly all the kids that stood up were white. She doesn’t know what led to the academic disconnect but they have worked to change things by collectively using their nonwhite teachers to raise the academic performance of their nonwhite students. She explained that the presence of a diverse staff allowed her kids, whether black or white to see “that, doing well is for everybody. That it is cool to achieve and to do well.” Principal C believes by providing diverse role models, the students see “African American adults in our building working together, being very cohesive.” It is her belief that these types of experiences “can make statements to kids.” Additionally, she thinks “that having the African American adults say certain things to the kids is very meaningful to them” as “they can talk about their own struggles.” This is important to Principal C because “we have a whole generation who don’t know and their parents don’t know the struggles of who came before them ... and so a big part of this is teaching history to kids and where they came from and why they need to do better.”

Principal C explained that in her district, “the building principal has total autonomy in hiring. I do all of my own attracting and interviewing, and reference checks and recommendation, and have never had anybody else overrule me or try to overrule me.” Much of Principal C’s recruitment to diversify her teaching staff had been through
very informal avenues. The first teacher that she recruited was a 16-year-old local high school student. Principal C recounted that while at the grocery store, she went through the check-out line of an African American student from one of the high schools. Over time she got to know the young lady and “started talking to her about being a teacher, and every Sunday we had the same conversation about being a teacher and then where she was going to college and she ended up going to UNI.” When the student would return home from college and work at the grocery store, Principal C would continue going through her line, and they would talk about her becoming a teacher and “going into special education.” They “always talked about her coming back and teaching in [District C],” and Principal C would talk about having her come back and teach for her. Principal C noted that it “was a real long process” that “took about 6 years” before “she finished her degree and I hired her as a teacher at [elementary school].” Principal C stated, “Not only am I committed to hiring minority candidates, but also hiring graduates from [city], and that’s actually where I think we’re probably most successful here.” Principal C believed that this commitment was important and the efforts were well spent, as the teacher “is still with the school district and is a very, very good teacher.”

Further examples of recruitment efforts shared by Principal C were her descriptions of how she searches for items that tip her off to the “minority” status of a candidate. She explained:

I don’t know if you’re going to hear these stories anywhere else, but I’m going to be really honest with you about how I find minority candidates because if you wait for somebody to land, you know in your lap, you’re not going find any minority candidates.
Principal C went on to describe multiple occasions in which she proceeded to look more closely into candidates based on hunches she had. She explained that she was drawn to one candidate after hearing his voice on the phone. She said, “There was nothing in the application, when I talked to him, I thought he sounded like he was African American, and that was the only tip off I had.” After inviting him in for “a real rigorous interview” (as they “had so many great candidates”) and after having the candidates “teach a lesson … he definitely came out on top.” Principal C was very impressed with him as an educator so she decided to take him with her to the junior high when she took it over.

Principal C related that she identified another candidate as she worked with another administrator to find candidates for an opening. While looking through the resumes, the other administrator said, “[teacher] and she says, ‘I think she sounds African American.’” She said that they looked more closely at the “whole application and resume and we found a place in the back that said that she had belonged to an honors society for African American students when she was in college.” Although concerned that the candidate was from Chicago and that she would probably not want to leave Illinois to come to Iowa, the two administrators proceeded to call her in for an interview. Principal C explained that the candidate had to interview in front of seven interviewers who had been doing interviews all day and were tired. She went on to explain that when this brand new teacher walked in and began talking, it was:

The first time, I’ve ever, ever saw, maybe the only time I’ve ever seen this, and everybody sat up and leaned forward to hear what she had to say. I mean she just connected with us immediately, and she walked out and everybody says, ‘Oh, we
got to have her. She was just a lock and she’s been with me for 3 years and she is a Master Teacher, even after 3 years.

Another example of creative approaches to diversifying the staff was the hiring of people without teaching licenses to teach programs within the school. For example, Principal C brought in a couple to put together a gospel choir. She explained, “They are not certified teachers but they did come in and teach that class for us.”

An additional example of recruitment described by Principal C involved meeting with a candidate, even though no positions were available. Principal C felt that the interviewee was someone whom the district couldn’t ignore so she contacted the central office for funding to hire her part-time. The district agreed and allowed Principal C to hire the person. She explained that the district found a place for a good candidate, even though there wasn’t an initial need. Principal C added that this also happened with two other candidates from diverse backgrounds as well as after she identified them.

Although most of Principal C’s recruitment had been through informal channels, she had recently instituted a program in her building to increase the availability of students at the college level who could eventually become teachers. Principal C’s program pulled together all of her nonwhite teachers and staff members to work with approximately 30 kids throughout the year and through a summer program. She believed that the program had done a lot to raise the academic achievement and awareness of her African American kids. Principal C explained that she “had a group of 20 eighth graders, African American kids who were leaving and had at least a 2.5 or above GPA and hooked them up with mentors to follow them through high school.” The mentors were “all African American adults from our community who will follow them all the way
through high school.” Additionally, she explained that she “met with [community college], met with the president and three vice presidents and we’re going to hook them up with [community college].” She went on to explain that the presidents are working on providing scholarships for those kids if they do everything they need to do in the next 4 years. “The plan,” she said, "is for them to go on after [community college]” because “we know that kids who go to a 2-year college are twice as likely to graduate from 4-year college.” Principal C stated:

Kids who are in [program] right now, a number of them have committed already. They want to go on to school, they want to be teachers, they want to come back to [city] and teach. I think that’s where we’re going to be most successful and it probably should have been done years ago at the district level, but it hasn’t been. . . . Maybe the reason it hasn’t been, is because they don’t have that relationship with the kids that we do. We have the relationship with our African American kids, we can talk to them all the way through high school, hook them up with a mentor.

As additional support to the program, Principal C had assigned one of her liaisons to spend one day a week at the feeder high school to “work more with the 20 or more kids” in the program “every year and make sure that they sign up for the right classes, that they’re not dropping classes, and that they take the ACT.” Principal C believed that the liaison’s role “is to be a real strong advocate for kids.” She said that they “worry about kids when they get to high school because we take really good care of them and I know everybody tries to but the larger the high school, I think the easier it is for kids to lose focus.” So for Principal C, the liaison could help the students in making the connections at the high school as he or she had done at the junior high level. According to Principal C, these steps and supports were because “we’re going to grow our own teachers.” It is through these strategies that Principal C believed her building was “going
to be the most successful” at improving student achievement and diversity within the teaching ranks.

When asked what the district does to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, Principal C stated:

I don’t know what the district does. I don’t know if they go to job fairs. The only lead I had ever gotten from the district was [reading teacher]. But I think that [reading teacher] just showed up because her husband came to town.

Principal C explained that the previous “Associate Superintendent here for a while and Head of Elementary Ed ... was more of a recruiter ... and was much more aggressive than what we have now.” Principal C was aware that the district was beginning to discuss the issue and noted that there “was something new that was maybe just written into our teacher contract.” She added that she believed the item addressed “attraction and retention of minority candidates and it had to do with not rifting or reduction in force, and being able to bypass rifting of minority candidates.” Principal C was unclear about how the effectiveness of such recruitment policies and procedures were to be evaluated or monitored by the district.

As Principal C identified concerns for District C’s attempts to diversify, she indicated that “we don’t have a vital African American community like you would find in a large city.” She went on to explain that even those African Americans who have grown up in the city tend to say things like, “you know it’s hard to find a place to get your hair done. This is not a community that would attract and doesn’t have the cultural opportunities to attract minority candidates from outside.”
To strengthen District C's ability to overcome the previously mentioned barriers, Principal C advised that districts should work to provide employees with opportunities to connect. Whether through connections with graduate programs or with the school or the community, the schools need to make sure they provide opportunities for people to feel connected or, as pointed out previously, they will leave. Principal C discussed a strong mentoring program as a way to make connections. She said for one of her hires, "I think that connection, that real personal connection here at school, was really important, that she had somebody to take care of her here" and help "create those relationships."

Thinking outside of the box, Principal C observed:

We’re most successful when we start with kids who are young. Just like with [teacher] and talk to her all the way through high school about being a teacher and help make that connection. She didn’t need me to help make the connection to college, she did that on her own.

However, Principal C felt many of the kids who come through school need that connection and schools need to talk “frankly with kids about GPA and what it means and passing classes.” Principal C explained:

They need to hear the importance of signing up for the right classes so that when they get to high school they go through in 4 years, and take the ACT or SAT, so that when they graduate in 4 years, they’re ready to enter a Regents institution, if that’s what they choose to do.

Principal C believed that these strategies would better assist the district in increasing its "graduation rates of African American kids from [high school]” which has “been a serious problem in our district.” Additionally, an increase in the graduation rates of underrepresented students would mean an increase in the overall availability of potential future teachers.
An additional strategy identified by Principal C involved the expansive hiring of non-certified staff who work directly with students. She explained that “we have people in our building who are not certified teachers but they do a lot of teaching and they really make great connections with kids and are really a vital part of our school.” Although Principal C thought that the district had done a great job in allowing principals to hire non-certified staff “to help make connections with African American kids and their families when they come here,” she wasn’t very sure that the people were necessarily “given a very clear job description.” Instead she reported that the positions “developed over time based on their strengths.” Notwithstanding, Principal C valued these positions because the additional staffing was a major part of assisting the district in addressing the needs of the growing numbers of “families who are coming from large metropolitan areas, Chicago particularly.” The additional staffing assisted the buildings in providing “a real strong orientation program” that helped “assimilate families into this is how we do things in [city], and how you get along in school.”

In closing, Principal C wanted to share that “you can’t sit around and just wait for something to happen or wait for somebody to come to you.” She explained that “if you want a more diverse teaching staff, you have to be very proactive. You have to do.” She said that she “wouldn’t do anything that wasn’t appropriate, but I will, however I can, find people. I’ll go out and find them, get them in, you know, work with them, and hire them when I can.” Although Principal C believed in what she was doing and knew that “it’s not going to diversify our staff right away,” she felt that “at least for [city], working with kids in middle school about being teachers, helping them make those connections,
and coming back to our district is a long term issue” that “we probably should have been doing 10, 15, 20 years ago.”

In addition to the interviews, District C supplied its negotiated agreement and affirmative action plan, both of which supported a number of items identified in the interviews. An examination of the negotiated agreement found that in the area of reduction in staff, as mentioned by Principal C, District C reserves the right to “bypass seniority considerations if an employee is essential to maintain existing programs or the affirmative action program.”

Additional support of the interviews was found in District C’s affirmative action plan. According to District C’s affirmative action plan, "the district is committed to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and non-discrimination” (p. 2).

District C’s plan is designed to address:

Employment; promotion, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rate of pay or other forms of compensation; selection for training and staff development; sexual harassment; and employee relations (p. 9).

The specific strategies described by District C’s affirmative action plan to “increase the number of underrepresented staff members and improve the balance between males and females” centered primarily on making those in charge of hiring aware of district/plan expectations and on the encouragement of administrators “to seek and employ underrepresented candidates for positions where representation is disparate” (p. 35). Beyond this description, there were no specific strategies for the recruitment of underrepresented candidates.
In the area of accountability, District C’s affirmative action plan provides a detailed description of who is accountable for ensuring the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. According to District C’s affirmative action plan, “the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee and all district administrators” are responsible for the “development, implementation, and monitoring” of the affirmative action plan (p. 9). The Board of Directors shall support the “District’s Non-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Affirmative Action Plan” by reviewing “the annual progress report as submitted by the superintendent or his/her designee” (p. 29). The superintendent has the “ultimate responsibility” of the plan, and corresponding efforts are to be annually reviewed and detailed in an annual report to be presented to the Board (p. 29). The district administrators are expected to “adhere to the policy and intent” of the plan through efforts to that make “progress towards the goals and objectives of the Plan” (p. 29). Central office administrators are expected to “hold principals and supervisory staff accountable for promoting” the district’s equity values (p. 29). The administrative effort is to be evaluated through the building level efforts to reach goals, their identification of plan shortcomings, and their overall review of building-level efforts. No efforts beyond these were identified in District C’s negotiated agreement or affirmative action plan.

Participant Responses to Interview Questions

Three sets of questions were utilized to identify answers to these four research questions:
1. What are the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

2. What are the recruiting procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

3. How does the district ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

4. What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?

The questions and answers from Districts A, B, and C have been grouped according to district positions.

Summary of Findings

This chapter examines data collected through interviews from three different urban Iowa school districts. The participants in the study included three superintendents, three school board members, three HR directors, three principals, and three teachers. Additionally, all available supporting documents were analyzed. Each of these data sources were combined to give a description of the commonalities and differences that exist in the policies and practices of the selected Iowa school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds.

The themes that emerged from the data analysis include:

1. Participants expressed that teacher diversity is very important or even “crucial” (Superintendent B).

2. Concerns were expressed regarding low teacher salaries and location “as teacher pay is down on the list” comparative to other states (Principal A).
3. Although there are areas with high levels of diversity, there are concerns about Iowa’s overall lack of diversity, support structure, and how that lack of structure impacts particular districts that have diversity thus indicating that teacher diversity “is important in some schools in the state and not in others” (Superintendent B).

4. Although there may be formal plans and policies on paper, the communication of plans, implementation, and accountability seemed unclear as shared by SBM C when she explained that “if we do have a policy, I’m not sure exactly what it states and I’m certainly not sure that it’s followed.”

5. Most of the implemented recruitment strategies identified in two of the three districts appeared to be traditional strategies meant to attract general members of the population and not specific to recruiting underrepresented teachers. (For example, attend primarily Iowa Career Fairs with low to no minority representation.)

6. District personnel expressed that the study was beneficial to the district because it brought an “awareness to our district, indirectly… just by bringing this issue up; then the district will know that we really need to do a better job” (SBM C).

SBM A advised that the interview had been:

Helpful because it’s made me realize that perhaps as a board member, perhaps we’re not doing enough to actively pursue that, and you know we need to make sure that our administration understands that we as a board value that and we want to make sure that we’re doing everything we can to implement and monitor and properly evaluate that so we can continue to identify strategies that help us, that can help us be successful at that.
7. It is difficult or “intimidating” being one of few nonwhites in an environment where the majority of individuals are white (Teacher A).

8. The establishment of “real personal” relationships or connections is a very important part of the recruiting and retention process (Principal C).

9. It is important that you make sure that districts have a good product to sell; that the district uses a diverse team to share it, and that the district presents “it in a manner that they understand it and see the benefit to them” to both get and keep people in the district (HRD A).

10. The demand is high for teachers who come from underrepresented backgrounds, but the supply is low as “people with really good skills have a lot more to chose from” (Principal B).

Findings Related to Research Questions

To assist in summarizing the findings, the four driving research questions are used to organize the data.

Research Question 1

Question 4 asked, “What are the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?” The strategies identified in District A included hiring “a superintendent with a diversity goal” (School Board Member, Superintendent). Members from District A also “attend career fairs at Iowa, UNI, St. Ambrose, and Western Illinois,” and an AEA event (Superintendent and HR Director). District A’s personnel really tried to focus on the benefits of the district (Principal, School Board Member, HR Director). The Principal in
District A discussed the importance of looking for and following up on information that indicates race in the application materials received by the district. The HR director spoke with groups of student teachers from area colleges and attempted to convince student teachers that District A is the district for them to complete their student teaching placement. Additional strategies discussed by the HR Director included the posting of positions on the Web, networking with HR directors in other areas, and contacting candidates that contact the district. The use of informal connections to find possible employees for the district was discussed repeatedly by the members of District A.

The strategies implemented in District B included sending out a diverse recruitment team with fliers and displays that emphasized the district's diversity and other positive qualities (HR Director, Superintendent, HR Director). Some of District B's efforts centered on informal conversations to keep track of, contact, and recruit back to the district people who have Iowa or district ties (Principal, HR Director). Formally, District B recruits from area colleges through teaching fairs and by contacting such institutions as the Regents universities (Iowa, Iowa State, UNI), through meetings with the education representatives from the Board of Regents to identify diverse students who are coming through their teacher education programs (HR Director, Superintendent, School Board Member). Some of District B's recent efforts have been spent recruiting students from southern institutions (New Orleans, Arkansas) whose student enrollments historically have had a high percentage of nonwhite students (HR Director, Superintendent, School Board Member). Additionally, the district has started a grow-your-own program that works with junior high students, high school students, and district
associates. Members of District B believed the grow-your-own program allowed the
district to tap into its own talent pool (HR Director, Superintendent, and School Board
Member). Some indirect strategies included addressing the district- and building-level
climates through the hiring of diverse leadership, study circles on race, and other
educational experiences (HR Director, Superintendent). Additional strategies identified
in District B’s affirmative action plan included use of the National Employment Minority
Network to identify candidates and continued efforts with the Iowa Association of School
Personnel Administrators to address diversity needs.

The strategies identified in District C included hiring a superintendent with one of
his job goals being to increase “the presence of diversity in our teaching” and staff
(Superintendent, HR Director, School Board Member). Although there had been some
attendance at recruiting fairs (UNI, Iowa) and presentations to student teachers at Iowa,
most examples of strategies centered on informal approaches such as “word-of-mouth
recruitment” by establishing networks in the community or outside to make as “many
contacts as you can and try to talk to people about the district” (Superintendent, HR
Director, Principal). For the most part, the district relied on the “standard way that we
would recruit all people” which was to keep salaries and benefits up and sell people on
the district and community (HR Director, School Board Member). Some members of the
district took steps to closely review applications for signs of diversity among the
candidates that contact the district (Principal). The district has also been willing to hire
uncertified staff to teach special courses and to hire quality teachers even when no
openings were available (Principal). An indirect approach that had been implemented in
one of the buildings is a program that was designed to increase the number of college-eligible minority students. It was hoped that these students would then be in a position to become teachers if that was what they would choose to become (Principal).

Research Question 2

Question 2 asked, "What are the recruiting procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?" District A had within their "Master contract" the ability to reserve "8 positions per year for affirmative action hiring" (Principal, HR Director, negotiated agreement).

District B had within their board policy that everyone was responsible for recruitment (HR Director). The Master Contract cited the right "to hire outside of the contract 10 teachers of color a year" and place them accordingly without regard to seniority guidelines or other contractual issues. This allowed them to expedite the hiring process and place people in whatever building they chose (Principal, HR Director, negotiated agreement). The negotiated agreement provided further administrative discretion when the district needed to reduce staff. The negotiated agreement provided administrators with the discretion of considering the "Affirmative Action program needs" of the district when considering who would be laid-off. This allowed the administrator to disregard seniority with employees with no more than 4 years of seniority. Another policy not covered in the negotiated agreement or affirmative action plan was the district's willingness to pay $3,000 to $5,000 for moving expenses to "groups of people that are underrepresented that want to move and live" in the district (Superintendent).
District C had within its teacher contract the ability to “bypass rifting of minority candidates” when there was a need to reduce staff (Principal C, negotiated agreement).

Research Question 3

Question 3 asked, “How do the districts ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?” The interviews in District A revealed that accountability involved the sharing of student and teachers percentages with the School Board Director last year in conjunction with a review of the affirmative action plan (School Board Member, HR Director). However, the affirmative action plan called for additional steps. According to District A’s affirmative action plan, the superintendent was responsible for the overall “effective implementation of the plan.” The district administrators were to ensure that “employees are not discriminated against in any aspect or condition of employment” and that “equal employment opportunity and affirmative action standards are included in the performance evaluations of those directly supervised.” The program director of equity was in charge of developing, implementing, and monitoring the plan and policies. Through monitoring efforts, the equity director was to “identify problem areas and measures for corrective efforts” through the establishment of goals and objectives. The equity director was also in charge of putting together a diverse equity committee and must communicate the affirmative action plan both “internally and externally.” The equity committee was then in charge of “monitoring and providing feedback to the district regarding affirmative action and equity efforts.” The committee was also to review policies related to “equity efforts and
make recommendations for change” in the areas of equity, multicultural/gender/fair education, equal employment, and affirmative action. According to the plan, “recommendations shall be made to the Associate Director of Staff Development, Superintendent’s Team, and the Board of Education.”

In District B, although Board Policy 404.1-R states, “initial contact with prospective candidates may be made at any time by anyone in the schools or in the community. Staff members will be encouraged to suggest outstanding candidates to the Associate Superintendent for Human Resources,” almost all of the recruitment efforts started with the HR Director. The HR Director put together and maintained the diversity of the teams that went out and made sure that they were all saying “the same thing” (HR Director). The HR Director also examined a report showing an overall break down of “how many minority staff members, faculty members” and the numbers of any other groups, and then goals were set for identified areas. The Superintendent periodically asked the HR Director about those numbers and what the district was doing (HR Director, Superintendent). According to the affirmative action plan, this information was to be shared with the school board every 2 years.

In District C the superintendent examined the data that emerged from the hiring process. Specifically, he looked at a description of the applicant pool and then who actually was selected for the interview pool (Superintendent). In the past, the HR Director provided information to the school board regarding “hiring practices, adherences to policies, and recruitment of diverse staff” (School Board Member). The school board did receive a copy of all employment contracts so that the members could see the types of
people that being hired, but racial information was not included (School Board Member). The HR Director tried to meet with the district principals two times a year to discuss and provide “some training on what are good equitable recruiting practices” (HR Director). Outside of these visits, the building principal said that she had “total autonomy in hiring” (Principal).

Additional expectations identified District C’s negotiated agreement called for “the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee and all district administrators” to be responsible for the “development, implementation, and monitoring” of the affirmative action plan. The Board of Directors should support the “District’s Non-Discrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Affirmative Action Plan” by reviewing “the annual progress report as submitted by the superintendent or his/her designee.” The superintendent had the “ultimate responsibility” of the plan, and corresponding efforts were to be annually reviewed and detailed in an annual report to be presented to the Board. The District C’s administrators were expected to “adhere to the policy and intent” of the plan through efforts that made “progress towards the goals and objectives of the Plan.” Central office administrators were expected to share expectations and “hold principals and supervisory staff accountable for promoting” the district’s equity values. The administrative effort was to be evaluated based on building-level efforts to reach goals, identification of plan shortcomings, and the overall review of building-level efforts.
Research Question 4

Question 4 asked, “What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?” District A personnel stated that the pools appeared to be low whether it was the profession, the desire to be in a bigger market area, or the difficulty in convincing people to leave warmer climates for Iowa’s cooler climates (Superintendent, Teacher, HR Director, Principal, School Board Member). An additional concern was that it was “intimidating” being/feeling like the only nonwhite teacher or representative of a given racial group (teacher). Furthermore, it was believed that District A’s teacher and administrative pay/incentives were “really low,” especially when compared with other nearby states where applicants can “make $10,000 more a year” (Teacher, Principal, School Board Member). Cultural community activities did not appear to be present (Principal, Superintendent). Some members of District A questioned whether an “earnest effort” had been made to recruit from diverse areas and believed that any effort “to start any type of programs that recruited minorities” would be helpful (Principal, Teacher, Superintendent). It was also mentioned that there appeared to be a need for someone to be hired to “be in charge of recruiting minorities” or the need to have a “recruitment committee to take a really strong look at what we are doing” (Teacher, HR Director). Finally, it was not clear whether members of the district would support or “understand the need” for aggressive efforts to recruit diverse teachers (HR Director).

Members of District B expressed that traditional efforts tended to attract traditional populations. Additionally, it was stated that the supply of diverse teachers in
general was low partly because universities in the area aren't overly diverse, the value of
the education profession had diminished, high-performing minorities had many more
options than they have had in the past, and there was a high demand for minorities in a
number of other areas (Principal, HR Director, Superintendent, Teacher, School Board
Member). Furthermore, education tended not to pay well and “they can make a lot more
money somewhere else” (Principal, Superintendent, Teacher, School Board Member). It
was also noted that Iowa may not be considered a very desirable place to live by young
up-and-coming educators, whether it be the weather or other reasons (HR Director,
Superintendent, and Teacher). It was believed that young minorities were more likely to
choose metropolitan areas like Chicago, Minneapolis, or St. Louis, as the District B
community appeared to some as “stifling” with not much to offer (HR Director, Teacher,
and School Board Member). An additional concern was that teacher diversity was not
necessarily valued by everyone, so aggressive recruitment strategies might not be sought,
accepted, or supported by the contract, the district, or the community (Principal, HR
Director, and Superintendent). It was believed that this lack of value created an
unwelcoming climate both in the schools and the community. The prevailing opinion
was that the combination of an unwelcoming environment, the lack of a “critical mass of
minority staff,” and gaps between community have's and have-not’s could drastically
affect one's desire to be a part of the educational community and the community as a
whole (Principal, HR Director, Superintendent, Teacher).

District C believed that a huge barrier was the lack of a formal plan or policy in
place to address teacher diversity or the identification of someone specifically responsible
for recruitment (Superintendent, HR Director). A nationwide issue identified by District C was that the overall numbers of African Americans who go to college is low and the competition for hiring those who value education as a profession was extremely high (Superintendent, HR Director, School Board Member). It was believed that the district’s pay and geographical location might not be appealing enough to entice and recruit people to come to the district (School Board Member). Additional concerns in the district centered on the problems that emerge from bringing a minority population into a primarily majority population. People naturally want to be a part of a community where there are others like them represented and there are cultural opportunities for them (Superintendent, HR Director, and Teacher). It was felt that the district would not be able to retain people if they do not feel supported or wanted (Superintendent, HR Director). Members of the district argued that people were very comfortable with the way things were and tended not to see the need for change or even the possibility that change could take place (School Board Member). This had manifested itself in at least two ways. First, it is believed that people tended to hire people similar to themselves from traditional groups and would only reach those groups through traditional avenues (Superintendent, School Board Member). The second issue arose from a concern for potential “backlash” from people who didn’t understand the importance of the emphasis on diversity (Superintendent, HR Director).
Table 1

District A Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Hire superintendent w/ diversity goal</td>
<td>*Set aside 8 positions per year for affirmative action hiring</td>
<td>*In hiring of superintendent who is responsible for overall implementation of the affirmative action plan</td>
<td>*Low supply of and high demand for nonwhite teachers creates smaller available group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Attend career fairs at Iowa, UNI, St. Ambrose, and Western Illinois.</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Director of Equity is in charge of developing, implementing, &amp; monitoring plans and policies</td>
<td>*People interested in warmer climates and larger markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Closely review applications for signs of diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>*HR director participates in all efforts.</td>
<td>*Salary and incentives are low compared with other states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Promote the benefits of district</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Student &amp; teacher percentages are shared with school board.</td>
<td>*Low community diversity with limited cultural community opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Speak to student teachers and encourage placement in district</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Equity Director in charge of putting together a diverse equity committee that shares the affirmative action plan both internally and externally and makes rec. regarding efforts</td>
<td>*It is intimidating being/feeling like the only one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Advertise on the Web</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Earnest efforts have been limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Use informal connections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Letting good people leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Network with HR personnel from other areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Aggressive efforts would not be supported by staff (Incentives).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not one person or group is focused specifically on increasing diversity.*
Table 2

**District B Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Attend career fairs at UNI and Wartburg</td>
<td>*Pay $3,000 to $5,000 for moving expenses if new hires live in the city of the school district.</td>
<td>*Board policy states that everyone working in the district is encouraged to help recruit.</td>
<td>*Nonwhite professionals have more choices than they used to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Took trip to Arkansas and New Orleans to historically black colleges</td>
<td>*Make step adjustments that fall in line with contract agreement.</td>
<td>*All recruitment efforts start with the HR director.</td>
<td>*Universities have low diversity so the pool is small.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Promote district through diverse team and diversity displays</td>
<td>*Be flexible in building placement</td>
<td>*HR director creates a report that is looked at to set goals.</td>
<td>*In general there is a high demand for a low supply of diverse teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Increased diversity in leadership</td>
<td>*Reserve 10 positions for hiring nonwhite teachers.</td>
<td>*HR director makes sure recruitment teams are diverse and sharing the same info.</td>
<td>*Education is not highly valued as a profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Improve district climate</td>
<td>*Allow them to expedite the hiring process.</td>
<td>*Superintendent periodically asks what, how, when, who.</td>
<td>*Salaries are not competitive with other states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Establish grow-your-own programs for Jr. high school, high school, and teacher associates</td>
<td>*Avoid rifting of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds during staff reduction</td>
<td>*The affirmative action plan calls for this info to be shared with the school board every 2 years.</td>
<td>*Contract limits what can be done to recruit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Use word of mouth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Traditional efforts tend to attract traditional populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Contact Regents institutions (Iowa, UNI, Iowa State) to track and recruit people in the programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Low diversity in current staff, nobody wants to be the only one.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Track, contact, &amp; recruit back to the district past employees &amp; graduates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*There are unresolved community issues in the area of racial and economic disparities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Utilize the National Employment Minority Network to identify candidates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Keeping people is difficult at times because people with no roots in community find it easier to leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Weather &amp; market are turnoffs to some, as they are interested in warmer climates and larger markets where there is more diversity and community opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Contract limits what can be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>*The district can’t put ads in the paper asking for specific races to apply.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*The state is not overly diverse and there is a lack of a “critical mass.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>*Diversity issues “aren’t very important to many areas of the state so nothing is being done.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

*District C Responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Hire superintendent w/ diversity as a job goal</em></td>
<td><em>Avoid rifting of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds during staff reduction</em></td>
<td><em>Superintendent was hired with a diversity goal and expected to oversee affirmative the action plan.</em></td>
<td><em>Low supply of diversity in colleges, high demand</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Attend recruiting fairs at UNI &amp; Iowa and speaks w/ university classes</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>According to the affirmative action plan, superintendent reviews hiring data and progress in regard to the affirmative action plan and is expected to share that info annually.</em></td>
<td><em>Other opportunities available to the pool being sought</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Use word of mouth</em></td>
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<td><em>Board asks HR director to provide an explanation of hiring practices in hopes that diversity will be a part of the report as they approve each hire.</em></td>
<td><em>Low value of education as a profession</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Have a principal who tracks high school graduates entering education as a profession</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>HR director meets two times a year with principals to discuss equitable hiring.</em></td>
<td><em>Geographic location--no lakes, oceans, mountains, etc.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Have a principal who closely review applications for signs of diversity</em></td>
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<td><em>Principal advises that she has “total autonomy” in hiring. However affirmative action plan calls for the administrators to make progress toward the goals and objectives of the plan.</em></td>
<td><em>Lack of a vital African American community and limited community opportunities</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Sell the district and the community</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Most teachers go to areas with similar populations and diverse opportunities.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Hire teachers w/out openings</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Although they feel the district’s pay is strong, statewide teacher pay is generally low when compared with other places or professions.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Hire uncertified staff to teach specials</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Teacher diversity is not overly important to community.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Network within and outside the community</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>No formal plan or specific person with this as a focus so people are unsure of what is happening</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Current hiring strategies tend to hit traditional groups.</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The belief that it can’t be done, so nothing is really expected</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Low current diversity and retention make bringing others in more difficult</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparison of Results

The third and final section of this chapter compares to the results of this study with those of a previous study. It should be noted that the studies are only compared on the first three questions because Hopton’s (2003) study did not seek to identify possible barriers to recruiting and hiring teachers from underrepresented backgrounds.

In regard to common themes, Hopton (2003) identified the following themes that emerged from her study:

1. “No specific policies” were in place that addressed recruitment.
2. “Word of mouth” was identified as the most effective strategy.
3. The “racial and gender composition” of the recruitment teams was identified as an important consideration.
4. Importance was placed on the location of recruitment efforts and the implication for impact.

All four of the major themes identified in Hopton’s study emerged in this study.

Hopton (2003) identified additional themes according to each research question.

Research Question 1

Question 1 asked, “What are the strategies implemented in the selected school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?” The districts in Hopton’s (2003) study identified the following strategies: online recruiting with Monster.com and GreatSchoolJobs.com, allowing for online application to district; attendance at job fairs in locations with large nonwhite populations (Prairie View, Jackson State, and Mississippi Valley); arriving a day early or leaving a day late to
perform interviews; attendance at the Minority Expo in New York; newspaper ads in select cities; and attendance at the National Alliance of Black Educators Conferences (p. 122). Although some effort was directed by the districts in the Iowa study to recruit in diverse areas, the districts in Hopton’s study placed more emphasis on attending job/teacher fairs and advertising in areas that would provide them access to a more diverse population of candidates.

Research Question 2

Question 2 asked, “What are the recruiting procedures in the selected school districts to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds?” The districts in Hopton’s (2003) study identified the following procedures: assist teachers with getting their loans forgiven for working with high-risk students; $3,000 to $3,500 stipends to teachers with special education and bilingual certification; $1,000 stipend for an ESL endorsement; $2,000 for secondary math, science, and foreign language teachers; assistance with housing placement; allowing for intern placement of students in the district from area universities and colleges with the goal of recruiting them; staff development programs for new teachers, salary and benefit packages; use of ESA grant money from the Eisenhower Grant, which is designed to assist in recruiting; and recruitment training provided to administrators (p. 123). The districts in Hopton’s study, on the whole, provided more financial incentives for teachers who taught in their districts than did the districts in this particular study. The relationship between the districts and surrounding colleges/universities appeared valuable to the districts in both studies.
Research Question 3

Question 3 asked, “How do the districts ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?” Collectively, the districts in Hopton’s (2003) study collected the following data to promote accountability: number of interviews held, teachers hired by race and gender, entry interview data, number of teachers retained, exit interview data, detailed progress report to the superintendents and board of education at different times of the year (p. 124). The districts in both studies appeared to utilize the same strategies for accountability.

Research Question 4

Question 4 asked, “What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds?” Hopton’s (2003) study did not address the barriers to recruitment.

Summary

The first of Chapter 4’s three sections reviews the data regarding the populations in this study and the related demographics. The second section discusses the participants’ responses to the four research questions identified in Chapter 1. Chapter 4 concludes with a brief comparison between the results of this particular study and the results reported by Hopton (2003). A number of similarities as well as a few differences are noted. Further discussion related to the findings of this study as well as the implications of these findings are presented in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study answered four research questions pertaining to the steps taken by Iowa's urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Those steps were identified based on strategies, procedures and/or policies, and possible barriers. Superintendents, school board members, principals, HR directors, and teachers were interviewed, and the resulting information was evaluated in combination with available documents and resources. The intent is to provide individuals and organizations concerned with the diversification of teaching staffs in the state of Iowa with information pertaining to what is being done and guidance regarding what could be done.

Summary

What are the steps taken by select Iowa urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds? What are the commonalities and differences that exist in the policies and practices of the select Iowa urban school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds? What are the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? Answers to these questions and all other findings are summarized below.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was designed to investigate the strategies implemented in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. A complete analysis of the district responses and supportive documents indicated that most
of the strategies utilized by the selected districts tended to target and attract the same populations that they had already attracted. As a result, the traditional approaches tended to not yield much diversity. Einstein has been credited with defining insanity as “doing the same thing over and over again while expecting different results,” and the continued use of traditional recruitment strategies to attract diverse candidates is consistent with this thinking. Although there were some discussions of specific activities to attract diverse populations, only one of the strategies identified by the districts (grow-your-own approach) appeared to result in a direct increase in the number of nonwhite teachers working in the selected districts. The districts stated that teacher diversity was a critical issue for them, but their failure to formalize, implement, and enforce a plan for recruiting and hiring teachers from underrepresented backgrounds suggested otherwise.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was designed to investigate the recruitment procedures in the selected Iowa school districts to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. All three districts had procedures in place to address the diversification of their teaching staff. Two of the districts set aside a certain number of positions each year to hire with diversity in mind. This is a great option to have in place, but it is meaningless if the candidates have not been attracted. Only one of the districts in the study utilized financial incentives, but its efforts are rather limited by the teacher contract agreement. Additionally, the coverage of moving expenses as pointed out by the superintendent was an informal approach and was “not something that you will find in writing.” The coverage of moving expenses and potential step adjustments are a good start; however,
the fact that these are informal steps decreases the stability of these efforts. Moreover, when compared with the higher salaries available in nearby states and signing incentives as high as $20,000 offered in states like Massachusetts, the coverage of moving expenses and potential step adjustments seemed insufficient.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was designed to investigate how the districts ensure accountability for the implementation of effective policies and practices to recruit teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. The level of accountability implementation identified within the studied districts was very low and unorganized. Although there appeared to be clearly defined accountability expectations within each of the district's affirmative action plans, multiple themes emerged. One common theme that emerged was that the task of diversifying teaching staff was someone else's responsibility. Additionally, everyone assumed that the job was getting done. The accountability component for these districts seemed to be very passive in nature. In fact, although the affirmative action plans provided specific steps to ensure accountability, many of the plans' expectations were not identified by those interviewed. As pointed out earlier, one could get the sense that the district's actions did not support the respondents' view that this is a "critical issue." SBM C noted that there are those within the districts who feel that they are doing the best that they can and "you can go ahead and set it [goals], but it will never be done." Without consequences/accountability, the goals are just words. Beyond wanting to do the right thing, there is really nothing more. The checks and
balances common to other educational areas seem to be missing when it comes to diversifying teaching staffs.

**Research Question 4**

Research Question 4 was designed to investigate the barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds. The barriers identified for the most part seemed to be manmade, system driven, or inherent to the manner in which institutions do business. Clearly, there are issues tied directly to the personal preferences of potential employees, but the education community has to avoid taking the easy road by saying, there is nothing that can be done because people just want something different or the candidates are just not out there. The question that should be asked is, Are there actions districts can take to be more attractive and inviting, and are there ways for them to affect who is in the candidate pools? Based on these interviews, the answer appears to be yes.

**Recommendations**

The research questions utilized in this study revealed some very interesting issues. The study initially sought to identify whether districts had strategies, procedures, and/or policies in place to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Additionally, the study focused on identifying the commonalities and differences in the policies and practices of the school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. The study furthermore looked at the accountability process for ensuring that these identified strategies, procedures, and/or policies were being effectively identified, implemented and assessed.
Recommendation 1

Each of the districts provided a description of its strategies, procedures and/or policies, and barriers. Although the study identified a couple of specific strategies that were in place to address the recruitment of nonwhite teachers, the majority of the recruitment approaches discussed and implemented by the districts were not designed to increase diversity but centered on general recruitment strategies that were designated to attract the same homogenous people that they already had working in the district.

Additionally, none of the districts studied had and implemented a systematic approach for recruiting and hiring teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Given the rate at which Iowa’s schools are increasing in diversity and the common needs and barriers that exist among various districts in Iowa, more attention needs to be placed on identifying systematic approaches for recruiting and hiring teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds at a state level instead of just at the district level. Once specific plans with specific steps are identified, more attention needs to be directed at accountability. Districts need to strengthen their levels of accountability by ensuring that what their Affirmative Action Plan says they are doing is what they are actually doing.

The community must hold the school board accountable for implementation and progress, the school board must hold the superintendent accountable, and the superintendent must hold the HR director and building administrators accountable. Each of these stakeholders is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the plan and that the efforts to diversify the districts teaching staff yields meaningful results. An additional level of accountability from state level is needed as well. The state needs to not only strengthen
its’ expectations but hold districts accountable for not only the implementation of their plans, but the results as well. Although it is unclear what the consequences should be for districts or school leaders who fail to follow through on the identified plans or to make progress in the identified areas of disparity, it is definitely clear that further dialogue on possible consequences is needed.

Recommendation 2

It is important to continue attracting diverse teachers from the available teaching pool. This could be done by increasing the overall pay that districts in Iowa currently offer. The state could assist districts by making a serious commitment to matching our teaching salary ranking to that of the states overall educational ranking as compared to other states. According to Morgan (2006), Iowa ranks as the 9th smartest state in their 2006-2007 Education State Rankings. Transversely, the Fall 2006 NEA Rankings and Estimates, during the 2005-06 school year, the average salaries of Iowa’s public school teachers ranked 40th nationally down from 42nd the year before (as cited by the Iowa State Education Association-ISEA, 2007A). The NEA ranking had the average Iowa teacher in 2006 making approximately $6,000 less than the average national teacher. By traveling to bordering states, teachers can make up to nearly $18,000 more per year than they can make in Iowa (as cited by the ISEA, 2007B). The state is looking to assist Iowa school districts in strengthening their salary base. Recent Iowa legislation, specifically Senate File (SF) 277, “will increase the average teacher salary by $5,400 over the next two years. In addition, the legislation increases the minimum salaries to $26,500 for beginning teachers; $27,500 for career teachers (third year); and $28,500 for all other
experienced teachers (ISEA, 2007A). Unfortunately, these salary boosts will only affect Iowa’s national standing briefly because the legislative entities in other states will continue to strengthen their salaries as well thus forcing Iowa to make some major investments in salaries if it wants to stay competitive and attract great teachers. Although a number of factors influence career choice and job location, the issues surrounding financial compensation are major. The salary gap that exists between Iowa and the surrounding states can be quite an obstacle for school districts to overcome.

Recommendation 3

In addition to increasing general teacher salaries, there needs to be continued dialog about differentiated pay based on the needs of the district and what individual teachers have to offer. During the 2006 State of Iowa Legislative Session, House File (HF) 2972, Section 12, was enacted to provide Market Factor Pay. According to the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) HF 2972, Section 12, “appropriated $3.39M for market factor pay, earmarking another $7.5M for FY 08 and $10M for FY 09” (2006, p. 1). IASB states, the General Assembly passed the bill “to help Iowa School Districts become more competitive in recruiting and retaining highly-qualified teachers” (p. 1).

The legislation was designed to:

Encourage school districts to establish teacher compensation opportunities that recognize the need for geographic or other locally determined wage differentials and provide incentives for traditionally hard-to-staff schools and subject area shortages or improving the racial or ethnic diversity on local teaching staffs. (Iowa Code 284.11, as cited in IASB, 2006, p. 1).

This legislation was huge as it provided a lot of flexibility for the “sole discretion of the school board” to add dollars to teacher salaries, offer incentives like bonuses,
repayment of student loans, moving expenses, tuition reimbursement for new endorsements or degrees to attract teachers for difficult-to-fill positions or from underrepresented backgrounds (IASB, 2006, p. 1). The legislation really breathed life into the “Supply and Demand” principle in which the lower the supply and the greater the demand, the more it will cost you to get what you need. The supply and demand principle is followed by almost every other industry and is how businesses get the best employees possible. At the building level, this means that if there is a shortage of science teachers or the district has a high need to increase teacher diversity, schools would be able to offer the incentives to attract the best science teacher or underrepresented teacher that they can find without concern for offering the same compensation to teachers in areas or backgrounds in which there is a surplus. Given that districts have the option of how this money is spent, I highly recommend that they choose to allocate a portion of the money for incentives to recruit and hire underrepresented teachers to their districts. This recruitment approach should especially be utilized by districts that have as a part of their affirmative action plan the goal to increase teacher diversity.

In addition to allocating a portion of the Market Factor incentives to recruiting and hiring underrepresented teachers, the state needs to take a look at reversing a recent change in the process for utilizing the funds. As mentioned previously, this money was initially kept out of the bargaining process and thus not subject to arbitration by the union. As of 2007, Section 284.11 of SF 277 was amended taking the “sole discretion” of the distribution of the allotted dollars from the school board and placing pieces of it...
into the hands of teacher’s unions (2007). The language, "the school district shall have the sole discretion to award funds received" was scratched and replaced with directions for a Teacher Quality Committee, which was to be established by the direction of additional legislation, to "make recommendations to the school board and the certified bargaining representative" or teacher’s union (SF 277, 2007). According to Pfitzenmaier of the IDOE (2007B), the Teacher Quality Committee has multiple responsibilities and one of which is to make "recommendations to the school board and the certified bargaining representative regarding the expenditures of market factor incentives" (p. 5). After receiving the committee’s recommendations, the school board then must decide how much of the money should be delegated for “salaries, educational opportunities and support, moving expenses, and housing expenses” (p. 6). The portion of money allocated to cover salaries now falls under the control of the district level teacher’s union and is subject to negotiation and bargaining. So any salary adjustments for incoming staff or to increase the salary’s of identified current staff has to go through the union. This becomes a problem because unions have a tendency to focus on self interests instead of those of the district as a whole. The initial intention of this money was to allow schools to offer incentives to attract the best people for high-need areas without having to provide the same compensation to teachers in areas or backgrounds in which there is a surplus. By leaving salary increases in the hands of the union, the district looses its’ ability to provide differentiated pay and could be forced to keep everything consistent for all staff and thus will be unable to address special circumstances through salary. I believe that this may lead districts to avoid using salary as an incentive as working with the union to address
salaries increases the difficulty in being creative when necessary. Given these concerns, it is my recommendation that all of the Market Factor Incentives return to the discretion of the district and not the union. The union is represented on the Teacher Quality Committee which provides them with a great avenue for making recommendations, however the final decisions regarding the district’s best interest and needs should be retained by the school board and district representatives.

Recommendation 4

Districts should look to step beyond the traditional methods (e.g. advertising in local newspapers, attending non-diverse teacher fairs, and recruiting from local non-diverse colleges) of recruitment and make concerted efforts to find the people whom they are seeking. Districts should take a page from the college recruiters that recruit high school students to colleges. Attracting high school students to college is extremely important to colleges as their operations depend on student tuition dollars. Given these needs, college recruitment has had to stay a head of the game.

When speaking of the recruitment process, Brendsel (2007) reports, “it’s a courtship” and courtships are the beginning of a relationship (para. 8). This is important as many nonwhites grow up financially impoverished, relationships become very important to their survival. Researchers like Ruby Payne argue that the “relationships are the key motivators” (1996, p. 1). Payne argues that the driving forces for the Middle and Upper class respectively are “work and achievement” and “social, financial, and political connections” while people from generational poverty are much more relationship oriented (p. 5).
Given the importance of relationships in the lives of nonwhites, school districts seeking to diversify their staffs need to place more effort on establishing relationships with colleges and university teacher education programs to make direct connections with students. As districts consider colleges or universities to connect with, they should consider that “minority serving institutions” are “by far the biggest source of minority teachers” (Gursky, 2002B, p. 28). In addition to the historic nonwhite institutions, districts should contact university and colleges in their region both large and small to identify possible students in the pipeline.

Once they have identified the schools that they want to establish a relationship with, the districts should take the time to actually meet department members and teacher education advisors. These meetings will allow the district personnel to connect with the advisors and teachers and share important aspects about the district and what type of teachers the district is looking for. In addition to connecting with college faculty, districts may want to start connecting and establishing those relationships with college students early on in their college career. The district should be willing to provide district personnel with the time to take a couple of days to individually meet with students, visit some of the teacher education classes to talk to the students in those classes about the education profession, initiatives in their district, or what ever they see fit. Prior to the on campus visits or after the campus visits, the districts could send potential teaching candidates letters with information about the district, words of encouragement, or letters expressing interest in the talents that the college student could potentially bring to the district when they complete their degree. To make a final impact on the prospective
teachers, the district should setup programs to facilitate and support meaningful student teaching experiences in the district. Each of the strategies mentioned in recommendation 4 should be implemented with the purpose of establishing that initial relationship to gain the first opportunity to bring viable candidates to their district before the candidates officially enter the job market.

**Recommendation 5**

Districts should seek to create their own viable candidate pools. Recognizing that the task of enticing teachers and their families to relocate to Iowa is at times daunting, districts should look at tapping into a pool of viable candidates who call their district home. One such strategy is to utilize a grow-your-own approach that begins to identify potential teachers early on. As mentioned earlier, students are deciding whether college is in their future as early as junior high. Districts should seek to connect with students “through formal mentoring relationships,” advising students throughout their secondary educational experience, which in turn “will help them prepare for college” (Holloway, 2002, p. 89). Districts using grow your own programs vary in their implementation but most programs emphasize helping the students become stronger students, while providing them leadership opportunities and experiences that will nurture an interest in teaching. As advised earlier, these types of programs “would not only guide the students to a future teaching career but also support students who might otherwise be at risk for dropping out” (Holloway, p. 89).

Once these students have been encouraged and supported through graduation, districts must begin identify strategies for maintaining their connection with the students...
through college. Fielder (1996) advised that one of the strongest approaches was to offer minority scholarships “to enroll in an education degree program at the university in return for a commitment to teach in the school district one year for every year they are on scholarship” (p. 445). These sorts of efforts are strengthened greatly by collaborative efforts among school districts, colleges, or universities located in close proximity to the district. In addition to the scholarships, some districts have offered to employ the college students as associates/para-educators to provide them with practical experiences as well as additional financial support. Fielder advises that “whenever possible, the job sites, grade levels, subject areas, and responsibilities are varied each year in order to expose the prospective teachers to many different teaching styles and methodologies” (p. 445). Strategies like this allow the districts to have much more control over the quality of the personnel that they choose to develop and bring into the district. The experiences gained as paraprofessionals would assist the new teachers in being “familiar with the students, their backgrounds and communities” (Littleton, 1998, p. 151).

Clearly, a program like this would need to be supported with money and time. The recent availability of the previously discussed funds from House File 2972, Section 12 would be a great way for a district to fund such an endeavor. Additionally, such programs could be funded through collaborative efforts between the district, the district’s foundation, businesses, and/or universities/colleges. Holden and Schelske (2000) believe there great benefits of a collaborative effort between “schools, colleges, universities, communities of color, business corporations/foundations, individuals, and nonprofit organizations” to fund the scholarships (p. 29). According to Holden and Schelske, the
grant developed by this collaboration “has been funded at a level of $60,000 per year since 1995” and is available if organizations can identify creative ways to work together for the benefit of their communities (p. 29). This sort of collaborative effort creates a win/win solution for all. The youth are involved in positive endeavors, the business community maintains young, productive professional members within the community, the district strengthens its staff, and the colleges “would receive an increased minority student enrollment and the opportunity to be creative in developing or enhancing programs for teacher certification with emphasis on the urban classroom and meeting the needs of the nontraditional student” (Littleton, p. 151).

Recommendation 6

As mentioned previously, a lot can be gained from establishing early relationships with potential teachers, but districts need to be very cognizant of who they are sending to establish those relationships. According to the Princeton Review, colleges seeking to attract high school students to their colleges send out attractive representatives. Although the review proposes that the people sent out should be aesthetically appealing, the review advises that the attractive qualities go much deeper and advises the rep should be a “representative of the community they are recruiting, and personable beyond belief, for they are solely responsible for setting the tone and making the students” feel good about what in this case, the district has to offer (“An Insider’s,” n.d., Para. 7). The recruitment person or team is the first opportunity to make a lasting impression and visits with diverse candidates should involve connecting them with a diverse recruiting team. The team that travels on recruitment trips should be made up of people who can discuss
the district from a personal perspective and answer the tough questions. District leadership should be reflective of the role that ethnic kinship can play in allowing people to feel better about potentially joining the district. As mentioned earlier, people want to know they will not be alone and establishing these initial relationships can take huge steps in that direction.

Clearly making connections is important and districts should have two packages to offer. One should be to show how the district will work to establish mentoring opportunities with other teachers from diverse backgrounds and the second should be to show how the district’s community extends beyond the school walls and into the greater community. People want to know that their personal, familial, social, and spiritual needs can be met in the community. Although an initial team may only include school members, it may be important to share with potential employees the availability of an additional team. The additional team should be made up of members from the community with the sole purpose of making the transition for the candidate into the community a smooth one. These community mentoring groups should be minimally made up of clergy or other religious community leaders, business professionals ranging from restaurant owners to bankers, beauticians, and realtors. Additional members should be parents, service club members, recreation providers, and any other community leaders who could assist the potential candidate in connecting to the community. The establishment of these kinds of groups provides a formal foundation for many of the informal relationships that people new to a community need. Additionally, the community mentoring groups assist in creating a sense of culture and community that
welcomes the candidate and gives them a network to not only meet their needs but connect with the community which ultimately makes the community and the school more appealing to those coming from elsewhere.

Recommendation 7

Unfortunately, the numbers of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds will not increase overnight. Nevertheless, school districts and universities need to do something now. Since the face of America’s teachers cannot immediately change, educational leaders can at least address the mind and skill sets that teachers bring into the classroom. As mentioned earlier, the majority of teachers entering the field of education are white middle class raised females. Kunjufu (2002) believes that “the future of the African American population primarily lies in the hands of White female teachers” (p. 17). Kunjufu argues that “most of our current and future white teachers “grew up in rural areas or lived their entire lives in white neighborhoods” (p. 18).

Given that most teachers do not physically nor experience wise represent the students that they serve, there is a greater need for an increased cultural competency. According to the National Center for Cultural Competence (n.d.), Cultural Competence requires the individual or organization to:

- Have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally.

- Have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve. (para. 3)
According to Davis (1997):

Operationally defined, cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes. (As cited in King, Sims, and Osher, n.d., para. 8)

One strategy for strengthening teachers’ cultural competency is to create programs at the college level that are designed to ensure that students have adequate training in dealing with diverse populations. Most teacher education programs require students to take a single Human Relations course as they complete their student teaching experiences. Although the course is intended to address “bias, stereotyping, discrimination, and oppression as it relates to the educational environment,” the Human Relations course can only scratch the surface of such an important area of education (Reiss, n.d. p. 1). Given the impact that stereotyping, discrimination, and oppression can have on the educational experiences of the students that we serve, a greater level of depth seems quite appropriate. Additionally, the ability to productively handle differences combined with an increased cultural competence would strengthen the credentials of any student and any program. “Employers seek applicants who are adept at negotiating multiple differences, who can move back and forth across boundaries that normally separate people, and who understand the historical and persistent structural inequalities that threaten communities” (Ferris State, n.d., para. 1).

Teacher education programs have the power to expand the level of cultural competency of the students that they are sending out into the education profession. Whether it is by offering a diversity or multicultural certificate/endorsement or by adding
the competency guidelines to their teaching program, university and colleges have much more to offer the education arena. These types of adjustments are simple to make because most universities and colleges have a wide range of diversity or culturally related courses in other departments. The cultural competence of the future teachers could be strengthened by having students take a cohort of classes (12-18hrs) that discuss the social, cultural, and historical issues relating to the groups of people that have been labeled as minorities. In addition to the classes, students should be required to fulfill some sort of “Diversity Practicum” or applied practicum that would emerge the student into a diverse experience by having the student enter a diverse community to serve in an outreach program, gain a work placement in an agency that works directly with diverse populations, or extended volunteer experiences in a community agency. The experiences may also include attendance at historically diverse activities like church services, cultural celebrations, and diversity conferences. These types of experiences should be done connected to a reflective process to allow the students to reflect with other students and a supervisor on what they are experiencing in these diverse environments, feelings and thoughts that arise, in addition to being challenged by the advisor to think outside the box. These courses and service experiences should be stretched out over the whole undergraduate experience to allow the student to truly feel that it was an integrated part of their learning experience instead of an added on less than valuable piece of their experience. The end result of these experiences would be to produce teachers who have learned “practical communication and collaborative skills” in addition to an educational
pedagogy that allows the teacher to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse populations.

Recommendation 8

In addition to changing the mind/skill sets of future teachers, school districts can take strides to increase the cultural competence of their current administrators and teachers through trainings that addresses pedagogy and thinking. Robinson, Bowman, Ewing, Hanna, and Lopez-De Fede (1997) advise that, “as educators, we need to know how to overcome cultural differences in our efforts to reach our students” (p. 3).

Research has shown that the implementation of a multicultural nonsexist approach to education increases student achievement across the board. One such research based program that seeks to assist school districts and families in addressing such issues is Generating Expectations for Student Achievement (GESA). Programs like GESA are effective because they attempt to address multicultural education from two primary perspectives. Early multicultural programs focused only on content, whereas GESA addresses teaching strategies as well as the content of the class.

Although several issues may lead students to feel as though they do not belong or want to be a part of the educational system, “most educators would agree that the major areas of influence on academic achievement of students are the curriculum content and materials, the learning environment, and the types of expectations, interactions, and behaviors to which students are subjected” (Miller & Grayson, 1990, p. 18). In a study performed by Good (as cited in Paccione, 2000), it was determined that “some of the strongest messages teachers communicate to students are expressed through classroom
behavior…. Teachers may have the best intentions in the world, but if they behave inequitably, real damage occurs” (p. 980). GESA attempts to assist educators in looking at their educational practices and utilizing equity to strengthen the quality of their teaching (Johnson, 2002, p. 169). Unfortunately, “although equity is a desirable outcome, many do not have a notion of what it looks like in the real world of schools and classrooms” (Johnson, p. 169). GESA centers on using data to address what is happening in the classroom. Through a major process of self-exploration, teachers can identify areas that may unintentionally lead to barriers in the educational process. The three major objectives of GESA are as follows:

1. Assist teachers in reducing disparity in frequency distribution patterns and increase the quality of their interactions with students.

2. Assist students in achieving significantly higher average gains in reading and mathematics when measured against themselves in pre- and post-achievement test scores. Increased achievement results in other subject areas as well.

3. Assist teachers in increasing the use of non-stereotypical interactions, materials, and activities (Grayson & Martin, 1997, p. 5).

Although this strategy does not directly increase the number of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds, it can directly assist the teacher in serving as a cultural broker who works to create a nurturing environment and the establishment of those critical relationships previously discussed between students, teachers, and parents. As Gay advised:

A teacher who serves as cultural broker “thoroughly understands different cultural systems, is able to interpret cultural symbols from one frame of reference to another, can
mediate cultural incompatibilities, and knows how to build bridges or establish linkages across cultures that facilitate the instructional process. (1993, p. 287)

The creation of such a nurturing environment would assist in increasing the overall achievement of students. Programs like GESA have shown that more students are involved and connected to learning than in the standard approach to teaching. Additionally, teachers utilizing these approaches are more cognizant of their interactions with students. More importantly given the importance of data in educationally decision making, preliminary data suggests that classes in which teachers are using the GESA program had significant gains on standardized tests. Increased student achievement is important because having an increase in the number of students achieving, would increase the number of students who are able to successfully complete high school, and enter college thus, indirectly laying the foundation for nonwhite students to enter the education profession or any number of other professions that are based on academic achievement.

Recommendation 9

Finally, none of the previously mentioned recommendations will be successful with out the “Will” of those involved to ensure their success. The final recommendation centers on addressing “the need for public, political, and private will” (Snauwaert & Switzer, 2007, p. 3). According to Snauwaert & Switzer, “we know what works,” but the question is “so why don’t we do it” (p. 3). Snauwaert & Switzer suggest that this is a very important question to ponder and there appears to be a very simple answer, we don’t appear to have the “Will” to make things happen. What is meant by “Will”? According
to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, “Will” refers to “determination, insistence, persistence, or willfulness” to do something (n.d., 6a). When it comes to applying “will” to making educational changes:

Moyer contends that we don’t have the political Will to make it happen. The short-term time perspective of many politicians, the constant need to not alienate your constituents and to get re-elected, the excessive reliance on quick fix solutions and the explosive context in which education occurs, leave even the best politicians short of the mark on education. (as cited in Snauwaert & Switzer, p. 4)

According to Snauwaert & Switzer, “the will to have great schools just doesn’t seem to be present” (2007, p. 5). They suggest that most of school and curriculum reform has been “destined to fail” because “the ‘will’ to fully implement them was not part of the formula” (p. 5). This could be seen in the responses that were received from the school personnel interviewed in this study. As SBM C pointed out, many individuals have the perspective that “You can go ahead and set it (diversity goals) but it will never be done.” She went on to explain:

Statements like that to me are huge obstacles because the expectation isn’t really there. It’s there in words, but it’s not there in expected action. So when you go to monitor the progress of something like that, if you never had the expectation of seeing that to begin with, at the end of the year and movement has not been made, or very little, you go, ‘See, I knew we couldn’t meet that anyway.’

According to Snauwaert & Switzer, we need the “public will to take action” (2007, p. 6). According to the Greek and Roman understanding of the “public,” Snauwaert & Switzer suggest that the “public” is an “alliance based upon shared interests, concerns and promises” (p. 6). In order for the public “to know itself and to articulate its interests,” it must take the time to “foster freedom of inquiry, expression, and debate” (p. 8). These conversations then allow for an educated public made up of
individuals and groups to actively engage because of the accepted value of the initiative. Because society benefits from the education of its members, “all citizens and associations of citizens have a common interest in the education of every child” and therefore should be a part of educational discussions (Snauwaert & Switzer, p. 9).

If we want support for the above mentioned recommendations, we must gain the support of the public, private, and political sector and this will require the establishment of the above mentioned public dialogues on the “will” of the citizens of the schools, district community, state, and country to address teacher diversity. This strategy “has been perfected over the last 20 years at the University of Northern Iowa and at the Judith Herb College of Education, at the University of Toledo” (Snauwaert & Switzer, 2007, p. 10). According to Snauwaert & Switzer, these public dialogues should “promote dialogue on critical issues pertaining to a defined social problem” which in this case is teacher diversity (p. 9). Those invited to participate in the dialogues, “provide the knowledge base” for the discussions as the “people in their own community or group are capable of defining issues of importance to them and in finding solutions to these issues through dialogue” (p. 9 & 10). Snauwaert & Switzer believe that these sorts of conversations allow all sorts of positions and issues to emerge “so that all participants feel that their voice has been heard as their discussion group reaches a consensus on a plan of action” (p. 10). Although consensus does not mean that everyone completely agrees with every strategy identified to address the identified problem, it does mean that everyone has been “heard to the point that they will not sabotage the action plan” (p. 10). The solidification of this consensus should come from the documentation of all

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conversations and recommendations for any resulting actions. Additionally, this information should be readily shared with all the stakeholders so that no one is left out of the loop. “The goal of all this effort is to increase the ‘will’ of the community to do whatever is necessary to provide each child with a quality education” (Snauwaert & Switzer, p. 10). Ultimately, districts seeking to increase the “will” of the community will need to apply “consistent effort over time” and not expect a quick fix (Snauwaert & Switzer, p. 10).

Further Study

Based on the review of the literature, on previous studies, as well as on the findings of this particular study, other areas that could be investigated are as follows:

1. This study could be replicated and enhanced with additional qualitative research techniques. Students from each district could be interviewed regarding their perception of teaching as a viable career choice. This could assist the researcher in gaining a deeper understanding of the students and the choices that they make regarding careers.

2. This study could be replicated and enhanced if a larger respondent group could be surveyed. This could include remaining respondents/school districts from both within the UEN and outside of the UEN.

3. This study could be replicated in 5 to 7 years so that comparisons could be made with respect to systematic approaches utilized by districts and the accountability in place. The comparison would be of particular interest if efforts emphasizing the implementation of strategies, procedures, and/or policies to recruit and hire teachers from
ethnically underrepresented backgrounds with a strong accountability structure had been put into place.

4. This study could be replicated or enhanced with careful examination and comparison of the strategies, procedures, and/or policies utilized by school districts to recruit and hire teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds with those utilized by teacher education programs to recruit not only staff but also future students.

5. This study could be expanded to identify how communities, school districts, and college education programs can collaboratively work together to expand the pool of college-ready students for teacher education programs for general achievement.

6. This study could be replicated in 5 to 7 years to look at the impact of HF 2972, Section 12 on the recruitment and hiring of teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds.

7. The study could be expanded to look at the impact of community dialogues on the “will” to make a difference on the educational experiences of students in regards to addressing teacher diversity.
REFERENCES


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Snauwaert, D., & Switzer, T. J. (2007, April). The Will to Improve Education. Paper presented at the spring meeting of the Renaissance Group, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA.


APPENDIX A
PILOT STUDY INVITE LETTER

[Date]

[Click here and type recipient's address]

You are invited to participate in a pilot study that has been approved by your district. My name is Willie Barney and I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Leadership at The University of Northern Iowa. This pilot study is part of my dissertation research requirements. You are being asked to participate in this pilot study because of the need to test the questions to be used in this research project. The study will focus on what school districts in Iowa are doing to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. Your district was chosen because of its' similarity to the districts that will actually be researched for the study.

Any information obtained in connection with the survey that can be identified with the participants from the district will remain confidential. Your information will be gathered through an interview that should last approximately 30 minutes. I will attempt to schedule our meeting around your schedule to minimize any inconvenience. Because the study is discovery in nature, it may reveal both positive and negative aspects of the district's strategies to diversify its' teaching staff. Additionally, there will be no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at [phone number] or my advisor, Dr. Victoria Robinson at [phone number]. You can also contact the office of Human Participants Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, at [phone number], for answers to questions about rights of research participant review process.

An extra copy of this consent form is included for you to keep. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate in the pilot study.

Sincerely,

Willie B. Barney Jr.
Doctoral Student
University of Northern Iowa

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant ___________________ Date __________

Signature of Investigator ___________________ Date __________

Signature of Advisor ___________________ Date __________

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APPENDIX B
STUDY INVITE LETTER

[Date]

You are invited to participate in a study that has been approved by your district. My name is Willie Barney and I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Leadership at The University of Northern Iowa. This interview is part of my dissertation requirements. The study will focus on what school districts in Iowa are doing to recruit teachers from ethnically underrepresented backgrounds. You will be one of 20 individuals participating in this research.

Any information obtained in connection with this interview and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Your information will be gathered through an interview that should last approximately 30 minutes. I will attempt to schedule our meeting around your schedule to minimize any inconvenience. Because the study is discovery in nature, it may reveal both positive and negative aspects of the district’s strategies to diversify its teaching staff. Additionally, there will be no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact me at [phone number] or my supervisor, Dr. Victoria Robinson at [phone number].

An extra copy of this consent form is included for you to keep. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to participate in the study. You can also contact the office of Human Participants Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, at [phone number], for answers to questions about rights of research participant review process.

Sincerely,

Willie B. Barney Jr.
Doctoral Student
University of Northern Iowa

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Investigator Date

Signature of Advisor Date
APPENDIX C
ADMINISTRATOR AND SCHOOL BOARD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name of School District__________________________________________
Date_________________________ Time________________
Location___________________________________________
Name of Interviewer__________________________________

1. What position do you hold in this school district?
2. How long have you held this position?
3. What duties are involved with the position of_____________?
4. Have you been involved in the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? If yes, when and how?
5. What strategies are used to recruit teachers from underrepresented background?
6. What factors are most effective in attracting underrepresented teachers to______________ISD?
7. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are they?
8. How do you assure that the recruitment practices are implemented?
9. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?
10. What specific policies are in place that addresses the recruitment of underrepresented teachers?
11. If there are recruitment policies, how long have they been in place?
12. How is the effectiveness of the recruitment policies and procedures evaluated or monitored?
13. Thinking outside of the box, if there were no restraints to recruitment and hiring, what do you think could be done to increase teacher diversity?
APPENDIX D
HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name of School District_____________________________
Date__________________________ Time______________
Location_________________________
Name of Interviewer________________________________

1. What position do you hold in this school district?
2. How long have you held this position?
3. What duties are involved with the position of__________?
4. What is the total enrollment of this school district?
5. What percentage of the total student population is non-white?
6. What percentage of the total teacher/instructional population is non-white?
7. Have you been involved in the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? If yes, when and how?
8. What strategies are used to recruit teachers from underrepresented background?
9. What factors are most effective in attracting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds to__________ISD?
10. How do you assure that the recruitment practices are implemented?
11. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are they?
12. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?
13. What specific policies are in place that addresses the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented background?
14. If there are recruitment policies, how long have they been in place?
15. How is the effectiveness of the recruitment policies and procedures evaluated or monitored?
15. Thinking outside of the box, if there were no restraints to recruitment and hiring, what do you think could be done to increase teacher diversity?
APPENDIX E
TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Name of School District ____________________________________________

Date ____________________ Time __________________

Location ________________________________________________________

Name of Interviewer _____________________________________________

1. What position do you hold with this school district?

2. How long have you been employed with this district?

3. What duties are involved with the position you hold?

4. Describe the recruitment process/practice that was utilized to recruit you to this district.

5. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?

6. Of your knowledge, what specific policies/practices are in place that addresses the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented background in this district?

7. In your opinion, how would you compare the total district population with the diversity percentages of teachers to that of the diversity percentages of students in this district?

   Extremely Balanced
   Somewhat Balanced
   Needs More Attention
   Not Close

8. Why do you feel this balance or lack of balance exist?

9. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are they?

10. Which ethnic group/s do you feel is/are well represented in the teacher population of this district?

11. Which ethnic group/s do you feel need/s more representation in the teacher population of this district?

12. What suggestions or idea, if any, would you like to see implemented that could assist this district with improving its ethnic and minority teacher recruitment process, practices, and/or policies?
APPENDIX F
RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The following sets of questions were posed to the individuals in the study.

Administration and School Board Member Responses

1. What position do you hold in this school district?

Superintendents
Supt. A: I am the Superintendent of Schools
Supt. B: Superintendent of (city) community school district.
Supt. C: Superintendent.

School Board Members
SBM A: Uh, director of the school, school board, director on the school board.
SBM B: I am a member of the (city) school district board of education.
SBM C: I'm um, president of our school board.

Principals
Prin. B: I'm the principal of (district) middle school which is our largest middle school here in (district).
Prin. C: Um, I am principal at (building) Middle School.

2. How long have you held this position?

Superintendents
Supt. A: One year.
Supt. B: Three years.
Supt. C: One year.

School Board Members
SBM A: Two years, nine months.
SBM B: I just finished up my second year. So I'm fairly new.
SBM C: Two years.

Principals
Prin. A: This position, this is my first year, my fifth in the district.
Prin. B: This is my first year as head principal. I've been Asst. Principal/Athletic Director for 4 years before that. Taught before that at ( ) high.
Prin. C: Um, I just finished my third year here at (building) but I have been a principal in the district for (pause) um, 13 years. Um, ten years at the elementary level.

3. What duties are involved with the position of ______________?

Superintendents
Supt. A: Basically, you're the Chief Executive Officer if you hold the chair, if you occupy the Chair of the Superintendency. Everything to do with the management of personal, uh, the uh, and working, and carrying out uh, Board of Directors, uh wants and desires and decisions and uh, basically you are the Chief Executive Officer and everything that goes with that title.

Supt. B: Primarily, I am responsible for being the educational leader of the district and that involves a number of things, such as maintaining the financial solvency of the district and working with the community to address district needs.
Supt. C: Largely responsible for the, the administrative leadership of the district. Certainly working with
the school board but more on management issues, working with our administrators to ensure the day to day
operations of the district and also to provide direction through a vision and mission and those kinds of
things. So, I don’t know how detailed you want to get there, but we could go on I think for some time.

School Board Members
SBM A: Uh, our role is to set policy, uh, hire a superintendent, and try to uh, direct the school district in
away that benefits all the kids.

SBM B: Um, making policies, approving policies for the school district, and overseeing (pause) um, the
whole district starting with the superintendent. So, (pause) uh, the school district makes policies and they
bring them to the board and we have to approve or disapprove of these policies.

SBM C: Um, in conjunction with the superintendent, I set the agenda. Um, actually it’s in conjunction
with our cabinet staff and recommendations from other board members. But we set the agenda, I facilitate
all meetings, I conduct and facilitate any hearings that are involved with student expulsions or things of
those natures or terminations of staff or employees. Um, I’m the spokesperson and face for our district so
when media asks for comments or explanations or further discussion or dialogue, I’m usually the person that
responds. I participate in um, dialogue throughout the community with anyone that wants an audience of
school board members or superintendent.

Principals
Prin. A: (laugh) What isn’t, uh certainly the overall functioning and operation of the school is a top a
priority. Uh, personnel, budget, um, severe student discipline issues, staff development, um, the typical
duties of a high school principal.

Prin. B: Are you kidding me, (laugh) how many hats do I wear? (Laugh) Um, I, I have the scheduling so
that’s one thing. But I, I think my biggest job is um, instruction, to help focus the instruction and for the
delivery of instruction. Make sure that the teachers have what they need and the tools so that they can do
their jobs. And, then obviously there’s the management thing, the budget stuff, the discipline and all those
kind of things that fit into that. And, there just, there’s so many different hats. Sometimes I feel like, I’m
the mom (laugh).

Prin. C: (Laugh) Wow, um (laugh) um probably the most important is um, attracting and retaining
quality staff members, um, teachers, paras, secretaries. Um, maintaining a safe and orderly environment
and um, curriculum and instruction, just, everything goes into running a building.

4. Have you been involved in the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? If yes,
when and how?

Superintendents
Supt. A: Yes, however not in this school district because of serving as an interim superintendent and
because of the short tenure involved, uh, my involvement has strictly been in a discussion stage of what we
might do to increase the number of, of uh, African American, Hispanic teachers that uh, and staff members
in general, that uh, that we, uh, should really uh, have in this school district.

Supt. B: Yeah uh, I work in a little different role with that uh, () our director of uh, Human resources, has
a team of people that actually go out and do the fairs and you know colleges and universities etc. What I
have been doing with that group is making sure that we are trying really, really hard to provide uh,
incentives for uh, underrepresented groups that come here. For instance, one of the things that we’re doing
right now, we don’t advertise this, and your not gonna find it in the journal anywhere or any policy. Is uh,
for groups of people that are underrepresented that wanna move and live in (), now if they wanna live

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(another city) or (another city), this wouldn’t apply, but we’ll pay there moving expenses. In other words so um, uh, if your, you’re a non in, in Texas for instance and you wanna move and we want you here, to come here, we’re willing to pay for up to a certain amount of money, up, I think it’s up to $5,000 or $3,000, something like that, but plenty to be able to move, so moving to our district isn’t gonna cost them anything. That’s not in our contract, that’s not anywhere but, now if, again that’s if they live in (city), because we want them live here if that’s, and we can’t force somebody do that, but if they do wanna be here, that’s, that’s a recruiting thing that were doing. One of the problems that we’re having with that right now though is, is that the even some of the schools in the south are paying more for entry level than Iowa’s paying, not just here (another city) or anywhere else. So why would you wanna come to Iowa and freeze and make a $1,000 less. I mean, so and that’s hard, that’s a hard one for us to go after right now, so. We’re also looking at uh, you know moving, moving some people from the one, the step that they might on to a little bit hire step, but we again we have to stay with in the contract to do that, so. My work with (HR director) and the team is being able to push hard to be able to say, what are we gonna do to be able to do that. Um, our administrative team exceeds what our minority population is for African Americans for instance. Our African American population is 27.6%. Our total minority population is around 34%. Um, uh, the second highest group being Hispanic population, which is really growing fairly quickly for us, although it’s only 6% it still was 4%, and then 5%, and then 6% in three consecutive years. But uh, our administrative team is uh, 30, 32% uh, African American. So as we take at a look at uh, those 42 people that represent that team, we exceed the, the minority populations of African Americans in the district. That isn’t the case in our teaching population though, we struggle you know in trying to get um, uh, teachers to be able to come to, to (city). The University of Northern Iowa is less than 4% minority population and specifically African American, uh, Wartburg same thing, so we don’t have that many people going into the business that are right here and doing it, so. My responsibility is just keep pushing that envelope as hard as we can. And I am hiring administrators that are qualified and great, that are African American. I can’t put a ad in the paper that says you know uh, we’re gonna have a preference for one or the other, because clearly that’s not acceptable. But if we, if we don’t bring uh, great models in for our young folks you know, to be teachers and to be good administrators that are African American, then we’re not doing our job either. And so, we brought in uh, uh two, two African American administrators back to the district in the last three, you know since I’ve been here and uh, one from Texas and now one from uh, actually he was a (city) person but went down to Kansas City and we yanked him back up here starting this next year. Both tremendous people and uh, so I’m recruiting hard and I work on the administrative side more than the teacher side, so.

Supt. C: Yes. Uh, most of my experience was in the (Illinois) district as a superintendent there for six years and we had as part of our strategic plan, which we have just recently done here in (City) as well, uh drafted, uh one of our goals that dealt directly with uh, the recruitment or uh, increasing the diversity within our, within our employee force, or work force. And, I’ll just point you this way, if you look at uh, the third goal, let me find the goals, develop a diverse work force, and that’s our formal statement that we’re gonna, you know, we’re gonna put some energy and time to, to make that happen. So that’s here, in the other district then from that goal, we developed specific action plans and involved uh, a number of folks from the community and within our school district to uh, first of all increase the candidate pool and uh, then to uh, grow, we were growing our own. Had some programs within the district uh, to help identify promising students uh, minority students as they came through our district to keep tabs on them so to speak and build up a, a communication network and then uh, to bring them back to the district uh, of residents, where they grew up and graduated and had some success doing that. We also uh, increased our personal networking. We believe that everyone in the district was a potential recruiter and we probably had as much success by word of mouth sometimes as, a, knowing that that door was open and if we knew someone that knew someone that knew someone uh, we got some referrals that way. Um, so a combination of informal uh, processes, networking. Formal processes, we also had some recruiting trips, went to recruiting fairs and those kinds of things and then uh, developing on the student side uh, growing our own so to speak. And I’ll, I’ll tell ya that’s kind of the plan here that uh, we’re getting started. I, I think there’s been some personnel involvement here but I don’t believe there’s been a formal plan and that, first of all getting a goal and then we’ll build the action plans under that. Uh, there’ll be a very formal uh, approach, along with the informal approaches as well here.
School Board Members

SBM A: In directly. Um, we indirectly we’ve been trying to uh, when we hire our superintendent, one of the questions we ask is how they would accomplish that. Um, the school district has a commitment to diversity in it’s in our mission statement, it’s in um, it’s in our CSIP um, we take great pride in the fact that we have a diverse student body and we recognize the need to have u, a diverse faculty in order to meet the needs of our kids and to really fulfill our mission. So we hire a superintendent and one of the things we ask very directly of our superintendent candidates is how they would go about, uh, actively recruiting and hiring minority faculty members. Um, (pause) we have uh, policies in place that uh, forbid discrimination on the basis race, creed ethnic backgrounds uh, sexual orientation, all those types of things. So, we try to put policies in place that encourage and promote recruiting diverse faculty, um we have an affirmative action policy that uh, the board reviews and approves that um, meets our uh, that tries to help us accomplish our mission. So, the board places an indirect role, we don’t hire anybody except the superintendent and the board secretary, but we do have an indirect role I think in trying to make sure that we have a diverse faculty that meets the diverse needs of our student populations.

SBM B: Yes, I have. Last uh, February of 2004, after I um (pause) ran for the board, one of my concerns was the underrepresented of people of color and that really pushed me to run for the board. Because when I was hired as a teacher, I was recruited. And that was in the late 60’s when districts were basically trying to do the right thing so that their staff could be representative of their population of students. And so after being in this district and teaching here for 33 years, I saw that we were not going forward, we were going backwards. We don’t have as many people of color that we really need to have. In fact some buildings don’t have anyone (pause) of color in the building. And um, I thought, Ok, I’m gonna run for school board and see what I can do. So last year was my first year and so I talked to (HR Director) and I said I was recruited from an all black college in Arkansas, Little Rock, Arkansas. Why can’t we do those types of things? Now I know we do things, we do go to job fairs up at UNI, and down at the University of Iowa, Wartburg, we recruit from Wartburg but I don’t know how, I didn’t know how extensively we were going outside of the state of Iowa. I said, you gotta go where black people are if you wanna get that population of teachers. Um, so (pause) right away, she said OK, fine. I took another person, a counselor from another building, an African American lady and um, we really thought (laugh) we were gonna have a lot of success. But we found out that everyone, all of the recruiters were looking for the same types of teachers (laugh). So, it was not, we had, we had a couple promises that they were gonna apply and um, but it did not turn out as productively as I thought it would. But at least we, we uh, made ourselves known because many, ok we were in Arkansas my home state and we went a five universities there. And I think one of the draw backs that we had, one of our disadvantages was, when I was hired (city) paid more than anyone that I uh, I had applied to, any place that I had applied to teach. Because, at that time uh, there were several districts that were looking for African American teachers and I had signed, by the time I signed (city) contract that was my fourth because each, each one paid a little more. I just resigned before I even started teaching and signed the next one. So, um, then I , because I thought I was gonna end up in Cincinnati and I had actually signed their contract and then when (city) person, human resource person came to my school, they offered like $300 more so I resigned (laugh) from Cincinnati because I didn’t know anything about Cincinnati and I didn’t know anything about (city). So, I resigned from Cincinnati and came to (city) (pause) and we were, they were paying more. But to our amazement in Arkansas (pause) most all of the, all of the large districts paid more than (city) and some of the even smaller districts beginning salaries was better than (city) so why would a person, leave their home state and come to an unknown place (pause) and get less money. And that was the only reason I came, because when your starting out, you need every penny you can get. So that was the only reason I came, because they were paying more money. In fact, when I graduated back in the day uh, (city) was paying me $2,000 more than I would have made where I was, so naturally that was a draw for me, but it’s not anymore. Our salary is not competitive with many other states.

SBM C: Not actually involved in the recruitment, no.
Principals

Prin. A: Specific recruitment, no. I haven’t attended any recruiting trips or gone to any affairs.

Prin. B: No, I haven’t been involved in that particular recruitment. Um, I , I do know that there is a necessity for the recruitment but that mainly comes through HR because the way the process works, there is, whatever position is available, um, we tell the district what position we have and then the district does the posting and gets all the applicants and then sends us, um, people that we can interview, people that they feel would be good for the position. So any of that recruitment comes from the, the standpoint of HR. Any of the recruitment that’s kind of overt and out in the open, I mean if I know someone’s good and I know they’re looking, I can say hey go down and apply, this is the, these are the positions open, go down and apply for one.

Prin. C: Uh, yes, I have. Well, um, I can-Do you want specifics-Can I just give you some specifics (Sure) It might answer some questions that are coming later as well. Um, previous to becoming the principal here, I was the principal at (building) elementary which is a feeder school and uh, we have similar demographics. Um, (MS) has 34% African American students and about 50% Free and reduced lunch and the other kids come from very well to do families and its very similar at (elem.). Uh, when I was principal at um, (elem.) and even the school before when I was at (building) um, the first recruiting that I did was of a 16 year old. Uh, since my husband was principal at (district high school) uh, I knew a a, African American student and I went through her um, um, line at (Randall’s) grocery store every Sunday and got to know her and started talking to her about being a teacher and every Sunday we had the same conversation about being a teacher and then where she was going to college and she ended up going to UNI. So when she was back on um, breaks, I would go through her line, and we’d talked about being a teacher um and going into special education and then you know, as it went on uh the conversations always, we always talked about her coming back and teaching in Cedar Rapids and I always told her, um, I was gonna hire her to come teach for me. And so that was a real long process. That one took about six years for her to finish her degree. And she finished her degree and I hired her as a teacher at (elem.). So, that was a long recruitment. Um, um, and I think um, part of the theme that you might hear through this is too, is not only am I committed to um, hiring minority candidates but also hiring graduates from (city) and um, and that’s actually where I think we were probably our most successful here. Um, and (teacher) is still with the school district as well and um, a very, very good teacher. Um, while I was at (elem.) uh, I had a fourth grade position that was open and um, had quite a few calls over the summer and one of the things, and I don’t know if you’ve noticed this too, is that it’s very hard for us to know going through a stack of applications if somebody is a minority, because there’s no place on it. And so I’ve gone through, I probably a hundred applications and I happened to answer the phone, the secretaries gone, I answer the phone and uh, it was a man, and he said he was interested in the position, uh, his name was (teacher) there was nothing about the name or anything that, that tipped me off. There was nothing in the application, but um, when I talked to him, I thought he sounded, like he was African American and that was the only tip off I had. Invited him in for an interview, uh, and it was, actually it was a real rigorous interview, we had so many great candidates. We ended up calling people back and um, they also had to teach a lesson and uh, he definitely came out on top. He taught with me there and then uh, came with me here as my counselor. Um, and so I not only recruited him I brought him with me. Now that didn’t add um, to the number of minorities in the school district when I brought him with me, but it certainly uh, helped out (MS) and he can affect a lot more kids here as a, a counselor. We have 650 kids here. And then I also have um, pushed him and helped him get into the administrative program at (university). Um, he just got accepted and uh, will be starting in the fall and uh, I really hope to keep hold of him in our district um, so he becomes an administrator here in uh, (city). Um, let me see, um when I was making the transition from um, (elem.) to (MS), I had a lot of openings, um, that summer an um there were also openings at (elem.) and the facilitator was following me as um, principal. So we were both going through uh, applications and um, and my facilitator was African American as well. So she was also very committed to um, attracting minority candidates for (elem.) and um, we were going through applications and it was um, (new principal at elem.) my facilitator, who said, well look at this one. And the girl’s name was (teacher) and she says, I think she sounds African American. (laugh) I don’t know if you’re gonna hear these stories anywhere else, but I’m gonna be really honest with you about how I find
(laugh) minority candidates. Um, because if you wait for somebody to land, you know, in your lap, you're not going find any minority candidates. So, um, we went through the whole um application and resume and we found a place in the back that said that she had um, belong to, um, an honors society for African American students when she was in college and she was um, went, and she went to college in Naperville (Illinois). So we had some concerns about whether she would really want to come to (City) and whether she'd want to stay here. She was from uh, Chicago. But uh, we invited her out for an interview and both of us sat in the interview, but the interview was here and I, and I had my, my jobs posted before she did. And (teacher) was in a group to interview with so many people and she was towards the end of the day and I had probably seven of us sitting around the table and everybody was tired and (teacher) walked in brand new teacher and started talking and it's the first time, I've ever, ever saw, maybe the only time I've ever seen this, and everybody sat up and leaned forward, just like this, to here what she had to say. I mean she just connected with us, immediately and she walked out and everybody says, oh we got have her, we gotta have (teacher). She was just, she was just a lock. And, uh, she's been with me for three years and uh, she is a Master Teacher, even after three years. And I got her hooked up with uh, Greg Reed, I don't know if you know Greg, uh a friend of mine. He was the Human Resources Director here and uh, now teaches at UNI, and I got um, I got her hooked up with, with Greg and she just finished her first year in the administrative program. Uh, and I'm her mentor and uh, she just made the decision to go on to get her doctorate and superintendent's license as well. So she's kind of on her way too uh, and it helps to have connections in colleges um, uh, to help um, get them there as well. Um, so (teacher) still with me and one of things I had talked with her about um, was what's gonna keep you here, what's the connection. And um, because we find that um, or I guess I have found that it's hard to get minority candidates from outside our state to want to come here. You know or to get them to want to stay unless there's some other connection for them. And for her, she knew um, a woman who uh, was a pastor in a church. And that was her connection uh, here as well. And in fact, through (teacher) this isn't a certified teaching staff, but through (teacher) there's another couple who moved here as well and belongs to the same church and uh, we hired them this year to um, uh conduct our gospel choir. We had our gospel choir kind of up and going again and um, and it was that connection through her and through her church that helped us find that couple. Now they are not certified teachers but they did come in and teach um, that class for us. Um, uh, one this uh, this last year um, (teacher) and she had moved in with her husband um, who had gotten a job here in town and she had been a teacher I think in Ohio is where they were from. And uh, she evidently, she must have come in and met (HR Director) in human resources, so (HR) sent out something saying, "I just met, you know, a really quality um, minority candidate, if any of you have any openings um, you know, you might consider (teacher)"). And uh, even though I didn't have any openings, I just called (teacher) and just said, you wanna come in, I 'd love to get to know ya, I don't have any openings right now, and she goes, sure. So she came in and we just did an informal chat uh, to see what she was interested in and uh, she has an elementary degree but then uh, she also has uh, um, I think it's a K-12 reading specialist's degree. And through talking with her, she said I'd really like to get in but just half time this first year um, you know, until we get settled. She had kids in elementary school so um, I contacted (HR) and (Head of secondary) who's my boss, and said, you know, I don't think we wanna let her go, would you consider uh, giving me additional staffing so I could hire her as a (laugh) a half time reading specialist um, and they said yes. So I hired her at the beginning of the second trimester and I, I let her set her hours um, and I said we'll, we'll set the classes around when you, when you want to be here. And um, so she worked the rest of the year for me uh, in that half time reading specialists. Um, so I really needed the district for that one, just to give me some extra staffing in order to make that happen, and then they did that. And then towards the end of the year, I was talking to her and she said, "I'd really, I'd like to go back to work full time but I really want to go back to elementary". So I said Ok (laugh), um, you know, I don't want to lose you, but if, if I'm gonna loose you, I want you to go to a feeder school. And she said that she wanted a diverse elementary. So I contacted the feeder school principals and uh, she got hired as a first grade teacher at (elementary). So she's gonna feed back into me as well. Um, and then most recently, um, I had a half time um, well because (teacher) left I was gonna fill that half time uh, reading position and I had a student teacher uh, who had student taught uh, in 8th grade language arts here um, name was () and she attended () high school. So, I had known her all the way through, through high school. I had watched her play sports, she was a stand out athlete, especially in softball, but also basketball. So, she was from here and um, not only did I have (student...
teacher) apply for that job, but another girl named ( ) who also I knew, she had gone to school with my
daughter at (high school). I'd watched her all the way through school and um, and she also applied for the
job. So I had these two great candidates. Um, she was um, mixed race, she's not um, I think her dads
African American, but um, um, she was interested in staying the district and she told me that. She goes, I
don't wanna go anywhere else, I wanna stay in the district. So I have these two great candidates um, I
contacted um, superintendent um, because he's very committed to um, having a, a more diverse uh, staff,
and my boss, and (HR) and said we're gonna put our heads together. And um, my boss called me back and
said which one of these two would be most successful in high school and I said well definitely (teacher)
um, would be. And, so um, he was going to give some additional staffing to the principal at (high school).
She has a completely white staff. She has tried so hard to bring some diversity and has not been successful
with that. Um, and so (principal) ended up hiring ( ) and I hired (student teacher). And then I had another
opening and I called (principal) and said (laugh), I have an opening, can I have ( ) back, and she said, no
(laugh). So, um, every single one of these I've hired a different way. Um, but I don't know what the right
answer is. If those are the answers you get other places or?

5. What strategies are used to recruit teachers from underrepresented background?

Superintendents

Supt. A: The strategies here have not been very successful. Strictly because of, uh the institutions or the
training, uh, colleges and universities have been underrepresented with uh, uh, people of color. And so as a
result they've not been very successful. We are discussing right now, the desirability and whether and the
potential success of uh, uh placing in to the budget dollars to recruit nationally at those institutions that
have a significant number of minorities. In the position that I had as the Superintendent of schools in
Omaha, uh, we did recruit nationally and worked very hard at trying to uh, hire, uh, uh, African Americans
specifically, but also Hispanics from those institutions that were actually training them. However, it was
very, very difficult. We just had moderate success because basically those institutions are in the warmer
portion of the United States and its' difficult to get, to convince people to come to the cold climates.

Supt. B: Well, the uh, we just talked a little bit about that. Some of the answers Willie are gonna probably
answer another question later on, so. And that is like for instance, incentives to be able to come here
relative to in this case moving, we can't pay him a whole lot more than anybody else but you know a
moving expense um, to be able to make sure that we uh, put them into building that their gonna succeed at
that isn't a situation which is not um, we guaranteed for instance that there are certain buildings that we
would know that uh, somebody might struggle more with than another building, we wanna make sure that
they have a great opportunity here, that they have good. And then the other thing is, is that uh, um we
want, we want them uh, any, any underrepresented it doesn't make any difference. For instance in our
Hispanic we are really hurting relative to bringing Hispanics, we only have two I think, maybe five. Five
Hispanic teachers in the district, that's ridiculous. You know, we have 6% of our kids, so it's 650 Hispanic
kids and 5 teachers for, and we're struggling working with that, so um. We were working with both
Hawkeye and the University of uh, or Uh, UNI, I mean relative to that uh, to try to be able to get some
more um, Hispanic you know teachers in there. We have no Hispanic administrators in the district. You
know, that's, that's not good, so I mean so the, the question um, um how have I been involved is just
basically been constantly working with everybody together, so what can we do, working with Hawkeye,
working with the University of Northern Iowa and also with Iowa, we've talk to them too so.

Supt. C: uh, at this point, I think it's mostly word of mouth. There is some uh, attendance at, at recruiting
fairs and so on, but I've not seen evidence of an organized plan, so that's what we intend to, to start
building or actually have started building and uh, I would hope in the first few months of this new school
year, we'll have that plan fleshed out and, and uh, be on our way.

School Board Members

SBM A: Um, from my knowledge of it, I do know that we try to cast a wide net. We send recruitment
materials out to uh, historical uh, black colleges uh, we uh, attend uh, hiring uh, yeah, hiring fairs at uh,
Iowa colleges and specifically try and identify minority teachers uh, we attend um, recruitment fairs over in Illinois schools to try and recruit um, minorities there, um (pause), but as far as my direct knowledge goes, that’s all that I know about.

SBM B: Basically, going to teacher fairs and um, trying to talk up the district and trying to talk up the whole environment, the city and the advantages you will have if you move to place like (city) or relocated to a place like (city). And uh, sure you probably would be safer her than in other larger places, but still the bottom line of the salary and I think that is the deterrent barrier. (Pause) We’re not able to attract many beginning teachers and what I found what happens in other places that have a higher beginning salary, they cut off after certain points of time where in (city) if you can hold out, you will eventually make a decent living after so many years and after you move across you know, with more degrees and whatever, you will. But just to start out, (pause) um, we need to do better.

SBM C: That’s an answer I would like to have actually heard throughout interviews from the day time. Um, we hired a new superintendent who just completed his first year, prior to that, and actually I should, I should have, I have a tape that I might send you and it is of a school board meeting that we had maybe 18 months ago. Every year we ask the HR director to come in and give a brief explanation of hiring practices um, adherence to policies, recruitment of a diverse staff and what those efforts consist of, and we had a nice dialogue about that. We’re do for another um, round of, of updates soon, so I expect to hear about that soon. But when we hired our superintendent one of the um, goals and objectives that we put, that we put in his evaluation was to um, increase the diversity in staff. So... What was your question? (Repeated Question) And so, I don’t know, I don’t know if they’re advertising outside of the district. I don’t if they’re specifically targeting and recruiting um, minorities, I don’t know. I’ll be honest with you, I don’t know.

Principals

Prin. A: Well, the district is able to set aside, uh, I can’t remember how many positions, but uh, set aside vacancies to hire minority students or minority staff members/teachers. Uh, I don’t know what that magic number is.

Prin. B: Because, I’m not involved in the process, you’ll get a better answer from (HR director) but um, (pause) I don’t think, we, we don’t in (city), we don’t offer any (pause) extra incentives like, like money or anything like that. I do know that based on contract just to have equity (HR director) can um, hire a, but I don’t know the exact number, a number of positions for minority groups to help with the equity and you know so you have a balanced staff within the district. But I don’t know exactly how many positions she can do that way. I know um, a PE position became available here and we needed, we need a female PE teacher, desperately. And um, it just so happened that there’s a young woman who’s also finishing her doctorate, and she came down to the district level and she was talking about, she was looking for maybe a teaching position in one of the schools. She, she’s taught before but she instead of teaching out at (college) and she’s African American and so instead of going through the whole process of who wants this and do I have to slide somebody over, we were able to offer her the PE position instead of somebody with maybe tons of seniority somewhere else in the district.

Prin. C: Um, I don’t know what the district does. I don’t know if they go to job fairs. Um, the only the lead I had ever gotten from the district was (reading teacher). Um, but I think that () just showed up because her husband came to town. I know that they go to job fairs, but I think maybe just in Iowa, I don’t know if they go other places. Um, in the past um, () had been um associate superintendent here for a while and head of elementary cd. Um, and I know that she was more of a recruiter. Um, there was a time when (another district) laid off a lot of teachers um, how long ago would that have been, probably about 8 years ago, 8-9 years ago, laid off a lot of teachers and um, and administrators, and there were a number of those who were African American and (assoc. supt.) went up and offered them jobs right away. Um, and she, she really um, was persistent and then came back and found jobs for them. So we have these teachers under contract um, and asked us to interview, you know asked people if you have an opening, please
interview them and we're gonna find the right, the right place um, for these candidates. So, she was much more aggressive, I thought, than what we have now.

6. What factors are most effective in attracting underrepresented teachers to_________ISD?

Superintendents
Supt. A: I'm not, I, we just have not been very successful. We just have not been very successful in this school district. That's a portion of the operation that needs to be looked at very carefully.

Supt. B: Well they have to feel wanted, they have to feel needed, they have to feel that they're going to succeed. Um, they have to, they have to understand uh, what, why would I wanna come teach in (city). So for us it's selling the district to, you know um. It's easy to sell the district to a whole bunch people that aren't minority or underrepresented uh, but it's harder to sell the district, but what, what's there, what, are there other people in (city) that are African American, are other people in (City) that are Hispanic, you know I mean because they're not gonna want to be the only person in that whole city usually. One side is to show we have a high population of these, these minorities, uh, like Bosnians or whatever and uh, you know so it's really important and, and because uh, as you talk to any unrepresented group, it's what's there for me. I mean what kind of cultural things can I do, to go to, to explore, and have fun, because the school day is one thing or the work thing is one thing, but I have a personal life that's gonna be you know, the other two thirds of my world (laugh) out side of school. I mean, you have to be able to have those things available in your community. And (city) does OK with that, they don't do great with that uh, you know, as you know there's the haves and haves not in this community and then, then that's a struggle for um, for us to be able to really work hard at saying that we a great opportunities for a lot of folks, and um, that kind of, so I guess um, that's the best answer I can get.

Supt. C: Well, I, I, there is a number of things and I think that's sometimes why uh, some of the initiatives are not as successful. Um, I, I think it has to be a community wide, involvement. Um, having candidates come to you or even starting an employment with you is one thing, but having them stay in a community that maybe new to them. Um, and sometimes the farther away someone is coming in to the community the greater the chance is they may leave, leave you after a year or two. So I think developing that uh, kind of inner related sort of approach with in the community, working with the churches, businesses, banks, all those kinds of the things to um, really help people. In particularly our, our district as an example, uh, we have 17% minority enrollment student wise but our uh, our citizen percentage minority is no where near that and so when young people come to us who haven't been here before, it, it takes some effort to get them connected in settings where they feel comfortable and have some commonalities and those kinds of things. So, uh, it's not just bringing them here, signing them up, and then you're on your own. I, I think it has to go uh, much further than that. Uh, the, some very good induction and mentoring strategies early on, uh, particularly with, with our teachers, um, I think are, are effective.

School Board Members
SBM A: I gotta tell ya, it's hard you know to attract minority teachers because of our starting pay. We fight an up hill battle because you can go right across the river and make $10,000 more a year. Um, I think what we have to offer in terms of quality of life, in terms of quality of our schools, uh, in terms of quality of our students, I think those are factors that we need to try an emphasize uh, as we try to attract uh, minority candidates for faculty positions, but I don't know if you're even going to be able to beat out money. (Pause) I mean heck you can go, we loose, we, we, we graduate outstanding students of all backgrounds from Iowa schools and when, you know with education degrees, and we offer them $25,000 a year and they can go to Texas and make 37 and I just don't know how we can beat that. You know with out getting some more cash from the state and getting our per-student uh, spending amount up there, it's just really hard.
SBM B: Uh, salary (laugh) and the um, selling the um, district to prospective employees, because um, if we can show where are really on the path of trying to uh, boost the salary, we are building new schools, and we have a lot to offer them, because um, we have the latest equipment in all the new buildings that we are building. They are well, well furnished and everything is up to date. So that part I think we’ve gotten, we’re on the right road. But as far as the salary goes, I think that would be a very, very important factor.

SBM C: (Pause) you know, Iowa doesn’t have lakes and oceans and vistas and views and mountains, so I think that we view as probably quality of life, quality of education, sense of community and friendliness um, (pause)styles of life issues that we hope that will attract people to our community and into employment.

Principals
Prin. A: Uh, first sell the positive attributes of the school and the school system in general, uh, as well as the community. Some people that are not from Iowa or specifically (district) aren’t aware of the many benefits that this community area can offer, uh so we really need to market the place. Uh, and then secondly, to sell the need to have uh, people of color in leadership positions and in teaching positions because our enrollments are growing, our student of color enrollments continue to rise and so it’s helpful to have uh, teachers and administrators that uh, can represent all factions.

Prin. B: I think sometimes just, just professionally speaking, it’s gonna come down to, um, what does the district also have to offer. And I’m not talking about for just because you might be in an underrepresented group, but for their staff professionally and personally. I think if I was out looking for position, um, irregardless of, of minority status, I’d want to know, what the district is, what’s the turn over rate, (pause) what are your policies, what does the contract offer, and because in some cases (pause) that’s just gonna be your best bet. If you can’t, if the districts not offering things anyway, your gonna go where you can make the money and where it’s comfortable and for any person, it doesn’t matter your status. So it has to be if the districts attractive to start with, (pause) far as how they pay and their benefits.

Prin. C: Uh, (pause) yeah, I know the community issue is, is kind of a tough one. Um, most effective. I think making sure that there’s a connection, either at the school or in the community. Um, for instance when I think about (teacher) um, she was coming, yeah she was 22 years old coming here from um, Naperville, and you know and Chicago, she lived in western Chicago, and she had her pastor but we have mentoring, a real strong mentoring program and uh, we hooked her up with um, um another woman from her team who kind of became her best friend slash mother and um, I think that connection, that real personal connection here at school was really important, that she had somebody to take care of her here and um, you know they did a lot of things outside of school. And also the pastor, and it’s got to be that relation piece, there has to be, um some connection at school, and maybe some connection outside of school too, um, to come in and fit into a community. Um, we don’t have a, a vital um, African American um, community like you would fine in a, a large city. You know even um, (), who was my facilitator at um, (elementary) had, had grown up in(city), gone through the schools, had been a teacher, and then I hired her as a facilitator, and then she became principal when I left, um even she said, you know it’s hard to find a place to get your hair done. It’s, you know, she said this is not a, a community that would attract um, um and doesn’t have the cultural opportunities to attract um, minority candidates from outside, is what she thought. And I don’t know if um, (another Iowa city) is any better with that or not or? (pause) I don’t know, that, that’s what she says. Um, but anyway that you can create those relationships, I think is gonna be important

7. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are they?

Superintendents
Supt. A: Pause, I don’t know of any, unless it would be because of the uh, of the, the percentage of, uh non-whites in the community. Uh, if that has an effect on a young person who might want, consider
teaching or working in the (city). Uh, I, uh, I just, I don’t think so. I just don’t think they’re, uh, they’re available. (Pause) At least it appears that way. I may be incorrect.

Supt. B: Well weather, you know for us it doesn’t make an difference, I mean it, it, while that is an underrepresented you know, complaint all the time (School Board Member) a good friend of mine will say, why the hell would I want to come up her and play football for Iowa, when I can go in the south and have great weather, and I don’t have to worry about all that crap. And he said, so when he came to Iowa, he didn’t no, and then you know he was like why would I come up here and freeze. And so, one of the barriers is climate you know, because every, everybody loves, would rather work sometimes. The other barrier is, is uh salary, uh Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, a beginning teacher in those three states right now Willie will make almost $10,000 more in their first year. I mean that’s how, that’s how much disparity there is between Iowa and those other three bordering states. In Louisiana we sent uh, (board member) off our board, uh Richard and (HR Director) down there to two black colleges. They can make more, they can make a $1,000 a year in their first year in Louisiana than they can in Iowa. Two questions they said, why would I wanna come up here for a $1,000 less and why would I wanna come up where I gotta worry about winter. I’ve never had to worry about that before, why do that now. So there’s, we’re running up against right now uh, costs. Why I can, I got a college loan to pay-off. I’m right outta college, I owe whatever, $50,000, I can go to another state and make $10,000 a year and pay my loans off a heck of a lot quicker than I can come to Iowa and make 26 or $27,000 dollars a year. So, that’s a big barrier not just for Iowa, or not just for us here in (city) but for, for Iowa as a whole. And uh, especially for the urban schools trying to attract diverse populations because other people are trying to attract diverse populations, underrepresented populations and they’re gonna be able to pay a hell of a lot more, so. You know we loose, we loose to Minneapolis, we loose to Milwaukee, we loose to Green Bay, Wisconsin, (pause) we loose to Chicago. You know and uh, and uh, if I was young person right now and uh, no matter what, whether I was underrepresented person or you know uh, um, uh, not a minority person, $10,000 I’m gonna, I may go somewhere else unless I’m tied physically to this area. So, that’s a big problem for us right now.

Supt. C: Yeah, I think there are. Um, I think nation wide our African American population is between 10 & 12%. Um, and of that percentage uh, very much underrepresented for those uh, in kids that get to go to college, and then those that elect education is an even smaller percentage. So, if many districts are out there trying to do what we are doing, uh with an already small pool of candidates, I mean that just by the numbers alone is a challenge. Uh, I think bringing minority candidates into a largely majority community presents a challenge. There has to a lot of dialogue, a lot of understanding um, addressing what can be some misconceptions, avoiding assumptions, those kinds of things. So, uh, the, the two primary barriers I see: small candidate pool to begin with and maybe some assumptions in the majority society, and, and I think some apathy and that probably resides in all of our populations. That some people are willing to sit back and think, well let’s see, you know you’ve had civil rights uh, activities for many many years. Uh, it’s been my experience that if we don’t aggressively and actively pursue uh, through strategies to make things happen, they’re just not gonna happen. There are too many people, too comfortable with the way things are. So, I think over coming the status quo in a lot of places, and it’s an awareness uh, situation for many people. I think we have some well intentioned people that don’t realize the kind of difficulty of, of what we’re trying to do, and so spreading that awareness and getting good people involved to, to help you I think all fit into that.

School Board Members

SBM A: Not that I’m aware of, I mean there very well could be. Um, I, I think that we have a culture that embraces diversity. Again, it’s in our mission statement and the board is emphatic about it. Um, there might be some cultural issues going on that, that I’m not aware of, but um, I, I see pay as our biggest detriment um, to that. Um, I don’t know too, I don’t know how I mean again, this doesn’t matter what your ethnic background is, I don’t how well uh, 30 inches of snow a year (laugh) turns people on or off. Um, again you know, no snow in Texas or a lot snow in Iowa, I don’t know. Um, weather could be a factor but um, again I think pay is our biggest barrier.
SBM B: I think sometimes um, sometimes money is an issue. Education is a very rewarding occupation and I think sometimes we let the money get in our way. And we shouldn’t do that but (laugh), but that is the bottom line as far as they’re concerned. Um, but I think that once you go into teaching, if they realize once, if they would go into teaching, if they would come to a district, they have so many experiences that they can go out into the work force and do just about any job. If you can survive as an educator, you will have, you pick up so many skills that you can go out and do something different after 25 years (laugh) but not really 25 years but after just about six or seven years, you pick up a lot of skills. But I don’t think they actually realize what a rewarding occupation this would, this could be if they would give it a try. Not going into the field that’s one. Um, and I have noticed in the um, past six or seven years, males not going into the field. And I, I don’t know the reason why they are choosing not to go into education. I know it’s a very, very, very, rigorous curriculum, they have to do many, many things that other people, like if your gonna major in I’ll say political science, you’re basically doing the social studies field, but if your gonna major in education you have so uh, many different disciplines that you have to go through and a lot people don’t want to take the time to do that. And it may take just a little a longer but, I think that deter a lot of um, individuals from going into education.

SBM C: Probably competition is one of our biggest barriers, competition, our climate. Um. (pause) we’re trying to adopt a grow your own philosophy where we can try to get some students that we think have an interest in education and potential for employment with in our district. Um, we think that that might work very well for us and we’re starting, I, I, if we have got strategies, I hope that they’re starting to use that as a strategy. I don’t know in fact if they are or not. Um, so those kinds of barriers, I, I just think (pause), you know if you look at the pool of people that are interested in education it’s kind of small to begin with. Many years ago um, you know, the pool was dominated and we’re talking 50 years ago, by very bright women, whose only options for employment was nursing or education. And then as those opportunities began to unfold for women in other areas of, of careers, they decided, well heck I can do some other things. So they started to leave, which made that pool even smaller and then for some reason (pause) K-6 looks like a nursing job for a lot of men, whether they’re of color or not. So it’s hard to attract men in a K-6 environment and it’s increasingly harder to attract the best and the brightest too. So, um, we have a lot of barriers. Um, our pay scale even though in the state we maybe relatively in you know in a hire level of pay, that’s really not what it’s all about and most of us do work for a level of pay but we really work for a passion and, and things that we’re interested in doing. So, um, I think a pay scale is a barrier, I think um, the interest in education over all, I don’t think our society values it at the level that they should and until we as a nation come to realize the importance and place the value on it, I think it will be a ever increasing battle. (Pause) And it’s not just people of color, it’s for attracting really good people in education.

Principals
Prin. A: Really, the only thing that jumps to my mind and its’ not underrepresented people but in general would be the, the pay salary, the pay schedule that Iowa offers. Uh, (district) is one of the larger ones in Iowa but in the overall scheme of things Iowa teacher and administrative pay is down on the list. So that would be the one barrier I think. Um, I don’t know this for sure, but I’m told there might not be, the number cultural activities that uh, people might be interested in. Certainly, there are a lot of offered in the district but um, maybe not enough.

Prin. B: I think just the, the number of applicants available. (pause) And I could be wrong, but um, what I’m seeing more and more over the years, people with really good skills, (pause) they have a lot more to choose from. They don’t have to go into education which is usually not a well paid position. To make a lot more money somewhere else, and, and there are recruitment incentives in other areas that are by far, more attractive. So you’d have to have, and I’m not saying people don’t, but their has to be a true passion that this is what I want to do to stay in education knowing that their you’re never gonna have the huge financial gains that you might have in another field.
Prin. C: Um, (pause) I don’t know, I don’t really know if I can think of any others besides ones that I have shared with you. Um, (pause) not that I can think of. Um, I’ll see if I can think of any others as we go.

8. How do you assure that the recruitment practices are implemented?

Superintendents
Supt. A: Well, basically look at the results, look at the data, and make sure that we’re following through on what we are, uh, and placing a high a priority and looking at those resumes that uh, uh, that are resumes of people who are non-white.

Supt. B: Well every time the, when the people that are going out working on this and we’re not that big here Willie that I can’t, we just say to (Hr Director) and the crew that’s working, what are we doing, how are we doing it, who are we talking to, you know, who, she, she documents exactly where they go, what they do, and how that’s working, and what’s going on. And we’re do, we’re doing are own, I’m sure she showed you about our own uh, leader program where we’re getting kids that are gonna be going to school, encouraging them to go into education in high school. And so, you know I, I’m part of that program and, and you know I’m, we have graduates that are going on to college that we want to come back. And so, I think we have teacher leaders right now in that program that (HR director’s assistant) runs uh, up to 20 I think we have about right now in there. And you know, if half those kids succeed and go on and get that done and, and, and because we’re gonna employ them, you know and we’re gonna try and get them a job back here. You know, and we’re gonna encourage them to go into the business and then come back here. So, one of the things that I’m involved with is that all the time. And then I watch, I wanna see the numbers, I wanna see what we’re doing, and, and accountability wise, so.

Supt. C: Well, that’s, that’s a pretty good question, because a lot of things will be on paper and uh, we rely a lot on data. And uh, such things as uh, when we post, what, what did our applicant pool look like. Just the applicant pool. Uh, what did our interviewing uh, pool look like. Uh, we can be getting minority applicants but are they uh, being interviewed, and then certainly the, the hiring um, pool. And I, I’ve found in other places that um, again we have a tendency sometimes to hire people that look and talk the game like we do. So, again, unless there’s some, I think some pretty fair but uh, substantial interventions to make sure that every candidate is being looked at totally for what they can bring um, to a community and to a school district. And, and I think diversity is one of those things that should have some weight. If we really believe that preparing our kids to, to live in a diverse world, a main part of that is to have uh, instructors and uh, principals and people in the central office that look like them an don’t look like them. If we really believe in that, we’ve got to be willing to step out there and do some things that um, kind of push against the, the tide so to speak of what, what normally happens. (pause) So, uh, going back and making sure that your kind of uh, walking the walk or you know walking the talk. It’s easy to talk and I suspect that a lot of that are on paper exist in a lot of school districts but really going back and making sure that you’re actively pursuing what you, what you say you are. And I think data helps, helps advise us in that regard.

School Board Members
SBM A: Um, to be honest with ya, I don’t think the board does enough to uh, I don’t think the board does enough to assure that. Um, we probably need to be more diligent in requesting information about that. Um, (pause) there really isn’t a board policy in place that requires an annual report on that. We are provided information periodically about our, our makeup both of our student population and of our faculty and administrative positions, but it’s more passive rather than requested. Um, I, I guess, you know I guess I take some, some of the blame there because as a board member umm, I have not taken an active role in requesting that kind of information. Um, it is important to us, I think our interim superintendent has stated it’s important to him, and I know that he’s taken specific steps uh, to try to address some of the things that I was talking earlier about recruiting at historical black colleges and uh, specifically identifying um, minorities for potential teaching positions so. Um, but I don’t have any data to know that that’s being done so, as a board member um, maybe I should be a little more active in, in getting that kind of information to
ensure that our recruitment practices are at a minimum at least identifying and getting minority candidates to fill out applications to be considered.

SBM B: I'm constantly um(laugh), bringing this awareness up front and I am constantly asking, why we don't have a person of color in every building. (Pause) Um, and as long as I'm on the board, I guess I will constantly do that, because I do feel that diversity is so important. Um (pause), a person living in (city) is not in an isolated area. Even if you live in a certain part of town, you're still gonna come in contact with people from a different culture and that's why I feel it's so important for young kids to live in a diverse society, even if they have two or three students in their classroom that is a different race. I think that also they should have one, or two, or three staff persons of a different race also. So I will constantly monitor that as a board member and hopefully we'll do a better job.

SBM C: By asking, you know, by holding our superintendent's feet to the fire. Um, you know we do hire, we um, approve all employment contracts so we see on a monthly basis the kinds of people that we're hiring, backgrounds, um, and then ever year she's to give us a report about her recruitment efforts. And sense we've targeted um, a more diverse staff, we hope that that will be included in that report also. His (pointed to superintendent's office) evaluation is based on some of those goals and one of those was to increase diversity in staff.

Principals

Prin. A: (Pause, deep breathe) Recruitment practices, I don't know how to answer that exactly. Um...I know for some specific positions I have approached personally, um African American, teachers to see if they would be interested in an administrative position. Um, during the application process if they have filled out the affirmative action statement we would um, review that information and try to include as many underrepresented um, people that we can in the interviews. Um, one of the big struggles is we're not getting applicants and so we need to take a step back and truly go into these other places and, and find folks that are willing to come this way. I'm getting off topic here.

Prin. B: I don't have any say in it. They send me who I can talk to (laugh).

Prin. C: Well, you know, at the building level I have, I have control over that. Um, I don't know if (another district) um, is still um, (another district) and (district) used to be very different um, as far as , um, hiring practices, Here, the building principal has total autonomy in, in hiring. I do all of my own uh, attracting and interviewing, and uh, reference checks and recommendation, and uh, have never been uh, and have never had anybody else over rule me or try to over rule me. And I'm really good at hiring. And I take that very seriously and uh, have made very few mistakes um, over time. Um, so I have total control over mine, you know. What the district does, I'm unsure. (Pause)Is that more of a district question or? (No). Ok

9. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?

Superintendents

Supt. A: I don't know if the word is balance, but there certainly should be representation and uh, in this particular district, if there are some non-white applicants, they will get a very, very good look. Uh, uh, we need them in the classroom and we also need them as trainees for uh, management positions with in the school district. I just think its' good for uh, our students, uh, from the standpoint, and uh, for the whole business of trying to promote the appreciation of and the respect for diversity within your district and also in the community. Uh, it demonstrates that the district is going beyond (pause) just verbiage. Uh, and I do believe that that uh, uh professional, uh, uh competent, non-whites can make a real positive contribution to what your attempting to do within your school district.

Supt. B: Well it, it should be, we're putting in an equity index in right now and this might help you understand why I think the balance is important. And, it, it, we need to be able to mirror on our teaching
staff and our administrative staff exact population that the kids in our district are. So, if, you know if, if
and we’re 34% minority, we outta have 34% of the minority population teaching, that same thing outta be
the same. We need role models, we need to be able to show everybody that you, you can do this too. If all
kids ever see is people that are non-minority or non-underrepresented populations teaching in a school
system than they’re never gonna believe that they can do that either. And so, it’s crucial for us to do that.
We’re putting in place an equity index that’s gonna ask our middle schools, elementary, middle schools,
and high schools (pause) uh, to keep track of uh, lots and lots of things. And we’re doing that to give us
for the same reason that we’re doing this, and that is that when a college visitation, when, when, uh,
University of Iowa comes to sit down at (pause) high school to talk with that wanna go to school, and if the
minority population (high school) is uh, 38% (pause) and there’s 10 kids sitting there with the University of
Iowa, expectation of them is that it’s minority. That isn’t the case right now. So now they’re gonna
have to start keeping track of that. They’re gonna have to start keeping track of the fact that, why aren’t uh,
if the minority population is 37% and you have a 100 kids in advanced placement classes, there outta be 38
minority kids in advanced placement classes. Why aren’t there? Well because nobody went back down in
8th grade, and 7th grade, and 9th grade to say, you know, (superintendent’s name) take this, or you should
take this, or you’re good enough to do this. And so, we’re, we’re making an index and each one of the
schools is gonna have an actual score (laugh) on a four point rubric, 1 and 2 aren’t acceptable, 3 and 4 are,
and uh (laugh), we have a lot of categories for secondary, fewer for elementary just simply because (pause)
there’s fewer things to keep track of. And what we’re trying to, the message that we’re giving with that, so
are whole purpose of doing this, this is important. There’s no reason why, uh, uh, (asst, principal), I don’t
know if you know (asst. principal), (asst. principal) never went, he went to (area high school), never went
to a college visitation once in his entire four years there. He got a ride, full ride to play football somewhere
(pause) Minnesota or I’m not quite sure, I think it was, and no, his coach was the one that helped him,
(pause) there was not a counselor, there wasn’t anybody to do that. Well, that’s not acceptable, you know,
so we’re changing, we just gave this to our administrators and there was a few eyes that raised on that one,
but not one comment. Everybody knows that that’s the right thing to do. There’s no reason in the world,
well like wise, I’m getting around to your answer, we need to be able to demonstrate, both in (pause) who
teaches here (pause) and our behavior, our actions, all the time that it’s crucial and important and we
celebrate the fact that we have great diversity in our system. And it has to be a celebration as opposed to,
those kids and right now, we still have some people that are going, those kids. And the kids have to be able
to say, that’s not happening, they have to feel it, they can’t you know, it can’t be something that somebody
made me do that. I know that it’ll start that way, but I don’t care. So, we’re putting that in place and, but
it’s, we need to be able to walk that talk all the time, (pause) constantly.

Supt. C: Uh, (laugh) it, it’s very important. I think on the surface it’s obvious uh, the things that mentioned
a little bit before, where our, our world is becoming uh, certainly more diverse and you can’t create
diversity where you don’t have it. And you can’t prepare kids to live in a diverse world if there not exposed
to that. So I think it’s really, really important on a practical kind of surface level. On a personal level, I’ve
had, with my own children, I’ve seen uh, I, I’ve worked in uh, an, an affluent district with almost no
minority representation both in the student body and in the teaching staff and I’ve worked um, in a district
that had about 45% of our students that were minority kids. And with uh, certainly not reflecting staff but
a, a fair percentage of minority individuals instructing or you know administrative positions and I
believe that’s the greatest preparation for, for the next step in, in to their lives. I, I think if we learn to
recognize um, our differences, appreciate those, those are growth experiences, at least personally that uh,
when I’ve been with people of different religions uh, different races, different ethnicities, cultures uh, that,
those are, that makes me a better participant in the world. And so I, I think it’s really, really important for
our kids to uh, to have those opportunities.

School Board Members
SBM A: Uh, I think it’s very important, it’s one of the reasons why we picked (city) schools when we
moved here, because you know when you go into the real world, not everybody looks like you and uh, it’s
important for my kids I think to have that kind of experience. Not just from the people they sit with at, at
the desk and do their work everyday but from the people that are teaching them. I think it shows them that
the worlds made up you know of people that are different than they are, but that we can all get along. So, it’s very important to me not only as a board member, but a parent.

SBM B: (Pause) I don’t think we’ll ever have a total balance simply because of the supply and demand. The supply is not there, the demand is great, but the supply is not there. Um, I do feel that we need a balance as far as if you have a building with, a large representative population of people of color, I think that there should be a balance in the staff. (pause) If you have a building where you may have 0.2% people of color I think that you should have at least one person on that staff, not the custodian but one person on the staff of color. And I, I think the reason I say that is because, when I first came to (city) I taught at (elementary school) and I don’t know if you’re familiar with (elementary school) it’s in (connected town) and I was the first African American teacher those students had ever seen. At that time, they had about two African American students out there and when those kids would see me, they would just wave. It was like, oh, there is a teacher that looks a lot like me and I think that’s really important because young kids get it in there head that if they see anyone that looks like them, maybe they can’t you know, obtain that type of um, occupation. But, I think that (pause) we are aware of that here in (city) (pause) so, I hope that we will go on and let it happen. And that was my reason why, is because we need to have people who look a lot like your student body.

SBM C: It’s huge. I don’t think um, (pause) I don’t think our staff look and represent our student population. And I think the problem we’re in is that (pause) as we shape young people in the educational environment, they need role models. They need people that um, represent to them not only things that they know the good things in life and what they should be doing, but that there is opportunity and hope and um, really great things out there. And a lot of them, a lot of people um, you know we have a very poor district in some of our schools, 97% of students are on free and reduced lunch. That’s a huge population of students and they are a mix of all kinds of kids in there. So we need people that look like our students, that um, come from cultures that our students come from, so that they can not only learn about our culture, but we can also learn about theirs and increase the diversity among the entire student population. Does that make sense? OK.

Principals
Prin. A: I think its’ very important. Um, I think its’ important for all students not just students of color but all students to have role models that they can look up to in those leadership types of positions and uh, quite frankly an African American student might not feel comfortable talking to a Caucasian person and to have uh, someone with a similar cultural background could be helpful in the some of the issues that they’re facing outside of school.

Prin. B: I think it’s very important, because everybody needs somebody that they can um, relate to. Although at times, it’s gonna depend on the individual. It is because the students here, while I have to be in a position of authority where that if something arises they know I, I have to do discipline. To them it doesn’t matter, to the students it doesn’t matter our, our black or white students. You can go out and interview all the kid, they know I’m fair and consistent in how I do it, and, and I think that’s what kids want for the most part. But it’s still important to have people that you can relate to. You know, I, I don’t that there’s a lot of people in this world that are Caucasian that have ever been in a situation where they’ve walked in a room and they’re the only Caucasian person there, where as that happens over and over and over again to minority students or people in the world, they have no idea what that feels like.

Prin. C: Well I, it’s um, very important, Um, (pause) you know, it, it, maybe even more so in um, schools that don’t have any diversity. I think it’s so important for, for my kids, you know, 34% of my kids are African American. Um, so I think it’s really important that they have uh, males, uh, uh African American males are great. Um, because I have a lot of kids who don’t have parents, or don’t have dads in the home, um, you know not just African American kids. So I make sure that I hire as many men as I can, I have young teachers, old teachers um. And um, it’s as important for uh, white kids to have African American teachers as it is for African American kids. Um, I think it’s good for um, and, and that’s been really hard in
this building. I’ve really had to um, get to know about the culture this building. Um, when I first got here um, it wasn’t cool for African American kids to do well in school. And, first time uh, we did honor roll and I called names and kids stood up, it was absolutely all white. It was not cool in this building for some reason. And I don’t know where that had happened over the years, but our African American kids did not excel academically, um did very poorly. And I think we’ve really turned that around over the years. Um, and part of it has to do and, and I, I may want to talk about that at some other point, um a program that we have called MAPP, here. And it um, (middle school), African American, Awareness, Program and we’re in our third year. And what that has done, is it’s pulled together all of our African American teachers and staff members to work together. Um, and they, they really hadn’t worked together either. Um, and then we have um, probably about 30 kids a year who we work with. We have a summer program and then work with them throughout the year. And that program has done a lot to um, plus everything that we do to raise academic achievement and awareness for our African American kids. Um, we’ve seen a huge turn around in that. I got off what your question was. Why was it, um? (why is it important to have that diversity, but I think that talks about that) OK, alright. But I think, um, what all of our um, kids black and white are seeing is that, doing well is for everybody. That it is cool to achieve and to do well. Uh, we just had a group that uh, and we’re making connections with college for our kids too. We just had a, a group of um, 20 uh 8th graders, African American kids who were leaving and had at least a 2.5 or above uh, GPA and hooked them up with mentors to follow them through high school, they are all African American um, um adults from our community who will follow them all the way through um, high school. We’ve um, met with (community college) met with the president and three vice presidents um, and we’re gonna hook them up with, with (community college). Um the presidents working on providing scholarships uh, for those kids um, if they do everything they need to do in the next four years. Um and so they’ll go to (community college) and then the plan is for them to, to go on after (community college). But we know that um, kids who go to a two-year college are twice as likely to graduate from four-year college if they do that. So we make a lot of connections for our kids as well and uh, what’s nice, our African American kids who are in this program see all of the uh, African American adults in our building working together, being very cohesive, uh and sometimes they can make statements to kids. I hold real high expectations for all our kids and I’m real up front with them too about expectations but um, sometimes I um, I think that having the African American adults say certain things to the kids um, is very meaningful to them. And they can talk about their own struggles uh, and we have a whole generation who don’t know and their parents don’t know the struggles um, of who came before them. And so a big part of this is teaching history um, to kids and where they came from and why they need to do better.

10. What specific policies are in place that addresses the recruitment of underrepresented teachers?

Superintendents

Supt. A: I don’t think we have, I don’t think we have, a policy as such other than the whole non-bias non-sexists that’s uh, typical in in most institutions that uh, hire significant numbers of people to work for them.

Supt. B: In relative to how we deal with… (to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds). Well, we’re, we’re working very hard to do it, like we just talked about, I mean we’re saying, that, that is a goal for us and we even have with in our contract, and I, I think that (HR Director) probably showed you that, we have the option to be able to not, to hire and put in place in our system uh, underrepresented populations uh, and not have that in other words not have somebody get in front of them that wants to transfer or you know contractually do that. So, for instance if we have four openings, we have language in their right now that allows us through diversity to be able to transfer people in diverse pop, underrepresented and diversity issues to certain places to do things and not let people that aren’t in underrepresented group do that. That caused us some consternation among our union, because they don’t like that, they want to be able, that’s my job, and wanna be able to say, no, we need to able to provide for instance uh, () middle school right now, was, we need to be able to have more of a minority uh, population both administratively and teacher wise there, because we’re getting up to the point where they are more minorities attending () and we’re not, we’re not, we don’t have the minority population teaching there. We gotta, I mean we have to that. We’re doing better at (another middle school) but we’re not doing very well
at (the other middle school), we’re doing much better at (an additional middle school) because we’re working with that there now um, and so uh, (HR Director) doing a really good job of that. Well, but that is policy, that is we got it in, we got it written into the contract so (pause) (emphasized point by knocking on the table), there is no choice, this is important. And we, we didn’t think that they we’re going to be able to say, we’re gonna take that to an arbitrator because we don’t want that. Well, they had to make another statement when they made that, if you know what I mean. We didn’t think they we’re gonna do that and they didn’t, so.

Supt. C: Um, our policy uh, situation at, at this time um, does, does not specifically address that. But, uh, as I, as I’ve said, we’ve opened that door through making uh, and the board has adopted those goals and one of those goals speaks very directly at um, increasing the presence of, of uh diversity in, in our teaching and well actually throughout our, our employees, all categories of employment. So, I think that’s gonna be the driver that, that uh, that helps us. I think in our, our policies in terms of fairness and those kinds of things, you know on paper, policy is one thing, but I, I think the bigger driver of what you do uh, is what you actually have in your action plans. And that’s, I think that, you know that’s the horse we’re gonna ride and I think that will make difference for us.

School Board Members

SBM A: Uh, affirmative action policy, um again the fact that we have it in our mission statement and CSIP um, we, it’s in our hiring policy uh, that we do not discriminate I, I mean, I think those are the key ones. Uh, and we do, we do demand and require regular training, annual training on those policies so that the people that are in hiring positions um, definitely know what’s ok and what isn’t ok.

SBM B: (Pause) None, that I know of.

SBM C: I don’t know if we have a policy in place, do we (laugh)? What did our superintendent say? Um, I know when we hear our report in the Fall, that after that we are going to have policy. So I’m not, I’d have to look through the policy manual and see. I know there’s that generic statement um, but it absolutely means nothing to me. (Pause) But I’m, I’m not sure if, if we do have a policy I’m not sure exactly what it states and I’m certainly not sure that it’s followed.

Principals

Prin. A: (Deep breathe) The only policy that I am aware of is that uh, I think its’ 8 or 10 positions in the district can be set aside for um, Affirmative action reasons.

Prin. B: Wow you picked the wrong person didn’t you (laugh)? I just know, that the Human Resource Office and (HR director) I know they have practices in place to do the recruitment, and, and I know that at times um, its hard because of what I talked about before, the number of applicants, if you, like I said, if you have wonderful, wonderful skills your gonna most likely do something different. (pause) Because the pay is better, there’s more opportunities you know, better ways, the more money you have honestly the better your gonna be able to take care of your own family. So I know they have policies in place, I’m not aware of what they are, I, I just know that they, they make an effort to, to find people. Just the idea that the importance is there.

Prin. C: Um, (pause) there must be something district wise, I think maybe, and I don’t maybe if (HR) talked about this, you talked to her right, with human resources, um, I think that there was something new that was maybe was just written into our teacher contract. Did she talk about that? (pause) Uh, as far as, um, um, and I’m not sure exactly what it is. I have um, um, all my stuff packed away right now, but there’s a new piece of the contract I think that um, that has something to do with um, attraction and, and retention of minority candidates and think that it had to do with um, even um, not rifting um, (pause) or that’s what we call it in our district, reduction in force, you know um, being able to bypass um, rifting of minority candidates, but I don’t have it in my hand, it’s something new. I think they’ve worked with (Union) on that. Do some districts have policies? That’s a good question (laugh).
11. If there are recruitment policies, how long have they been in place?

Superintendents

Supt. A: N/A

Supt. B: Hmm, I think that you have to ask, ask, you have to ask (HR Director) Willie, I don’t know, I can’t remember when they put that in there, because the contract just shows the current contract and doesn’t say when something went in I don’t believe it says that in there. You’d have to ask her (pause) I don’t have the answer to that.

Supt. C: NA

School Board Members

SBM A: Oh jeeze, I can’t tell ya (laugh). We just updated the hiring policies to add sexual orientation and the harassment policy, we’re in the process updating that (pause) along the same lines and I believe the affirmative action was updated within the last year. How long they’ve been in place, I honestly can’t tell you, it’s written on the policy, but I can’t give you the date.

SBM B: NA:

SBM C: NA

Principals

Prin. A: Long before my arrival here five years ago. So I don’t know.

Prin. B: NA

Prin. C: Just recently.

12. How is the effectiveness of the recruitment policies and procedures evaluated or monitored?

Superintendents

Supt. A: Can’t really answer that, because I’ve not been here long enough, uh we’re just in the beginning stages of discussing that. But uh, we truly will need to monitor it if in fact we do utilize some strategies to determine whether the efforts have been successful.

Supt. B: Well the effectiveness is in the result of, do we have more people hired that come in. It’s as simple as that. If we go out and we try very hard and we don’t get anybody then we’re not doing the right thing. We need to retool and try something else. Um, and uh, so the effectiveness is in the results (pause) of you know, is it going up or is it going down, is it, is the ratio moving in the direction we want it to move in or right now it’s not. It’s doing, we’re doing fine, like I said fine administratively but we’re not teacher wise at all, so.

Supt. C: Regular reporting and progress regarding those, those plans and, and strategies. If you don’t do that, it’s too easy for another year to go by. And I don’t think it’s annual reporting, you know, I think because we are hiring uh, in a school district we sometimes look at teacher hiring, because that’s a big part of what we do and about half of the employees in this district are teachers. But we have lots and lots and lots of other categories of employment that we should be looking at and measuring as, as well. So, I think those uh, periodic reporting it’s uh, that it’s a form of accountability to your public to the board and I think that uh, that will have a positive affect on what we’re gonna do.
School Board Members

SBM A: Uh, again we have uh, uh, what’s the term for it, we have kind of like a director of statistics, um, (statistician’s name) and he keeps a lot of information not only about our student population, but I believe he also keeps the data on our um, on our faculty population as well. Uh, and again it’s, again it’s reported (pause) on, in a, on a passive basis not on an active on going basis. (Pause) So, I can’t really say that it’s actually evaluated or monitored probably the way that it should be. Um, it’s probably again one of those areas where the board probably oughta be a little more proactive in requiring um, (pause) a little more effort on the part of administration to make sure that we’re doing everything we can to make have an effective program and I think when we hire a permanent superintendent I, I do think that will happen.

SBM B: (Pause) It’s, it is evaluated, I guess (superintendent) and (HR Director) will be doing that but, as far as a board member, I have not had any type of communication on the evaluation of how well we are doing as far as recruiting and (pause) I guess because, I’m the only African American board member and (pause) before (previous black board member) was (pause) a board member then (another previous black board member) and I don’t know if they put as much emphasis on it as I do, and I probably put more emphasis on it because I came out of the classroom. And if you are connected with education, you have a tendency to think like a teacher and you, you watch and you see things and what. These things will go by unnoticed by a person in the business world or whatever that’s not really directly, directly involved with that, so that’s why I put more emphasis on it. And I wish we did have (pause) an evaluation format (pause) and maybe after a few years, we may monitor that more closely because right now it’s basically left up to human resources. And (pause) you know (pause) some uh, districts I know hire (pause) companies or head hunters or whom ever, to do this for them and we don’t do that so I think we need to (pause) look into something like that.

SBM C: Well um, I’ve only been on the board, this is my third year on the board and that action wasn’t until this last year with this new superintendent, I’m not sure um, procedures were evaluated and monitored on regular basis at all, whether it was hiring or in any other, a lot of other areas. And that was one of the criteria we had when we hired the superintendent, was we wanted to make sure that all of our policies regulations were adhered to and that we had reports on the progress of. Because that’s one of his goals and objectives and there’s only like eight of them I think that you have, that one has to be regularly reported and monitored so. Um, again holding these people’s feet to the fire and asking for reports and proof in numbers in, in uh, hiring.

Principals

Prin. A: That specifically, uh I’m aware of two or three incidences where positions have been set aside but there weren’t any applicants and so that part wasn’t effective. Um...(pause), I’m not aware that we have made an earnest effort to go to the south or to the city of Chicago or Geary Indiana, or other places where a higher population of African Americans or whomever to get and actively recruit specific people here. Uh, I know we go to career fairs and things of that nature but uh, its’ been a number of years I think that we’ve really made a concerted effort to go those different areas. Long winded answer to that, I don’t think we’re being very effective.

Prin. B: I don’t know, you’re gonna get better answers form (HR Director). I, (pause) I don’t know how they monitor it to see, and and, it’s not like there not sending us applicants, I’m just not sure, there just hasn’t been (pause) people saying here I am-take me, you know, I’m interested. I feel lucky about this um, PE teacher, I really do. Um, because she has good skills, she, she works well with kids, and then you also have the rest of her for the equity part.

Prin. C: Oh, wow (pause). I don’t know, I suppose just percentage of, of minority staff who were hired. (Pause) I don’t know, that seems to be more of a district thing.
13. Thinking outside of the box, if there were no restraints to recruitment and hiring, what do you think could be done to increase teacher diversity?

Superintendents

Supt. A: I would work very hard at uh, recruiting nationally and uh, recruiting nationally, and uh, uh, offer signing bonuses, and perhaps even uh, salary the, the, entice the, uh the candidates through salary commitments that went beyond what the contract now permits you to do. I think it would be that important.

Supt. B: Well beyond, I think we would, beyond the uh, moving expenses which we don’t have written down anywhere but exist. Uh, beyond the, those things legally we you know because we’re bound legally to be able to do so. What I am saying is, right now we said, we say in uh tech education, in physics, and some math, there some areas that we will say we’ll go hire in the bringing the person in on the salary schedule to be able to get them in here. If there, there should be no reason for us until we balance (pause) the, the, the whole thing you know relative to the that the underrepresented or diversity population is equal that of the kids, we outta be able to go in to a pay differential to be able to bring people in to be able say, I’m sorry, it’s important enough for us to be able to do this that we’re gonna pay to have people come here. Because people will move here if they’re gonna make money more than they can make somewhere else. So now I’m choosing between (city) and I’m choosing between, whatever X district. If I can make more money here and they want me, clearly they want me, and they’re telling me that they want me, than I can make here, I mean I’m looking at that, I’m gonna go here. And so, and there’s more than just money to that, I mean I have to be able to show anybody that we want ya here and, and we’re willing to do these things to do that. But Willie, I think we’re gonna need to, we’re, we’re gonna do the same thing in internally. We’re saying, we need our brightest and best to teach at, at the high risk schools that we have. And we don’t have our brightest and best doing that. Because what they do in the contract, as you well know, they can get out. In other words, if my only way in is I go to (elementary school) because that’s where three openings are and I’m a new teacher, the last person you outta have teaching uh, as a new, new teacher in the system is at (elementary school). Because it’s gonna take, it, if, what you learned in college, you weren’t ready for, to do that. So the most at-risk kids need to be taught by the people with the best skills to be able to do that and that’s not happening. Likewise for us, we need to be able, and we’re willing to pay more. We’re getting ready to put a program in place that here are five schools, five schools that there’s gonna be a differential in pay to teach at. And uh, we’re not gonna do it, we’re, how we’re gonna that is, because the union won’t let us otherwise it’s fine, if you were gonna, I’m making this part up, but if you were gonna go to (elementary school), you’re gonna make $5,000 or more a year to teach there. The expectation is, and we’ll take, we’ll take your per diem wage and we’ll say we’re gonna pay you for uh, 30 more or 20, 25 more days (pause) to teach at (elementary school). Now that doesn’t mean that you have to work all summer and Saturdays, we’re gonna have you keep a log. And on that journal we’re gonna be able to say in half hour increments you need to show us what you’re doing, home visits, talking to parents, we don’t care when, outside the school day. These kind of programs, talking with kids, helping when things get bad, calling parents at home, visiting with them. You will, by the end of the year, the expectation is you will have logged in 25 days outside the school day and that’s what you got paid for. Now there might be a couple days where we get everybody together to do special things, but see legally then you can do that. So if we really believe that that’s important, then we’re gonna have to differentiate and say that’s what we gotta do and that, that doesn’t make any difference whether it’s (pause) uh, I don’t care who the teachers are that, that go into that, but the whole idea is, is we want our brightest and best. Likewise, we want kids to see from, that our diverse population we, we uh, we hold a diverse uh, population as crucially important for us and we’re bringing them in and we’re gonna pay them more to be here. And if somebody says we’ll that’s not fair because, I’m doing the same job they are uh, as an underrepresented population and that’s the argument that we would get, just like we have here. But I think uh, in a perfect world, I don’t really care. I mean, and until we get the balanced numbers, that’s what we’re gonna do, (pause) too bad you know, so. Now that, that’s got some controversy with it, I’m not telling you it doesn’t, but.
Supt. C: Oh, uh, this isn’t really even outside of the box, but as an example one of the things that we did in (another city) and we may be doing it here. I’m not as familiar here yet as I’d like to be. Um, we had federal money as many districts do for uh, class size reduction. And we uh, at least in that situation, we didn’t know exactly where those teachers were gonna be placed. So from the central office perspective, we took the responsibility to hire those teachers. (Pause) And we made sure that we had an enriched minority presence in that pool of teachers. We found that more often than when we were controlling it from a central office perspective uh, when teacher uh, interviews were held and so on those schools were more likely to pick someone that, you know and, and the word we would get, you know it’s the chemistry and it’s the fit and all of that kind of stuff. Well, (pause) we, we recognize that and we’re working to, to change that to, at least too a degree. But with those class size reduction positions, we took those into the central office and we enriched the minority pool and a large number, uh, uh, I mean, not all but a, a certainly more than half of those placements then became, were, were with our minority teacher candidates. So that was one of the things that would be a little out of the box but uh, and we had agreements I think if, you know you’ve gotta work with your association, the union to say that that’s ok. So that was, that was one of those uh, things that we did. I think uh, having a central office presence on some of the uh, uh selection committees can also have a positive effect. And uh, having a, a very objective um selection process, it’ll never be totally objective, there’s always some subjective, but we’ve gotta continually talk about, um, I’m the kind of person once we write it on paper were, we’ve agreed it’s important and we have to continually talk about um, reaching those goals and why they’re important. (pause) I don’t hear any wild outlandish things but I think, you know you have to kinda push against the norm, at times to, to uh accomplish things that just don’t happen naturally. And there’s just a, too much evidence out there that if we let it take the normal flow of things we’re gonna see what we’ve probably had for some time.

School Board Members

SBM A: Um, some of the things that I think are current superintendent is actually, our interim, is interested in doing is, is a not just sending materials to um, historically black colleges or to other places that have significant minority populations going through getting their education degree, I think we need to send human beings. I think we need to send people and do face to face recruiting. Um, you know when I was looking at a graduate school, I went to a graduate school that sent a human being to a recruitment day and I sat down and talked with that person face to face and it gave me a really good feel for the school that I wanted to apply to. I didn’t apply to anywhere that didn’t send a person um, because I think it really shows a depth of caring and a depth of dedication to that and I think if we were to actually send people to actively recruit minorities face to face, I think that would give them a better feel of what (City) is about and what a person from (City) is about. Umm, so if there were no limits on it, I mean I’d be spending some dough to send some people out there and do the face to face stuff because, you know a piece of papers cold and you can put whatever kind of numbers or wording or whatever on there but I think with out the face to face touch, that human touch um, I think you’re just gonna get lost in the rest of the paper. And again, they’re gonna look for dollars, you know, you know some one face to face can do a better job explaining why they wanna be a teacher in (city) Iowa.

SBM B: If there were no restraints, oh my gosh (pause) we could really get people to come (laugh). If there were no restraints I think we would have uh, what could be done, we could have a team of individuals to go out to all the areas (pause) that we felt that would have people that were in the educational field and we would not have a cap on uh (pause), we can only spend so much for this, so we can’t do that. We would have a better salary scale to offer them, we would um, have funds to help them relocate because getting out of school they’re broke. That’s how Texas gets everybody. We would give them a bonus for signing (pause) and help them to find housing. And those things will help a person feel better about coming to a strange land, like (city). (Pause) We would have that support system, we would always have someone that they could call upon if they had problems or questions and needed to uh, find doctors and uh, grocery stores or whatever. I count the little things that people don’t think about that would be that support system that we would offer them and I think that that person would get information like that, that they would go, oh boy, that’s a nice place. They’re really gonna be looking out me. I won’t be so lonely there or whatever, like I was (laugh).
SBM C: Um, (pause) certainly money. (Pause) I, you know I, I like incentive pay, I like incentive pay a lot, I like incentive pay to attract good teachers to high poverty schools. I like incentive pay to attract teachers to schools that are, that have under performing students and are regularly challenged and on the, the watch list. Um, so I'm, I'm a big believer in incentive pay and I think that um, this is, that's a business model is incentive and bonus pay so I'm , I'm certainly for that. Um, continued professional development with opportunities for expanded educational (pause) degrees. Um, (pause I, and I don't know, and I don't know what works and what doesn't work but I would go as far as with 37 schools, pick your school, pick the school that, that you would feel that your talents and abilities could best be used and, and then allow some mobility every three years, four years, five years or whatever, you know whatever it looked like the group could provide consistency but also offer opportunities so people don't feel stale and feel like they're growing in their environment. Um, a diversified leadership staff, if you come into the (district office) how many people of color do you see (pause)? So it, it can't just be in the school staff it really, it has to be something that's embraced throughout the entire system. Um, (pause) I think those kinds of things might be attractive to people. And then as a community, as we attract all kinds of different cultures, um, we have to, we, we can't be so rigid in our own patterns of behavior and social behaviors that you know we don't allow and respect other people's um, practices and um, ways of worship, or expressions of art, or whatever it is. And to support that, you don't just stick up a building or you, you don't just call it a program, you actually embrace and have some measure of, of value to it that actually engages people and not, you don't just put it on for show.

Principals
Prin. A: National advertising, um providing stipends or moving expenses for people coming from X number of miles away or greater 300 miles say. Um, as I said before, actually getting in those diverse areas and, and actively recruiting people. Uh, go to the, uh mostly black colleges if you will and be active in recruiting folks out of there. Sell the district, sell the town, sell the Midwest.

Prin. B: Well you have to remember equity in, in a lot of things because if, if you go out and recruit and use monetary incentives, then you also have to have, that's going to set-up a, a whole system of, well how come. And, and, it almost puts the person who getting the monetary incentive on a bad footing with the other folks that have been around along time. So I think the district has to make themselves attractive, as, as far as, as having incentives for everyone, and, and give themselves a reputation of caring about the teachers, and, and caring about having a passion for education so that people do wanna come here. So when people ask about (City) you you get, oh, that's a great place to work. That's gonna be a, a better incentive than, than trying to say well, um, if you come and teach in (City) and your African American were gonna to give you a $10,000 signing bonus. That just sets you up for, you know, for in equities in other ways. Well if we can offer that, why can't we just make this a good place to start with? Why can't we have salaries that, that pay a better wage? You know I've been w/ (City) schools for quite a long time, my dad taught for (City) schools, raised the family with lots of kids, but based on his teacher salary we were on um, reduced lunches. (pause) There were six kids, six foster kids, twelve kids in the house on his salary we were on reduced lunches. (pause) There were six kids, six foster kids, twelve kids in the house on his salary we were on reduced lunches. So that tells you something about, about teacher pay even. So, I think districts just have to start making themselves more attractive as far as, as whether it's health benefits, the, the base wages, and, and then just some of the personal things, things you can do, um and, and this may sound crazy, but there's little things, lets say we, we always work the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and every year it comes up, every year, well the kids the leave at such and such a time and on Wednesday we have 1:15 release for kids, well contract will say something like, uh a day before a holiday teachers can leave a half an hour after the kids. But the districts saying because, this is a professional development day and the kids are out at 1:15, really they should stay longer and so they have this battle and in my mind, who cares, who cares. Some people are gonna stay until 5:00 on that day anyway, some people are gonna leave a half an hour after the kids, some people are gonna sneek out with the kids, some people are gonna stay until their regular end of the day time, and you know what, we'd go along way to where it's making people feel we care if we say something like, have a wonderful holiday and then whoever's gonna do what ever just does it. But that makes people feel like you understand, oh I have to drive to Illinois, or I have pies to...
make because there’s people coming tomorrow. We know you have stuff to do. So I mean there’s you can
do as district to make people feel like you care about them as individuals and I think that goes along way
for anybody. If you’re looking for a job somewhere, you’re gonna ask around, you’re gonna, what are your
thoughts, what do you think, how are you treated in this district. Those, you’re gonna ask people that and,
and if the answers come back that, man were always in this constant rigid contract struggle or there’s these
problems going on, that’s not, $10,000 signing bonus doesn’t help you anyway (laugh). Because your
gonna be miserable.

Prin. C: Well, I, I think were most successful when we um, start with kids who are, are young and uh. Just
like um, with (teacher) and talk to her all the way through high school about being a teacher and help make
that connection. She didn’t need me to help make the connection to college and um you know, she did that
on her own. But um, were, we have groups of um, kids now like these 20 who were, are going on to um,
uh () High School next year. Uh, after having them three years and through that whole time uh, we’re the
only school who had GPAs on our report cards. And so we talk very frankly with kids about um, um, um
GPA and what it means and passing classes. And all of their eighth grade year they here me talk about um,
you know, signing up for the right classes so that when they get to high school they go through in four
years and you take the classes um, and take the ACT or SAT so that when they graduate in four years
they’re ready to enter a Regents Institution, if that’s what they choose to do. So this is our first group kids
um, who I have had for three years now where um I really think we’re gonna see a turn around in um,
graduation rates of, of African American kids from (high school). That’s been a problem uh, serious
problem, I think in our district and those who go on to, to high school. So it’s a real long, a long term um,
solution but of those kids, there are a number of them who want to be teachers. U, the kids who are in
MAPP right now, uh, a number of those um, um have committed already. They wanna, wanna go on to
school, they want to be teachers, they want to come back to (city) and teach. Um, I think that’s where we’re
gonna be most successful. And it probably should have been done years ago at the district level. Um, but
it hasn’t been and I think that maybe the reason it hasn’t is because they don’t have that relationship
with the kids that we do. Um, you know, we have the relationship with, with our African American kids,
we can talk to them all the way through high school, hook them up with a mentor. Uh, plus one of my
liaisons um, () um, and I don’t know if you want to talk to anybody else while here um, () is a great person
to talk to. He’s one of my liaisons here and he spends a day a week at () high school. And um, the main
purpose of that has been to help advocate for kids who are going to get dropped otherwise you know, um
because kids get dropped pretty regularly and, and go to um, the alternative school and then just um, kind
of fade away. Um, but his focus is gonna change and um, work more with the 20 kids, 20 or more kids we
send every year with this, with the mentors and we know they’re college bound. Um, and make sure that
they sign up for the right classes, that they’re not dropping classes, um they know that they take the ACT,
you know or the SAT. Um, so he’s gonna be, uh a real strong advocate for kids. We worry about kids
when they get to high school that, because we take really good care of them and, and I know everybody
tries to um, but the larger the high school, um, I think the, the easier it is for kids to uh, loose focus. So
he’s really gonna help with that connection, there as well. And, um, so we’re gonna grow our own
teachers. I think, think that’s where we’re gonna be most successful. And we really are doing a lot to,
to make sure that they’re gonna too. Like I said, with the connection with (Comm. College) um, and beyond,
and then we’ll go you know after their two years at (Comm. College) um, you know, help them get in to a,
a four year college.

14. Any thing that you would like to add that I may have not asked about or covered?

Superintendents

Supt. A: No, I think uh, uh, if candidates were available, we would put a full court press on trying to hire
them.

Supt. B: In, Iowa (pause), in, in, in, the problem with Iowa (pause) it’s not a diverse state relatively to you
know, everything. So, it’s important in some schools in this state and not in others, so it’s not a topic
anybody’s gonna have a big seminar about how can we do a better job doing this, because it’s only
important to about five schools. (Pause) You know I’m sorry (another district) is not that diverse of a setting, it’s an urban school, but it isn’t as diverse as we are you know, so. Uh, (another district) is not as diverse as we are, still it’s an urban school but when you, you know so when we go to have a discussion Willie about how do we do we do a better job recruiting, how do we do this, there’s only really uh, three schools that really this topic is important to us and so those people sit down and share all of the time. (HR Director) and her counterparts in those schools work constantly at that. But in Iowa, it’s not a big topic, it’s not important. It’s not important to the legislature, it’s not, I mean I don’t care, I mean I’m saying something that (pause) you know again, state you know however it’s gonna happen, my names not gonna be on it, but it isn’t important, it isn’t important. Case and point, Marshalltown when the packing plant opened there and Lenox left, the furnace company, and uh, Marshalltown was a fairly Lilly white city, well then things changed. Their Hispanic population went way up. Well Hy Vee, and uh, Hy Vee said you know that Iowa is not there aren’t that many places uh, more so now, where diversity is not looked as, because it’s all about customer service. People in Marshalltown those first two or three years went nuts, so what? we need to hire uh, Hispanic people here so that you know when the, their friends or families of people come in here, number 1 they’re working here, number 2 they can help talk you know, until they learn the language they can be able to do that. The banks hired Hispanic people to start working there because it’s all about customer service. People in Marshalltown those first two or three years went nuts, why do we have Hispanic people working at Hy Vee, why do we have them all of a sudden Hispanic people working at the bank, we don’t want it. And they even came out and said that. Well that’s insanity, you know that Iowa is not there aren’t that many places uh, more so now, where diversity is not looked as, oh shoot, you know you gotta be kidding me. And Iowa City has stuff happening, there’s two of those there you know, there’s Hispanic population that’s moving in. I don’t know if you’re middle schools gonna have uh, if that’s who’s coming there or not, I can’t remember where they’re, where they’re building that but one of the elementary schools is changing it face of what’s happening there too. Iowa City because of the university is not gonna have as much issue with that as Marshalltown did, trust me. But Iowa, it’s not that important for Iowa, and that, that’s a struggle for me and it’s a struggle for us, because (pause) for instance, the governor said he was gonna give us a half million dollars to help close the achievement gap. And uh, we were so excited about that. And we wrote everything that there was to write. We had a commission that worked a whole year. We did some tremendous things. The other school districts got made when they heard that uh, (school district) was gonna get a half a million dollars above and beyond what they were gonna get. So they started filing complaints about why can’t we have, we have a diverse population too, it got political and so they divided it up among four schools. (Pause) Two of which have no, I mean their diversity level at their district is less than 6%. And so we got $125,000 because the other schools got mad that you know this was gonna happen. And so they got to the legislators and the legislators got to the department of ed. and then they played that game. That’s insanity, pure insanity but that’s typical for Iowa that it is trying to, that, that, that it’s not you know, that wasn’t fair. Well but they didn’t understand at all what they issues were. Well the more uh, the more, the more people that we have understanding the issues and the more of when we say, it’s crucial and important for us to be able to mirror the population and mean it of the people that work here, then and when we really mean it, and when we mean it, we say, we’re gonna put some things behind it. You know, then people start saying, hmm you know, maybe it is important. Um, maybe we should educate all kids, as supposed to, you know the good thing about No Child Left Behind is No Child Left Behind is saying, timeout a second, you had your chance public schools, now and, and you didn’t do it, that we still have this gap. (Pause) And right now our African American kids um, in 2002 were 25% proficient, they just went over the 50% proficient mark. So we moved it to 50% from 25 and we moved the whole group now to 68% and uh, so we’re, we’re pushing the envelope hard. We’re doing things no, we weren’t doing before and we’re helping all kids. And, and now we’re, we’re still a long way to go but that’s the right direction you know, so.

Supt. C: No, I, these are good questions and um, I’m hoping that a year from now if you ask me the same questions we’ll have uh, you know I’m talking a lot about what could be and what we wanna do and I’m hoping that when you come back and we talk, you’ll see that, that we have done these things. I, I think, I mean, this is the tip, when we talk about education it’s so important to our, our kids lives but it’s so much more important also in the larger society. And we have uh, particularly our African American population in realizing that, there’s all kinds of communities within that and you can’t paint everyone with the same brush, but generally as a group of people uh, are underrepresented in about everything that we do, all, all
the positive things and are overrepresented in many of the, the negative things. So, you know, it, it's not just a school district issue, it's a community and a national issue for us. And, and I think you know, if we can model some of the things that we'd like to see happen elsewhere, that, you know that’d help us. But, good, good set of questions, it's not gonna be easy, you know, but uh, the fact that you're here asking these questions, I think, you know, is a, is a good sign.

School Board Members

SBM A: I don't know, I think that I did pretty well. Um, a again I think this school district embraces it’s diversity, I think it sees the value in it, I know my kids have gotten a lot um, from that diversity and not being, again not everybody is gonna look like them, I think they're gonna be more prepared to go out in the real world and they graduate and go on to college. And I, you know it’s very important to this board that we actively recruit and hire um, every underrepresented group um, because I do believe there’s value in, in your faculty looking like your student population. Um, it's been helpful for me to talk to you because it’s made me realize that perhaps as a board member, perhaps we’re not doing enough to actively pursue that, and uh, you know we need uh, we need to make sure that our administration understands that we as a board value that and we wanna make sure that um, we’re doing everything we can to implement and monitor and properly evaluate that so we can continue to identify strategies that help us, that can help us be successful at that.

SBM B: Hmm (pause), I think it’s important that um, we keep this (pause) on the front burner. Um, and I think that if we, just like you doing this survey. I think you are really, bringing a, an awareness to our district, indirectly just by you, you know doing this. And um, if we keep individuals like you, individuals like myself (pause) bringing this, this issue up then the district will know that we really need to do a better job, we really do. And we cannot just depend on, what we have in this area. Because what we have in this area, some kids when they get out of school for example, they wanna leave. They want to relocate to another area. They’ve grown up around here and they wanna see something different, so we can’t just depend on them. And I think it’s important to that we do have a grow your, your own teacher program. I think that’s important, that’s a good program. And I’d like see us extend it bit more because uh, um, if we had more staff people involved. Like now it’s just uh (pause) (college professor) up at (local college) in the (teacher academy) and (HR Director’s assistant) and (HR Director) and I think that (pause) with that program, it could really be successful if we had like mentors of teachers in the classroom talking to these uh, young people, to encourage them and just match them up with one teacher, one each semester and then the next semester a different teacher. I think that would really help them. And they may you know (pause) decide yep, I wanna stay with this, I gonna be a teacher just like (pause), Mr. Barney (laugh) or whatever. But um, exposure, we need more exposure in that area.

SBM C: Um, and I don’t, I don’t know how it pertains to this but along time ago I was an HR director in a machine shop in Hammond, Indiana and that was a, by Geary, Indiana. Steel mills, um smoke stacks, very diverse, um, culturally diverse area and I was in, I was charged with had several government jobs we had to have some minority and cultural balance in, in our job, in our staffing in order to get contracts. So it wasn’t good enough to put an ad in the paper, it wasn’t good enough to put an ad in the surrounding papers, I had to actively go out into other states and I had to actively seek out um, different group (pause) communications. If it was a magazine or a trade or day pacers or whatever it was and that’s where I had to advertise it. I would like to see more of that in our district, to say that you advertise across the state or you threw it on the net, well that hits a traditional group of people that regularly use those means of communication, I would rather, I would really like to see some creative recruiting efforts. Um, I would like them to expand the grow your own. We have some phenomenal students in our district who don’t necessarily have good direction. I thinks it’s budgets have been cut um, and in effect counseling has been cut, so you get into high school and, and, the counselors you have four counselors for 1600 students, they become class schedulers, discipline monitors, um, you know their time is taken up in, in many other areas that and, very much away from student counseling. And as I said before, a lot of these kids come from families that don’t provide the kind of counseling that, that they need, the kind of grooming, the kind of pushing, the kind of focusing um, and I think our schools are really lacking in that area. So, I, I’d like to
see us as a school district put some more emphasis in counseling in high school and try to help students choose a career path maybe that would go into education or, or um exemplary services to education that might enhance the environment. But if I were a person of color and I came into a white environment with a population of 17% students, 2% minority staffing that is not very appealing to me. Um, I would automatically feel as if I didn’t belong and so some how we have to change that picture and (cleared throat) I don’t know how to do that specifically, but I think some dialogue continually helps. Having someone who’s in the direction that says, we’re gonna walk the walk and not just talk the talk, so (pause) I hope those kinds of things will make a difference. However, one of the obstacles I think to recruiting um, minorities to our district might be the thought that you can’t do it and I heard, you know in a school board meeting that we had about 18 months ago, I kind of heard that between the lines, we’ve tried and we just can’t do it. Um, when our superintendent set the goal as increasing our minority percentage of staff and I can’t remember what he set it to, but we’re at 2% now hopefully he set (laugh), he set it into the double digits, we had board members in the room that said, well sure you can go ahead and set it but it will never be done. So when you hear statements like that, that to me is a huge obstacle because the expectation isn’t really there. It’s there in words, but it’s not there in expected action. And so when you go to monitor the progress of something like that, if you never had the expectation of seeing that to begin with, at the end of the year and movement has been made, or very little, you go see, I knew we couldn’t meet that anyway. Huge, obstacle, and I don’t know if you’ve heard that in your interviews but I, I do hear that and I have heard that from our school board members.

Principals
Prin. A: I think we’ve got some first steps in place. Um, my personal opinion is I think we need to take it to a, a deeper and or higher level to actively recruit underrepresented people to come to the district.

Prin. B: I think nationwide, I think we have a, a society kind of um, a societal issue. Because like I said, um, the applicants just aren’t there. If I’m African American, just like with my, my oldest son, you know, he thought about education, but honestly, the, the financial end wasn’t there. He did a lot better not going into education. So, until something changes about how we view teachers as professionals and pay them as professionals, we’re not going to get, I mean because he had lots of choices quite honestly. Being African American would open, where lots of times in life it closes doors, when you’re out looking for a position somewhere, there are some doors that open because that. Because people do want that, to have a balance, whether it’s federally mandated or they just feel they need to have it. So with, he has good skills, he has a wonderful education, he can pick and choose what he wants to do, and the financial end of it just wasn’t there in education. Now once you get up to the level you’re going to or get into administration, the money starts to be better. But if you moved up in to management administration types of positions in other fields the moneys even a lot better in that well in other businesses.

Prin. C: Um, well maybe just um, talk about um, people besides teachers um, for just a minute. Are you interested in that right now, because um, for us, I mean that’s kind of another issue to, that um, we have people in our um building who are not certified teachers but um, they do a lot of teaching and they really uh, make great connections with kids and are really a, a vital part of our school. Um, and some of those um, the district has um, you know the district has done a good job of hiring. Uh, we have uh, three community liaisons and two of them are actually (MS) liaisons and one is um, kind of the district liaison and that’s (name), I don’t know if you have met (name) or not? Um, uh, Jason and Gayle are both liaisons here and they were hired before I came here. They were hired and, I don’t know if they, they we’re given a, a, a very clear job description. I think it’s kind of a developed over time um, based on their strengths. But I know that um, um you know a main reason, uh, one of the major reasons they were hired is to help make connections um, for African American kids and um, their families uh, when they come here. And um, uh and we have a growing number like, like Iowa City, we have a growing number of families who are coming from uh, large metropolitan areas, Chicago, um particularly and we have a real strong orientation program um, their a big part of that as well. Helping, um, assimilate um, families into this is how we do things in (city), and how you get along in school. Uh, so they’ve very helpful uh, and Jason also follows uh, he’s the one who also goes to (HS)a and helps make those connections. Um, and they do um, work with small
groups of kids, they're here, they're 12 month employees so they're also working summer school uh, as well. But Jason, particularly, I don't know if you're interested in talking to him or not, you should meet him, he is a great guy, uh has a college degree, uh, but did not get certified to be a teacher. But, he does a lot of teaching in our building and, and working with kids. Um, Ninah is a, a para um, paraprofessional in the BD program but she certainly does a lot of teaching. Um, you know she, her children are grown and uh, she is a terrific, terrific role model. And all these people are a part of MAPP and it has really pulled all of our African American employees together whether they're um, certified teachers or not. Um, um, but I think um, (pause) probably the major thing that I would want to talk about is that uh, you can't sit around and just wait for something to happen or wait for somebody to come to you. Uh, if want a more diverse teaching staff you have to be very proactive. Um, you have to do, just from what I've talked about, I mean I don't, I wouldn't do anything that wasn't appropriate, but I will um, however I can, find people. I'll go out and find them, get them in um, you know, work with them, hire them when I can. Um, but I do think that um, at least for (City) um, working with kids in middle school about being teachers, helping them make those connections and coming back to our district is um, so it's a long term um, (pause) issue. You know, it's not gonna diversify our staff right away, but we probably should have been doing it 10, 15, 20 years ago.

Human Resource Director Response

1. What position do you hold in this school district?

HRD A: Currently I am the associate director of Human resources.

HRD B: Associate Superintendent for Human Resources and Equity.

HRD C: I'm the Executive Director of Human Resources.

2. How long have you held this position?

HRD A: 2 years.

HRD B: Uh, 10 years.

HRD C: Uh, three years and 2005-2006 will be my fourth year.

3. What duties are involved with the position of__________?

HRD A: Uh, pretty much everything that deals with any kind of employment issues, negotiating the teachers contract, um maintaining, maintenance of all employee records um, hiring, recruitment, retention, selection, processing, orientation, you know name it, any personnel function would come under what I do.

HRD B: Um, I do all, I administer all Human Resources policies. Um, do the hiring, I responsible for the hiring and discipline and termination of employees. I'm in charge of equity programs, um and major pieces of the equity responsibilities would be chairing the district equity committee, um, looking at um, ways to assess the equitable distribution of resources uh, to make sure that um, all kids are being provided a a good education. Um, our most reason recent initiative has been the development of and requirement of um, an equity matrix, which will require all, I'll give you a copy of it before you go, um all building principals to record by race um, or non-minority/minority, um critical benchmarks. So there'd be things like um, oh attendance, well I can grab you one so you can kind of look at it, (got up) um I was saying to, (returned) this is the elementary matrix and this is the secondary matrix and what we've attempted to do was to develop a matrix that would require principals to look at their data as it relates to equity. So we would look at um, minority graduation, so they'd have to know how many minority students who they have in their building how many non-minority and they rank themselves in terms of the a rubric of if it's less than 80% of their non-minority, if their minority students graduated at less than 80% of their non-minority students' rate, that's the score that they would get. And as a result of, of completing this matrix, those schools that had rankings in 1 and 2 they will be required to develop some type of a plan to start to approach what are we doing here. You know, what kind of things can we do to improve that. Um, my pass work with equity committee has made us realize that, many building principals in the scheme of things, don't even know.
Two years ago we required, we asked for information around AP enrollment and that’s one of those um, benchmarks. Building principals were surprised to know that they didn’t have any (pause) minority students in AP classes. Now(pause), for many of us that that’s horrifying and shocking and we probably thought that was case but for them, they were really surprised because they’re right there in the mix. So this is another opportunity to look at the data and determine what we can, what they can do, or we as an district can do to address it. Whether it’s policies, whether it’s resources, whether it’s beliefs systems, regardless of what it is, it needs to be addressed. And these are our, most of these uh benchmarks are pieces that are outside of the parameters of No Child Left Behind because you know you have to report some of those things. You have to report proficiency rating, you have to report attendance, you have to report some of those things, but this is above and beyond.

HRD C: It’s uh, maintenance of all Human Resources functions. Which includes, employee interactions, insurance benefits, payroll, um, workers comp, disability, all those sorts of things, but mostly, most of my time is contract maintenance and contract bargaining with employee groups. Of course we’ve got the hiring and recruiting and all that stuff that comes with HR.

4. What is the total enrollment of this school district?

HRD A: Oh, that one I didn’t look up. Uhh, let’s say, I should know that but I don’t, 16,143, you can get that final number from(). Sorry.

HRD B: We’re roughly 10,500.

HRD C: Willie, uh, I think the rough estimate is (pause) just under 18,000, I think it’s 17,600 or 17,800, something like that Willie.

5. What percentage of the total student population is non-white?

HRD A: Uh, approximately 32%.

HRD B: About 30%.

HRD C: I’m gonna have to direct, I, I don’t know the, the correct answer to that one. Um, (pause) I, I believe were in the, between 15 and 20% range. That’s awful for me not to know.

6. What percentage of the total teacher/instructional population is non-white?

HRD A: Approximately, uh, 6., I’m gonna say 6.25% because I ran that as of January 19th, 2004, so it’s between 6 and 7%.

HRD B: Probably about 10. A little less than 10. That kind of fluctuates. Um, what happens with that % um, as we get stars, we try to get them into administrative roles and so (laugh) were fighting against ourselves all the time. But you know, I, I truly believe that administrators are, are instructional staff as well.

HRD C: Uh, teaching staff, um non-white would be less than 3%.

7. Have you been involved in the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? If yes, when and how?

HRD A: Yes. Well first of all we do attend of course a lot of career fairs, as many as we can, mostly in Iowa and Illinois, and of course we do contact uh, as many candidates as we can who contact us um, who are interested uh, in working especially um, you know in our district, and then we follow up with them as
well as make contacts when we’re out recruiting. We advertise, we put things on the web, so we do a
variety of things to again bring our district to the attention of, of uh, all candidates, and especially minority
candidates. (When were the career fairs?)

This year, this year and last year and primarily we recruited at Western Illinois, University of Northern
Iowa, the University of Iowa, and our AEA has a job fair and so we did some recruitment there. Um, I also
have some connections with people across the country and whenever I have an opportunity to talk to them,
if they know of anybody whose relocating to Iowa you know, it’s kind of like an informal network. Um, the
same is true for uh, personnel directors around the state, we have pretty good network and if somebody
knew of somebody who was relocating to (city) who might be a good candidate for us to consider uh, they
would certainly give me a heads up as I would them.

HRD B: Yes. Um, I am basically in charge of all the recruitment for the district. I think the one piece of
um, that others are involved in, in the policy it talks about, in the board policy, it talks about everyone
being responsible for um, recruitment. But (pause), I think my role is um, getting to places where I can talk
about, what uh (City) offers and I can do that from a different perspective. Um, you don’t know how many
people, but you probably do, say to me, I didn’t know there are black folks in Iowa, because I ‘m all over.
Um, (laugh) and it, it’s very hard to um, it’s very hard to recruit minorities when there isn’t a critical mass
of minorities um, staff. That’s just, it’s just very difficult. No one wants to be the only one. And many of us
have always, have been the only one in many settings um, and grown up that way, so it’s a a little different
than being plopped into that. Um, (pause) so basically um, I try to look at fairs that may have some
minority recruits. Um, going to the traditional, um, the historically black colleges and institutions, that has
not served us well, and its because of that. Now let’s see, do I stay in Atlanta or do I go to Iowa. Do I stay
in New Orleans or do I go to Iowa, you know those, I, I did um, a, a group of five historically black
colleges in uh, Arkansas, didn’t get one. Didn’t get one. I, I’ll come to Iowa, but it’s gonna take me a few
years to get ready for that. You know just, you just don’t do it. So, um, the Chicago’s, the Minnesota’s,
and maybe St. Louis’s of the world um, you’ll have a better chance.  (When) March was Illinois. Um,
any the, any one that’s in the track in a Regents institutions, I can hook on to them very early because my
HR group, we have Iowa, UNI, and Iowa State reps from the education division meet with us. So I can
kind of tell who’s in the, who’s coming through and can, can make those connections with them before
they graduate. Like uh, (student) for instance is someone, I made a connection with her when she was a
sophomore. We’re keeping track of them, I’m still interested, I’m still interested, so when they do graduate
or get into student teaching we kind of have them convinced or, or they decided not to consider (City). The
ones in Arkansas we did last year and um, we have connections through UNI with the New Orleans group.
It’s really hard, I mean I can get people here to teach for a couple of years but then it’s like (pause) the ones
that stay are the ones that get married here and so I’m seriously thinking about some kind of dating service
or someway of, No (laugh). It’s just hard to, to keep them connected and you understand, you want to be
home, you know.

HRD C: I’ve done some personal recruiting, yes. Um, mostly very informal. Um, you know at, at
recruiting fairs to try to identify uh, candidates. Um, and really I, I don’t go to any recruiting fairs other
than UNI, I know you’ve been there, uh, and the University of Iowa events. Um, I do some speaking
engagements for all student teachers at the University of Iowa and try to catch kids early, but that’s, that’s
not been very successful either.

8. What strategies are used to recruit teachers from underrepresented background?

HRD A: Well we pretty much um, (pause) do the same kind of thing, we just simply try to make as many
contacts and talk to as many people and get them here, give them information about our district. Uh, we
generally take out application packets. Um, we talk to them about our district. For example, when I went
to UNI um, not this year but last year, I had um, a conference room and was a loud to make a presentation
about (city). I also recruit and I didn’t mention before, but St. Ambroughs University, I go over there
twice a year and speak to their student teachers and talk to them about (city). The other thing we do
certainly is try to provide opportunities for student teaching and bring a variety of candidates in their
student teaching experience here. To kind of give them a taste of what it’s like to work in an urban district and uh, try to be creative and do as many things as we can to make the connections that you need to finalize employment hiring.

HRD B: Um, one of the things, well actually right now we’re developing a um, flier that focuses on equity. And that’s hopefully something that we can uh, provide to all of our um, candidates so they can see that there is a future for them here in our district. And then this um, our most recent, the concept of teaching the world in (City), to let people know that we are a diverse community, because quite honestly, many don’t know. We’re not a large metropolitan area, actually we are a state that is not seen as having any diversity and we our a very diverse community, so you can have that(handed a pamphlet), but that’s, you know, looking at, pulling together pieces like that. My newest display that I take on the road is extremely diverse. Uh, in fact it’s probably, it probably reflects more diversity than there is in this community, but I think that’s important, because all teachers need to recognize and appreciate that diversity. If they see it and they don’t appreciate diversity, they’ll walk on to the next booth and that’s what I would like, would want them to do. Um, other strategies, we have um, a Multicultural Future Teacher Academy, and I’ll get you a flier on that too um, that we, we taught… (college professor) and I, do you know (professor), we were out to lunch years ago a number of years ago probably five, and we were talking about a way to encourage, I’ve gone to so many career fairs that this district has hosted and the only career that’s never represented (pause) is education. It’s crazy to me (laugh) and we have a number of, of African American students in our district that have potential to be incredible teachers. They have the heart, there there really bright kids that could be good teachers and I think um, one (laugh) (city official) daughter was in my school when I was a principal and I’ll never forget, she had a really good teacher (teacher) African American teacher, and I’ll never forget at the last conference her mother says to me, that’s just great, I said what, well she was/ she had talked about being a doctor now she wants to be a teacher. That’s the greatest compliment, (laugh) that we could ever have and one of the reasons she made that determination is because she had a teacher of color who was an incredible teacher, who was an role model for her and so getting these kids connected, they may not have the experience of having an African American teacher, but through this Multicultural Future Teacher Academy, we’ve been able to take middle school and high school kids (secretarial staff member) who is a, a licensed teacher, my administrative assistant, meets with them once a month. They do practice lessons in classrooms, they volunteer, they shadow teachers, they do all of these experiences over a three and four year period. If they stick with it, they’re in the program four or five years and many of them are choosing to continue they’re education as a teacher and we track them. Our first graduate out of that program, I will hire in December. So it’s been here, it’s been going long enough and, and they’re committed, and (Admin. Assistant) keep track of the kids as they matriculate through the system so um, I think that’s a very promising, very promising program. Um, they’re not all African, they’re not all minority kids uh, but the majority of them are. And our focus is not on, it, it is on minority recruitment, but it’s also on even if your not a minority you need to understand the perspective of multiculturalism, because that will make you a better teacher. Um, another project, the it’s called the Cunningham Memorial project, it used to be called the Wartburg project and about mm, probably 15 years ago, I can’t even remember how long ago, um (professor) from Wartburg and myself, I think (district administrator) might have been involved, (district administrator) a few people started meeting together for breakfast and talking about getting a, building a minority staff group and uh, through that process Wartburg started looking at the most reasonable group of people to get through in education. Are we talking about people who have no experience, no, we want people who have experience in schools so we have reasonable expectation that they’d be successful as a teacher. Um, but also, people who have wanted to complete an education but for some reason or other, they weren’t able to complete. Um, Wartburg got the money together through a grant and started providing coursework for cohorts of kids, students. Um, recently, well in the last three or four years it’s become the Walter Cunningham Memorial Teaching Project and uh, I have hired. I believe at this point 14 people who have graduated out of that program. And right now there are at least that many in the program. I’ve taught a couple courses in the, in the program and it is really, I love teaching in it (laugh). I love teaching in that group because there’s people who’ve been in education forever, as associates. So they know what happens in school (pause), they know what happens in
(City) schools, because they’re our employees, majority of them are employees. Um, so you can talk about the theory of what’s supposed to happen, then you can balance that with what they see is really happening, and then we can talk about what really should happen, and it’s really, I mean it’s, I (Admin. Assistant) would, she, we’d talk about it after class the next day and, oh we had this great discussion about, you know whatever, differentiated instruction. Um, there, there more prepared. And if they don’t make it in that program, I know and we can move them into another field, but bottom line, they’ve had the, the real experiences we just need to hang the, the uh, framework the concept ional framework on top of that and if they come out ___________ or as a graduate, graduate of the Wartburg teaching project. Um, and then the regular recruiting, and talking to people and you know, I no qualms about saying, I want you (laugh). If I’m at a career fair and if I see someone of color that doesn’t come to my table, I’m going to get them the first opportunity I get, because they need to recognize us as a option. There’re some internal things that we’re doing. Um, we, we’d started with study circles with teachers to talk about race issues and we’ve done some things with, with other staff and now we’re getting into work place diversity because many times it’s not the interactions that teachers have with kids that make minority teachers not choose the building, it’s the interactions that their colleagues have with them. So, the work place needs, we all need to be more culturally competent so we can provide a setting where (pause) all teachers are valued, particularly minority teachers. It’s hard, (pause) it’s hard being the only minority teacher in a building, particularly when you’re the first minority teacher in that building because there’s this level of expectation that’s just out of control, (pause) in many instances. That’s too much pressure for anyone. The pressure of being a new teacher is enough, (pause) having to deal with some of those uh, cultural issues is more than um, a new teacher should have to deal with. And so, we need to have a welcoming environment and one way to do that is to become more culturally competent, many times people don’t recognize what they they’re doing. Um, so those are three you know areas that we’re dealing with in terms of getting the work place right, in terms of coming up with a critical mass through recruit regular recruitment avenues um, and then the building our own through the (teacher academy) and the () project.

HRD C: We, we don’t have any formal strategies other than uh, make as many contacts as you can uh, and try to talk people about the district.

9. What factors are most effective in attracting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds to ___________ ISD?

HRD A: Well first of all, I think they need to know what your district is about and they need to have some kind of perception of what are schools are like. Um, they have a lot of questions um, many of them of course are related to salary and benefits so you want to keep your salary and benefits packages very competitive. Um, you also want to have a fairly good representation of people to speak with them when you go out to recruitment fairs. So, I think it’s always nice to take a variety people in a variety of positions, because you know they think you know, sometimes you’ll say, I only talked to central office people, and it isn’t as realistic as talking to a building principal or perhaps a teacher from the district, um, somebody perhaps closer to their own age um, somebody who can tell them about places to live, places to go, things to do, what it’s like to really live in the community because are the things that they really want to know. So in addition to salary and benefits, they want to know, what, what is (city) Iowa like. And especially if you are recruiting a long way from home, not that we’ve had the opportunity to do that since I’ve been here, but I’ve done that for other districts and they want to know what’s it like, what’s the weather like, you know, what’s the cost of living. You know, they have a lot of really good questions. And also this year was very interesting in talking to candidates, they had questions about retirement and um, IPERS, and the, the retirement system. How long do you have to work there before your vested? If you leave Iowa what happens to your uh, investment in that retirement system. And I got more of those questions this year than I’ve ever had in all the years I’ve been doing this and I’ve been doing this now, about eight years. And I find that very interesting, that there’s that kind of concern. I think it has a lot to do with social security and what’s happening in regards to you know, changes in social security.
HRD B: The most effective strategy for me has been um, people who have ties in Iowa. And um, I think (pause) I think what Iowa is, is unique, I think people of color who are raised in Iowa um, have a unique perspective on the world, it’s a little more sheltered, so um, and, and the social life is a little bit um, it’s different. So in order for a person of color to be successful for long periods of time and say this is my home, they, they have to be able to hook to the, the Iowa, Iowa values. They have to be able to, this is a great place to raise kids, I don’t have to lock my door. Um, I don’t expect to be able to, go to the club and see a big name, you know it, it’s a, it’s a different environment. You know, my kids, well one of my kids who had lived on the East Coast for a number of years, she moved back here and it’s very, it’s very hard. You know, you’re not gonna go, the personal life is a lot different (pause) and the options are a lot different, so. Um, so I think that trying to make a connection with, with Iowa is, is probably the, the most effective and the second one is opportunities, because there’s some things that we can do here um, that in some larger cities you get lost. (pause) You know, there, there are a couple people even in within the state, you know they’ve, they’ve made it work in, in our district, people, people of color, made it work in our district, they’ve, they’ve worked hard and been very successful, I would do everything I can to help make them successful and follow their career path as far as it, they want it to go. Um, in a larger district, I don’t think that works as well.

HRD C: I wish I knew (laugh), I really do. Um, (pause) I think um, retention has a lot to do with recruiting. I think make an good place for people to feel welcome goes a long to helping those networks establish and, and then having other people come. (pause) Um, (pause) uh, (pause) you know other than the, the standard, the standard way that we would recruit people, all people and that would be, you know, try to keep our salaries up, try to keep our benefits, try to talk with people about, you know, once you come to (city) you tend to stay because it’s a great place to work.

10. How do you assure that the recruitment practices are implemented?

HRD A: Well pretty much we’re not a large operation um, so I think right now um, we have a number of people who have been involved in the recruitment um, initiative who are very enthusiastic and generally I’m there with them. So, I see it first hand, so I know what’s being done. Um, in terms of things that we need to do um, we need to keep our website updated and current, we’re a little behind right now because of the transfer process and those things are just very important. Um, making sure again that calls are returned, that people know that you appreciate their interests, and that you just do everything you can to follow them. So, I’m thinking that those are some of the things that we do. Some of the other things that we have plans to do, are to revitalize the recruitment committee uh, to take a really strong look at what currently doing in terms of the recruitment efforts, and how we can expand upon them uh, and yet still make sure again that we get some really positive return for our investment. Because we like every other district in the state of Iowa do not have the economic wherewith all to spend a lot of money on recruitment efforts where we’re not closing the deal so to speak. You know where we are not bringing back, you know the, the um, minority candidates that we’re trying to attract. Uh, we simply just can’t afford to make um, you know efforts that really kind of go unrewarded. But by the other hand, you can’t afford not to either. So, it’s a real kind of catch 22 right now for districts who have real limited resources and I think that’s another um, thing in terms of what can we do. We need to continue to be strong advocates for uh, HR budgets and operations, and also for spending from the state, so that we’re not just you know trying to deliver the instruction and have you know what we need for instruction but, but we also have what we need to recruit quality personnel who can best deliver that instruction.

HRD B: (Pause) Um, right now because our district is not that large, we don’t have um, (pause) I’m pretty much in, involved with all of the recruiting activities. (Patrick Clancey-check position) I mean there are very few people and one way to keep a close, if you keep things close to the chest you can control them better. Not that I’m a controlling person, but uh, the more you know, have information about what’s happening in terms of the process um, (pause) I think the more confident you are that, that it’s , the integrity is there in terms of making sure that the people are really out for the same thing. Um, I have had some teams go, making sure that that team is diverse (pause) is um, I think the most powerful um, and
sharing the story. And many times, you have to (pause) create the (interrupted). Um, making sure, I’m, I’m trying to think of the, the key, key statements, making sure that we’re all saying the same thing about being here in (city). You know, if you have some people saying um, I like it the way it is (pause), that’s not as encouraging as, we want our staff to be more diverse so we can provide good experiences for all kids. You know, everyone needs to be saying that message um, getting that out there and making sure everyone understands and believes it. Um, we’re going through a strategic planning process, we’re using the Baldridge stuff, and it’s really interesting. Um, it has, it has changed my focus in terms of some of the diversity efforts, because quite honestly my focus has really been on, how teachers, treat kids, particularly kids of color. (pause) The focus needs to be broader than that. The focus needs to be, the district says, we believe these things, everybody needs to walk that walk. And when, and if there are symptoms that they’re not walking that walk, the whole organization needs to focus on those things and figure out what it is that’s happen, that’s wrong. Do we need staff development uh, wrong people in the wrong streets on the bus, what ever we need to do, but this what we believe so I need to hear you say you believe it and I need to see that you believe it, so that, that’s some of my pieces.

HRD C: I try to um, meet often with the uh, principals, we have what’s called level meetings. So we’re too big a group to have all the administrators meet together. We only do that maybe twice a year, uh, because there’s 70, 72 or 73 administrators. So um, what we do though is once a month the elementary principals meet, the middle school principals meet, and the secondary principals meet so I try and go at least three times a year to those meetings and do some training on what are good equitable recruiting practices. Um, and then we, it’s an under current, we’ve had an under current here for sometime about you know how do we do a better job of recruiting nonwhite staff, but nothing formal.

11. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are they?

HRD A: (pause) (sigh) Probably making sure again that they know and understand where we are and what we can offer. I think that when you’re going and it depends on the market that you’re going into, now if we’re recruiting in Iowa everybody pretty much knows where (city) Iowa is. If your recruiting um, let’s say in other markets, let’s say that we’re maybe at one of the historically black colleges or universities, some times they don’t have a clue about (city) Iowa. Does it smell there? Is it cold there in the winter? I mean those are sometimes the things that you hear. And as I said um, our recruitment efforts have been some what limited, but I think we need to do things to still make people know and understand what we have offer. I think we need to look for partnerships to um, pair people up maybe with alumni from various colleges and universities to look at businesses and other kinds of operations that will give some affordability to bring candidates in because a lot of times people don’t even have money to travel for interviews uh, to come and look at our schools and look also at the community. And I think you know, again if your asking somebody from let’s say from uh, let’s say if your asking somebody from Louisiana to come up here to take a look at what we have to offer, unless we have some wherewith all to afford them you know, lodging and or traveling expenses, sometimes it will create a real burden on that one person who, who really would be perhaps interested in coming to see what we have to offer. But again I think you know, again you can’t waste your efforts either, you wanna make sure again with these people um, these candidates really are truly interested in committing, that they’re not just looking for travel. It’s not like a lot of people travel to (city) but you know what I’m saying. You, have to create a really good balance of what you can offer and again that you reserve that for the candidates who are the most interested and you really do have a good connection. Sometimes people will have family connections or uh, they’ll no somebody who maybe is involved in one of our churches here or who has a son or a daughter who works here, has an aunt or an uncle or something like that, and you really have to capitalize on those connections. And uh, in terms of a recruitment committee, it probably would be ideal if it could include both school and community people.

HRD B: Absolutely, the greatest barrier is, is the shortage. That’s a, that’s a reality, you know, many of those people who choose to be teachers are now choosing to do other things. And I know in the, in the uh,
the reasons group (pause), education was on the forefront in terms of recruiting (pause) and other departments are stepping up to the plate (laugh) and so there's competition. There are fewer, I believe um, Iowa kids of color, matriculating through the system, through the regents system, so there're fewer kids (pause) to fight over, (pause) or students to fight over. I, so the, the number, there's a shortage I believe. Um, geographically that's (pause) the problem too. Now I, I had a young person that I thought was really good, man, and I felt it, she decided to go to Texas, to Houston. There're bugs in Houston, they fly, you don't wanna be there. Well, I'll just be there for a little while, she'll come home, her parents are here, she'll come home. But I, I've loosed her for a while, you know and, and geographically, people are choosing to be in like, young people, you know why not. Chicago, Minneapolis, Houston, or (city), you know while their young and can do those things, that's what they're choosing to do. So geographies are, is another piece, (pause) another barrier.

HRD C: Um, yeah certainly. Um, uh, we, we have to get more, (pause) more students interested in being educators. Uh, we have to get, and then see them through their education. Uh, so, uh, what we tend to do is we tend to fight over the, the candidates that we have (laugh). You know, we tend to recruit them away from each other and then gloat (laugh) um, and that's not effective. Because it doesn't help, help us all. Um, (pause) other barriers, and I mentioned all ready, you know, doing things to retain people once they're here, make you feel comfortable. You know, you know, recruiting (pause), recruiting outside the mid-west, you know people say, well you can't do that, because then people hate our weather. Well, you know that's, that's an excuse but what, what, what ever the reason is, if that's the reason let's address it, let's figure it out. Um, so retention is a big, big barrier I think for us. And I'll, and then to be very frank with you, it's hard to go out and recruit someone whose nonwhite when you have a bunch of (pause) white people sitting at the table (laugh). Uh, and so we have to do a better job of, um growing our own and then using uh, not using but helping other recruit for us.

12. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?

HRD A: Critical, absolutely critical. I think that you know one of the things that ideally we would like to do is have our teaching population reflect, reflect our student population and that's the ideal. Uh, if, if you can accomplish that or better uh, because I we live in such a diverse world and I think it's imperative that we learn how to work with other people who are different from ourselves and that we learn how to value them, and respect them. And I think you know again sometimes I feel um, really sad that we don't have more role models to offer to our students um, from a variety of um, races and ethnic backgrounds, and cultures. Um, and (city) you know in Iowa is much more diverse than many other communities. So I think we're gonna go out and continue to emphasize that as one of our areas of strength and to continue to continue to build upon it and uh, to do everything we can to you know again uh, um, help our children to understand the real world. And, I think part of that is by certainly making our world look more reflective of the real world.

HRD B: Oh, I think it's very important um, kids need to see themselves. Kids need to know what the options are, you know, just like the young woman who decided she was going to be a teacher instead of a doctor, she never saw herself as a teacher because she'd never seen a teacher that looked like her. And, (pause) for the other, the non-minority kids in the room, they now see (pause) the possibilities for minority students. So when they see another minority student, they see there colleague as having the same options that they have. Um, (pause) many of our kids are city bound, so they, they are city bound, so they never get out to see those things. Um, when I was in, in high school, I uh, did some traveling on the East Coast and I was, I was so taken back by the number of minority people in important roles. There were people with briefcases and dressed in suits and that was so amazing to me, because you didn't see that there then. And, when I was in college and I went over to Chicago on the weekend and I took a friend who was a couple years, somebody that recruited to, to Cornell, she went to Chicago with me and she was, now this was a college student, (deep breathe) a black Baskin Robbins, oh my God, look at all these, she had never seen that. So the exposure piece, we can't expose all kids by taking them other places, but we can certainly
expose them to options through literature, the materials that we provide, and certainly through staff, I think that’s really important.

HRD C: It is critical, just critical. Uh, it is, it is one of those (pause), in, in our jobs you have these big worries that kind of just hang over here. You know, I worry that, you know we’re gonna hire somebody that has something in his background (laugh). One of the big top three worries that I have is that we just don’t have a good representation, a good group, diverse workforce. And that’s not only good for kids, it’s good for all of us. I mean it’s, it’s um, I, I listen to the president of (company) speak, they have very good recruiting practices and we’re trying to use them as a role model, but he said if we have all of the same people, all of the same engineers from the same university taught by the same professors and ask them to do something new and unique (pause) we’re not going to get anything new and unique. We have to have different people at the table. And if we’re gonna do something, if we’re gonna take kids where they need to be, we’ve gotta have everybody at the table, helping us get there. So, I’m very passionate about this, you can tell (tears).

13. What specific policies are in place that addresses the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented background?

HRD A: Well we of course have our affirmative action plan um, our Master contract, which addresses uh, the reserving of 8 positions per year for affirmative action positions, which takes vacancies really apart from our usual transfer procedures and sets them aside to give us an opportunity to look at um, minority candidates to fill those positions. Um, otherwise we have our board policies which support that and our I think our individual commitment to do that.

HRD B: One of the most uh, important pieces that we’re able to negotiate in the bargaining agreement with teachers was the ability for me to hire outside of the contract, 10 teachers a year, 10 teachers of color a year. Uh, what typically happens, I find a, I find a teacher of color, let’s say a, a guidance counselor, and I want to hire them to an opening, but the contract language will require that I post that opening and then a teacher within the district who always wanted to be guidance counselor would moved to that job and then there wasn’t a job for that person that I had worked so hard to seek out. Now I can go outside that, if I see a position that I want, I find a minority candidate, I put them there. I don’t have to, mess around with the contract. I don’t have to post those jobs, that has just, that has been incredible and my goal is to fill those ten every year. Because, I know I have ten, I got ten spots, my goal is to hire 10 people, put them in those positions every year. If I can, and that’s very difficult, if we can do that every year, we will move to a, a point of equity in the district around staffing. There aren’t any other policies that you know we, we have policies, policies around equal opportunity. You know making sure that um, well not making sure, but um, recognizing the belief system of the district that uh, we don’t discriminate but in terms of um, actual recruitment and hiring staff, I think that’s the most critical one.

HRD C: Well uh, we have just established some, I’m sure (superintendent) talked about it, we’ve just established as one of our, uh, uh key strategic goals, is to establish, uh, a diversified workforce that uses exemplary professional practices. (Pause) it’s big, it’s a big goal but, but you know he talks a lot about let’s put that goal on the wall and start measuring it and holding people accountable to it. So, that I think is gonna take us a long ways. Um, but we’re just starting, we’re just getting started on it.

14. If there are recruitment policies, how long have they been in place?

HRD A: I’ve only been in the, in the district for two years but, to my knowledge and understanding, these policies have been around for quite some time (pause) in one form or another because this has always been a concern uh, and a understanding of the importance of recruiting minority candidates for our teaching positions. I know the directors who proceeded me shared that philosophy and uh, worked on that and I will continue to do as well.
HRD B: I think um, this is probably the third year. It hasn’t been, it’s been recent, it’s pretty new, (pause) pretty new. And last year, got a lot of grief, because what has happen, you know, when you bargain something (pause), teachers, the general teacher population really doesn’t know what’s in the contract unless it’s something that impacts them. And, I think it was last year, that I got a lot of grief because there are these people who wanted these positions and they’ve always wanted to teach in that position, they’ve always wanted to teach in that school, and here I am placing these other people there and it’s like, that’s not fair. Well, we have contract language to support it. I think I’ve placed four or five minority teachers at (0) high last year.

HRD C: Well, we just, the board just passed it at their last meeting, in June 2005. So, (pause) you know, we’re gonna be building this, this skeleton the structure around it this next school year.

15. How is the effectiveness of the recruitment policies and procedures evaluated or monitored?

HRD A: I think one of the things that we do is take a look every year at how successful we’ve been in recruiting minority candidate to uh, positions. I know last year at the point and time that I reported to the executive director who also reported to the board um, at that present time I was at 7% in terms of recruitment efforts which doesn’t sound amazing in light of our student population but it was pretty well in keeping with our existing teacher population and I was glad that we were. But after that um, I continued to end up hiring teachers so that it probably got a little um, lower. But um, we were at 7% at one time and I think now we’re probably closer back to the 6.25% because when we continue to expand and positions after the school year started and of course you know there were not a great many minority candidates available. Um, and we’re not seeing a great many minority candidates at the teacher recruitment fairs either. And I think if, if I do see minority candidates they’re generally looking at the larger markets for some reason, not always, but often. And I don’t know if that’s because of salaries or because of the appeal in working in a more urban metropolitan area like Chicago. Their salaries obviously are really strong um, and they would be our you know again, an area that uh, would give us a run for the money in terms of salary and benefits. I mean also, also in addition to salary benefits some times those districts will also have signing bonuses, they’ll have uh, some kind of incentive, they’ll have uh, (pause) for example I worked in Indianapolis before I came here and one of the things that we had for our new teachers, we could offer them like um a month rent free to stay in their apartment rent free and we worked in cooperation with federal apartment complexes in the city. So I mean those are some of the kinds of things that people are doing and if I travel and, and recruit and talk to people there’s always things that they wanna know. So it’s kind of like you learn and you share, and you, you know build your incentives and what you have to offer based on other things you see from other people too. But sometimes it’s kind of a tricky deal because I’m sure that we would get a lot of support for offering any kind of signing bonus or an incentive um, from the you know, (pause) from even our, you know teachers who are currently here. I’m not sure they’d support that or understand the need for it.

HRD B: Um, we look at the numbers. Every, at the end of every uh, school year, we look at (pause) we have a report of how many minority teacher we have in each group, I mean how many minority staff members, faculty members uh, any employment group we have, and then start setting goals for where we need to really focus to try to get um, um individuals in. Uh, (pause) right now like we have a real lack of minority counselors, we have three I believe. Well that’s an area that and, (pause) close to, related to that on our um, ACT you know how they provide information and feedback around services that they thought could be improved, it’s number one. (Pause) So those, and that, those are ways, we try to analyze the data first in terms of um, what we have for bodies, and then how, what the, what the achievement data says about, you know, if there is a relationship. In that case with the minority counselors, I think there’s a direct relationship. Um, we may not be able to do anything in terms of finding more minority counselors to hire, but we can certainly do some things in terms of training the existing ones to help fill that (laugh), fill that gap.
16. Thinking outside of the box, if there were no restraints to recruitment and hiring, what do you think could be done to increase teacher diversity?

HRD A: I think that we have great schools in Iowa. I mean I think one of the best things you can do is connect your candidates with schools and with your school people, with your children, with your community. Because I think that's the selling point for us. You know I, I talk to a lot of people from all over the country, a matter fact I have a daughter who lives in Ohio, and they're worried about where they're gonna send they're daughter to school and I suggested they bring her to Iowa. Because (laugh) we have excellent schools and I think that you know when you look at what you have to offer you build upon what you, you know, where your strengths are and strengths are totally in our educational system. And even know we may have some achievement gaps and even know we may have you dents in schools where we need to make some additional efforts or do some things in regards to achievement, if you look at the overall picture, we just have an awful lot to offer. Our salaries uh, unfortunately are still too low, so I think that's another thing that we've gotta really work hard to bring them up, because if we're like 3rd in the nation you know in terms of education and testing and then 35th in the nation or what ever it happens to be right now this minute in regards to salaries, we have (pause) some ways to go. And we need to improve that, because again, this is a livelihood for people and I do take it seriously. I um, spoke to some comrades and one of the things they were doing this year, they were recruiting in Montana which sounds really funny, they were trying to bring them into an urban setting from Montana because their salaries were so low. Like even people who had been there long term, their salaries were extremely low, so one of the things they were trying to do is to entice them by getting them connected to a, more metro area uh, to see what they had to offer. And the other thing that I think we have is a real boost for us, is we're not just one community, you know, when you come to (city) you come to (a bigger area) that real nice blending of communities. All around in terms of the (state connections) it's very metro with out seeming like a very large city um, there's you know very close at hand the smaller areas for instance if people want to live out in smaller locations like (towns) but their still a part of us for people who really aren’t into living in (city) there're a lot of other locations, you know where they can live. I think we’re also um, growing and building as a city and I think that will appeal to young people. Um, even to let them know what, what are the restaurants like here, what’s the shopping, I mean these are things they wanna know. They don’t just wanna know about the schools, they wanna know about the community and what we have to offer. What it’s like to live here? What is there to do? Uh, are there young people my age to mingle with? Where do you go? What do you do? And I think that those are some of the things that their concerned about as well all those issues in regards to the economics, cost of living, etc. So I think the challenge is to us to, first of all get the word about out about what we have to offer, what our community would be like, what are schools are like, and then of course you know again, what our salaries and benefits are. I think that we have a lot of expectations from uh, the people that we are meeting and interviewing and trying to attract.

HRD B: Um, I would (pause) I would do signing bonuses for minority teachers. (Pause) There are other, and other perks if need be. Whether it’s moving expenses um, whether it’s um, I think the signing bonuses have worked in a number of communities. Um, they, I know, I know it’s not specifically, well I don’t think it’s specifically for minority teachers, but um, (pause) for places that have difficulty hiring teachers, they pay signing bonuses. In our district, it’s the most difficult to hire teachers of color, that might be something that might work. Um, I think the more and more resources we have uh, the more we can really highlight our district. We’re working on a CD, you know that we can send out, this is why we really are and really highlight uh, (pause) some of the equity related activities that are going on in our district. Not just kids uh, um kids of color but or staff of color but um, ELL and some of those other um, equity related groups that give you the feel that we appreciate cultural differences.

HRD C: Um, I would um, (pause) I would find a dynamic individual (pause) who is nonwhite and pay them what it takes to come here and do nothing but recruit high quality (pause) staff members. Give them an office, give them the resources, go where they need to go, give them the resources for the retention and to
help these people get certified, and to grow our own. (pause) I would put someone in charge of this because it’s, right now you know, you talk about barriers, a, a major barrier is we just don’t have any one person assigned to take care of it. We just all shake our heads and worry about it.

17. Anything that you would like to add that I may have not asked about or covered?

HRD A: Well just simply, we all recognize how important this initiative is to try to attract you know minority candidates to our profession and to our district. And I think that none of us under estimate that importance but I think you know again that sometimes just like anything um, sometimes we’re challenged um, to you know, continue to do that in the face of declining numbers of candidates and I don’t know if you’re, I mean you’re talking about recruitment have you also looked at the flipside of the coin in terms of the availability of minority candidates. Because you know, one of the things that I’ve seen when I go out to talk to teacher candidates, I see fewer and fewer candidates at the secondary level and fewer and fewer minority candidates. And I see more and more candidates at the elementary level but still no greater number of minority candidates. So, I don’t know if your starting to track and look at that data as well, but I think it’s all very interesting data uh, in terms of the availability of candidates and where do they go. I went down to uh, (pause) Western Illinois, not this year but last year and I think there were very few minority candidates there but of the minority candidates who were there, none came to talk to us. And I even, you know of course because that’s just the way I am, pretty out going and pretty talkative, so I approached um, one of the candidates who happen to be just kind of standing in area real close to us, and said Hi, you know what are you looking for, and what area are you interested in and, where are you thinking you might like to end up. And their reaction was, I’m pretty sure that that person, probably found a position in the Chicago suburbs. But you know sometimes um, even know their salaries look better and stuff, cost of living is going to be much greater there. So we talk to them a lot not only just about our salaries and what we have to offer but also about our benefit packages, because even in terms of our insurance and what our people pay, like right now in (city) our people who take family insurance only pay $30 a month for family insurance. And if they don’t take $30 a month then there gonna get total comp, there gonna get you know a significant amount you know in their paycheck because their not taking the family insurance, because we’ve tried to equalize that. So if you really compared the benefits sometimes you know your moneys gonna go farther you know, in this market. And in our situation then it will be if you are having to pay a huge chunk (pause) of your salary towards your benefits. So I mean it’s, it’s kind of matter of making sure you know what you have to offer and making sure that you present it in a manner that they understand it and they can see the benefit to them (pause). Um, the other thing I think you have to do is be realistic about how, how far people are gonna go from home. When worked for the Indianapolis public schools, I would recruit um, sometimes in places where people would be, you know, they, they would be interested but they really didn’t wanna go that far from home. But if we ever recruited some place that was like three hours from home, like some of the best recruiting we did was in Columbus, Ohio. We were three hours down the road from Columbus, Ohio. Well I think the same thing is true here, if, if we recruit, you know, the majority of your people are gonna come from immediately surrounding this area. And so I think that’s where you have to focus your recruitment efforts, but I think you also have to look at other options. Because again if your trying to recruit minority candidates, there may not be as many of them here and we may need to again be prepared to you know travel and go other places and do what we can to see if we can make this, an interesting option for them, (pause) because that’s what it’s all about. (Pause) Just like any product, you have to sell. You have to market yourself and what you have to offer and why you would be a good choice for them. And another thing that, that I should have mentioned was also the importance of retention efforts (pause) and doing some things not only to bring people in but also to keep them here. Because again, that investment may not just be for a year or two years or three years or five years it could be for 30 years, it could be for that whole teacher’s career. So I think again, you have to make sure again that your salary and benefits stay competitive, that you do things to recognize and reward your teachers because it’s not just about salary benefits as you get into this and are in it for a while, it’s about how the system recognizes you, appreciates you. Uh, does uh, some things in terms of service awards or you know, teacher of the year, board recognitions, I mean what can we do that will also provide that positive reinforcement and incentive in
regard to (pause), this district appreciates you and appreciates the service that you are providing. So I think it’s not just about recruitment, it’s also about retention.

HRD B: (Pause) One of the things that (pause) one of the things that’s happened over the past few years, (pause) we’ve lost some stars and my follow up study (pause) should be to have conversations with them. Um, there’re some communities that are more attractive than others to minority candidates in Iowa, I need to have those conversations with them. Um, I lost a star to (another Iowa city), I’ve lost two stars to (another Iowa city), I don’t see either of those communities being any more um, attractive. I personally don’t, but there’s something there, there’s, there’s a feeling there a tone there, is it money, I, I, I don’t know, I haven’t had the opportunity to, to have those conversations but, I don’t know about that. Because, we, I can, quite honestly I can recruit from some, some communities, I can get (another Iowa city) teachers (snapped fingers), I can, I can, I can go, that’s not fair and I try not to do that. They’re kids need minority teachers as well as I do, (pause) but um, I, I’m curious as to, to what you know makes principals, teachers make decisions not to be here. I know in, in one case um, because our community is so um, (pause) because there are such unique differences with in schools, there are some communities, some school that are in communities that would be less attractive for people of color. We need to figure out how to break that down. The only way to do that, I believe, is to place minority people there (laugh) and say this is what it is, this is what you got, let’s deal with it and I’ll show you how, how um good of an experience it can be for your kids. Um, I understand the whole critical mass and the, the, the passion piece in terms of wanting to serve um, kids of color but, we have to break that mode. I don’t like it that in our district, the highest minority populated district, the highest socioeconomic district um, schools, the highest schools, the schools with the highest number of low-socioeconomic kids are all led by people of color and uh, I want the highest schools as well. I, I don’t want the minority staff to feel that they have to do that, because that’s hard work. (pause) You know, I understand why they want to do that, but I also feel that we need to place, that should not be the determining factor. So, and I, I don’t know if it’s something that we’re doing, if it’s just a choice. If it’s a choice, that’s fine, but if it’s something we’re doing, I don’t want anybody to think that’s the only place they can be.

HRD C: Um, (pause) you know I, I, you know the next worry is the, the, a back lash, you worry about (pause) people not understanding why we’re doing what we’re doing and why we, we wanna place such emphasis on this and I would hate for that to back lash into individuals. You know if you, if you do some recruiting uh, and then for, for the same reasons as a nonwhite person would be unsuccessful in a job (pause) excuse me, for the same reasons a white person would be unsuccessful a nonwhite person is unsuccessful and then suddenly everyone’s, everyone’s pointing to the recruiting and saying, see, see what this kind of goal gets, gets us. And I hate, I would hate to see that. And so we have to be careful that that doesn’t happen or, and if it does happen, to be ready to say, nope (pause) our goals are still good, everybody fails. So that’s a, you know an added piece, an added worry.

Teacher Responses

1. What position do you hold with this school district?

T A: 8th Grade Language Arts Teacher.
T B: My current position is, lead teacher um, at the elementary level at () elementary. Prior to this year, I was a Spanish teacher at () high school.
T C: I am an ELL, English as a language learner teacher at (Building) High School.

2. How long have you been employed with this district?

T A: 1st year.
T B: With the district, I have been employed three years. This is my third, I’m finishing my third year.
T C: This is my third year.

3. What duties are involved with the position you hold?
T A: Normal duties of a teacher. Planning, um, teach two classes. Language Arts, four periods of the day and an Applied Learning class for 1 period. You know duty, maintaining records on the students, grades, just normal duties.

T B: My principal duty is to process referrals and handle discipline, behavior management issues with teachers and students, I deal with parents quite a bit.

T C: I coach Volleyball as well as teach um, 4 classes a day, English as a second language and I teach one reading class for general high school students.

4. Describe the recruitment process/practice that was utilized to recruit you to this district.

T A: Well, (laugh) um, that's a good question. I moved here from (Southern state) about, I don't know, a week before school started and I was looking for job. And, I just put my application in the online file and they called.

T B: For me personally, it was maybe a little bit different because I'm a product of the (city) schools and I know that the (city) schools likes to what they call grow their own and really keep um, minority students who are going into teaching, keep them in the district or at least bring them back if they decide to go to college. Um, other places, so I did participate in the minorities in teaching on campus at UNI, so that kept me in contact with personnel here in, in (city). And so when I did graduate, I did teach somewhere else for a little bit, but I still kept in contact with (HR Director) down here at Human Resources and so, she brought me back when I was ready to come back to, to the (city) district.

T C: Um, I was subbing and another middle school teacher at a middle school in the district and I was talking to one of the staff members and they said that there would be a ELL position at (building) high school so I made the call myself and um, I talked to the ELL coordinator and um, you know she didn't say, OH we a position, but I insisted and called back, I heard this and so, I'm um, dropped my resume with (Building Principal) principal and um, a couple weeks later they called me for an interview and said the position was available.

5. How important do you feel it is to have a balance of diversity between student and teacher populations? Why?

T A: Very important. Um, because I think the students need role models. Someone that they can relate to, that they feel understands where they're coming from. And, in order to do that, you need to try to have as much as possible a balance between the student population and the teacher population in terms of culture and diversity.

T B: I feel that it's very important to have um, the balance of diversity between student and teacher populations. I think, it benefits not only the kids but the teachers as well. There, when having teachers from different places, students from different places and that they can learn from each other, I think that's, that's a benefit for both ends, both sides. I think, it's a benefit first of all because teachers coming from different places, I think they can identify more with kids who are coming from different situations other than teachers who are coming from maybe small town Iowa, which we have a lot here. They can't necessarily, not that they can't learn to but, right away can't necessarily identify with these kids and what they've been through and how there are uh, different things that they need in order to learn, in order to be successful in the classroom. There's different interventions that sometimes they need or different practices and other, teachers who haven't had those experiences or aren't as diverse in their background may not know that right away.
T C: (Pause) Um, I think that it is very important. Um, the reason why I am saying that, is because, we live in America (laugh) in a melting pot where I would be very surprised to teach a class, not just because of my, um major in just general. The class that I teach, the, I co-teach the a reading class and you look at the students, you don’t see the same background, students from backgrounds, I would be surprised to find that in my classroom, so diversity um between student and teacher populations is extremely important because we deal with students from different backgrounds and different socio-economic standing and so we need to be aware of where their coming from and what they have to deal with before they come to the classroom.

6. Of your knowledge, what specific policies/practices are in place that addresses the recruitment of teachers from underrepresented background in this district?

T A: I’m not aware of any.

T B: To be honest, I’m not sure specifically what (city) does. I know (pause), they go to the UNI teaching fair every year and recruit, but I’m not sure that it’s, that it’s directly targeted towards minority students. I do know that um, there is someone down town who does um, (pause) I don’t know if she goes to different places but I think she targeted, targets college students um, minority college students trying to get them to at least visit the district and um, think about coming here to teach.

T C: Um, none personally but what I know from local, um, from the high school where I teach is that um, the principle of diversity, that is the number one thing on our uh, policies. I don’t know what the district does. Um, but as I said, um, as far as the school where I teach, it’s the diverse school in the district. Especially with the ELL students, um, from different parts of the world. I have 20, I have students from 27 different countries, they speak 29 different languages (laugh). I have half of them in one classroom, so, um, it is very diverse, let me put it that way.

7. In your opinion, how would you compare the total district population with the diversity percentages of teachers to that of the diversity percentages of students in this district?

- Extremely Balance
- Somewhat Balanced
- Needs More Attention
- Not Close

T A: It needs more attention.

T B: It’s not close, it’s not close at all.

T C: Uh, I really think it needs more attention. Uh, because, and again I’m talking from my experience at (Building) high school and the diversity of the student body there and it’s just extremely diverse and I don’t see the diversity in the staff members as balanced as it should be. Um, (pause) at that level.

8. Why do you feel this balance or lack of balance exist?

T A: I’m not sure. I’m not sure if there is maybe not a qualified pool or if there just not tapping into that pool. Um, most of the people that I know that were born and raised here in Iowa, that have gone into teaching, a lot of them have left. They moved, when they finished.

T B: Um, from what I understand by talking with people that I graduated with at college that don’t stay here because they don’t see (city) as a community where they can necessarily raise a family. It almost can be seen as a stifling community, where you can get trapped in and there’s not a lot to do for young people and teenagers and that can be a problem for them. And so, I think that’s what a lot of people look at and that’s why they go to bigger cities and they don’t stay here in the (city) area.
T C: Um, (pause) I'm not sure, I really feel that (pause) from my background, middle eastern, I see it very
difficult to see another colleague from the same (laugh) background, and teaching for example high school,
middle or elementary school. Not because, (pause) um, not because we don't apply for jobs but um, (pause)
I think most teachers from the middle east will go to California or Detroit, where major populations
from the eastern community is, um, well I tell all my teachers about Iowa, they say what are you doing
there (laugh). So I really don't know the reason for that and again, I'm talking about my personal
background, I don't know if that has something to do with (pause) with um, (pause) certification maybe.
Um, not sure.

9. Are there any barriers to recruiting teachers from underrepresented backgrounds? What are
they?

T A: If there are any, the ones that I just mentioned maybe, if there's not a pool of qualified applicants, uh,
I don't know. I haven't been here long enough to assess that.

T B: (Pause) I think of course pay is one. When you can go to a, a bigger city where there is going to be
more to do, you're going to feel more connected with your community, why would you stay here. I think
that's, that's a, that's a big one, a big issue. I think pay and then just the community and things to do and
you know the connections that you make.

T C: (Pause) What do you mean by underrepresented?

My response-That would be anyone who would be in the non-white category or non-majority.

T C: Ok. I don't think that there is barriers for recruiting but probably there is a barrier for accepting. I
don't think there is a barrier for recruiting teachers. Because again I'm talking about personal experience
with (building) high school. Um, I think the most exciting thing that attracts the principal is that I um, come
from a different background, I taught overseas. You know, he felt that would bring something to the school.
So, I'm not sure about the Latino or about um, uh, uh African decent teachers, if they would, you know if
they would (pause) apply for the same job, if they would have gotten it or not. But, I've heard that in
interviews that you bring a strong culture to school. Um, so recruiting wise I don't think there's any, any
uh, barriers.

10. Which ethnic group/s do you feel is/are well represented in the teacher
population of this district?

T A: Caucasian.

T B: Besides Caucasian, there's not really any ethnic group that's really strongly represented (pause), at
all.

T C: I would say the white.

11. Which ethnic group/s do you feel need/s more representation in the
teacher population of this district?

T A: Hispanic and African American.

T B: I think African American of course, but I also think that we need the Hispanic, we need Hispanic
educators. Because we have an influx of Hispanic students and they don't have any people that are
teachers even support staff within schools, administrators, anything that they can look up to and that can
help them feel connected to the schools, and Hispanics are the number one, their the number one drop-out
rate of anyone. And I think that's something that we need to look at, when were looking at hiring and
really try recruit Hispanics and also Bosnians. I mean we have a Bosnian population here in (city), we
don't have any Bosnian teachers or Bosnian administrators in our district.

T C: I think that Asian, um I think that we should have more (pause) and and again this is only my third
year so I don't know, I'm afraid to uh, generalize, I'm talking only of my experiences at the middle school
where I uh, uh substitute taught and at (high school). In these two I think, um we need to add more African
American teachers. (pause) When I go to the lounge I, you know, can count so many minority teachers
(laugh) if you want to label them that way. Um, so yeah Asian and African teachers, I don't know of any
teachers from for example China. Even the Chinese teacher is American, the German teacher is an
American teacher. So yeah, (pause) I think that it is important to have more variety in that specific
population.

12. What suggestions or idea, if any, would you like to see implemented that
could assist this district with improving its ethnic and minority teacher recruitment process,
practices, and/or policies?

T A: I think if they would just start any type of programs that recruited minorities. Right now, I'm not
aware of one that's in place with (district) um, schools. So limited, the incentives that they offer period for
teachers here, are just like next to nothing. The compensations is really low. I'm from (state) so I thought
that was bad. It's worse here. Um, I have a Masters and the money that I make (pause) won't even pay for
my schooling. What I make in a whole year (laugh), I have more in student loans than I make a year
(laugh). Um, I don't know, maybe if they offered some type of incentives. If they would just even single
out. You know, get a, get a little program started that was specifically designed, this person can be charge
of recruiting minorities. That would help some. They don't have that.

T B: One would be pay, better pay I think would be, because in all, in all reality that something you have
to look at when deciding where we're gonna work. I mean that's just, that's something
that hast to be major. The second thing is, a lot of people have families. Is this a place where I can raise
my family, what, what are the, what are the schools like, not only that I'd be working in but the schools that
my kids would be attending. If the schools partnered up with just area businesses uh, programs different
things to offer, offer things families to do. Just to have that available all the time, different programs,
different things available. I think that would make, that would make a huge difference in who we get to
come to our district, I think that would make a huge difference. I think it would be helpful if the district
worked with the larger companies in the area. Like such as John Deere and maybe Tyson, those bigger
companies too, to show people what they have to offer for other employment for spouses or for older
children who will eventually be teenagers. University of Northern Iowa is another connection that could be
made to assist the district in recruiting teachers, to try to get them, you know to get them to come to our
city. I'm not one to say that there should be a quota of how many minority teachers should be in a district
because a quality teacher to me is a quality teacher. You shouldn't be hired because oh, we need another
black teacher, so let's, let's hire this person. I'm not one for that at all. But, I do think that they (pause)
should make it a policy to try harder to bring students from (pause) even, I mean Texas I know the
University of Northern Iowa gets a huge influx of students from San Antonio, Texas who are Hispanic
students, to get them to stay here. To lure them to you know to stay in this, this community the (metro)
area to see what we have to offer to teach here instead of going back to Texas, which a lot of them do.

T C: I think that they, they should try to (pause) go to colleges to see, to meet with senior teachers, you
know educators, uh in their senior year before they graduate and they'd see the class of maybe 2007 and
talk to them about coming teach. Uh, I think, I know that we have student teaching, a lot of times you have
placements, um, pretty much you have choices.(UNCLEAR) The other suggestion that I have is not
necessarily how to recruit but also how to improve your staffs views of diversity and how it wouldn't hurt
to (pause) when we have all those staff meetings to (pause), for example, introduce idea on how to deal
with this person from this particular background or to take a, I don't know, couple hours to learn about our
students' backgrounds before we meet them um, I think that would help tremendously. As an educator, I
don't know how to get to that student unless I know where that student is coming from. So learning,
taking, making it as a priority and may the administrator suggest to teachers, because we like suggestions
from them how um and we know how to do it, and we know we need to, but reminders during staff
meetings and stuff it helps to just, to learn about these students, a little about their backgrounds and also to
educate teachers about other teachers you know and their backgrounds and what they eat or how they
smell, how they look, how, um you know I think that it is extremely important for staff members and again
I'm talking personally about what I see and our staff members are just amazing in that regard but you can
still feel it that it isn't a 100%, that there is something going on and I think teachers need to be aware of
that. Um, and the best place to introduce that is in faculty meetings especially those in service days where
the group meets to discuss things on how to improve the climate. What about improving our personal
views of each other and, and the students.

13. Is there anything that you would like to add as a wrap up that maybe I didn't cover or ask about?

T A: It's intimidating. Right now I'm the only certified African American teacher in the building. When I
go to meetings, there maybe a couple other people there that are African American, but most of the time,
I'm the only one in the Language Arts dept. I mean, I'm talking about this is a district wide meeting.
There may be one other person. I don't know, maybe that's why people leave.

T B: (Pause) (Deep Breathe) I think that, of course the, the major cities have easier time getting you know,
minorities you know, different, people from diverse backgrounds to, to be a part of their schools. And I
think, because of that, the students have a better all, a better overall education. Because I think it just helps
students if you have a person who has been, who has grown up in the inner-city and they can talk to you
about that even for kids here in (city) who think that they're in a inner-city, you know that's just, that's a
connection that can be made right away. And, so many kids, I mean they say, that teenagers need at least
seven adults in their life that they have that connection with, and if they can make those connections at
school, that's such a powerful tool to keep them there. (Pause) So I think, I mean having just a diverse
group of people in the schools overall, not just here but every where would really, you, I mean I, I could
guarantee you would see the connection between student, student success and the diversifying of teachers
with in schools.

T C: Uh, (pause) as I said I liked to emphasis more on having workshops or diversity um, day type of
thing. Because um, I heard this from my husband, yearly they have this one day where they just go a whole
day and practice a bunch of exercises to, at (university), just to a, a remind themselves yearly, what is it,
how can you deal with this diverse person, how can you deal with that particular situation. I think we as
teachers, we always, we're pessimistic, um unwilling not to even being able to reach out and try to talk
change for example in terms of school and then we see this shift, like uh oh, I didn't even know, I mean
basically when I look at their color, and again as an, an ELL teacher, I don't have problem with that but for
some other teachers, because I expect my students to be from, I expect them to be diverse. But if I don't
know a famous person's name or, or even this person in front of me is a student, uh maybe he's, he's uh, uh
adopted and then when I see the parents and uh, I would be in shock so learning about the background of
the student ahead of time and getting information, being able to access information, not to try to beg for it
for a month, "can I get information about them," is very, very helpful. And to try to, try to help learn and to
celebrate diversity, uh, I mean, that's the major thing. To, to try to take time to practice that and to put a
scenario for example for the staff members to react to a scenario where, you know you walk into a store for
example and you speak with accent or you're a different color I mean immediate, the immediate reaction to
you is uh oh trouble or, um they're just like "ok it's right there, you can go get it" as if they don't want or the
have time to help you. I shopping for tires, I have no idea about tires, can you help. Well I was like,
"you know what (laugh) I'm not staying here. So I see that out there and I'm not saying I see from teachers
but, it's everywhere and unfortunately if we teachers don't enforce that in the classroom to make students
feel comfortable and make them feel like they exists, uh I'm afraid they are distancing them, because they
know they are leaving, you know they are. That would be a major thing and we need to remind ourselves
of that very, very occasionally.