**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

**Strategy Recommendation**

## DEI Strategy: Implement DEI-focused Exit Interviews

## ACHRO Workgroups: Exit Interviews

Version Date: April 8, 2021

# Issue Statement

# When elements of organizational culture fail to support diversity, result in equity, and ensure inclusion, employees from diverse communities are unable to be authentic, contribute fully, and enjoy the benefits of employment. In these conditions, employees are more likely to leave the District voluntarily.

# Strategy Proposal

Exit interviews can provide perspectives on how the prevailing culture impacts equity and inclusion for employees from diverse communities, attitudes towards diverse student and employee groups, awareness and success of DEI programs, likelihood of recommending the District to diverse job applicants, impact of current DEI-related culture on decisions to leave, and other issues impacting employee retention. Through a robust exit interview process, with DEI-focused questions, institutions can gather, analyze, and use data to address specific workplace culture concerns.

Implement or revise exit interviews for all employees focused on workplace culture and diversity, equity, and inclusion. Key considerations include writing DEI-focused questions, developing processes to increase participation, communicating data from exit interviews to stakeholders, and increasing the importance of exit interviews in the overall analysis of institutional climate

# Current Challenges

* Inadequate staffing and training to implement a more robust exit interview process, write valid interview questions, collect interviews, analyze data, and report on key findings
* Employees leaving a District may perceive little direct incentive to complete exit interviews
* Employees leaving a District may be reluctant to engage with HR if they have had negative experiences with HR managers and/or staff
* Employees may fear negative outcomes from being honest about DEI-related issues (e.g., likelihood of being rehired in the future, negative references, lack of confidentiality)
* Districts may fear asking for DEI-related feedback could encourage discrimination complaints
* Conducting analyses and communicating results may be difficult and increase tensions and negative feelings within a District
* Inadequate staffing, training, and resources to act on exit interview data findings and improve District, College, and community college system operations and culture

# Strategy Recommendations

## Incorporate DEI exit interview data as part of annual DEI Report/Diversity Report to the Board of Trustees

* Report on patterns and trends observed in exit interviews; where possible, include information on patterns specific to race, ethnicity, gender, and other characteristics
* Develop strategic plans to address areas for improvement
* Share findings in participatory governance committees and with key stakeholder groups to increase transparency, gather additional context for findings, collect input on potential strategies, and encourage buy-in for culture change efforts
* *See attached sample report*

## Incorporate DEI questions within the exit interview to address workplace culture

* Develop DEI-focused interview and survey questions for all employee groups (*see attached example*)
* Establish and communicate the purposes of exit interviews to normalize feedback as an institutional priority (institutional commitment to DEI, increase retention, improve organizational culture)
* Utilize an appropriate combination of qualitative and quantitative measures (e.g., Likert-scale questions to measure attitudes and open-ended prompts to solicit individual experiences)

## Improve exit interview questions and processes

* Provide training for staff composing, conducting, and analyzing exit interviews
* Provide an option for employees to submit exit interviews to an individual/department outside HR (e.g., Title IX Office, Diversity Office, Institutional Research Department)
* Contract with an external provider to facilitate exit interviews on behalf of the District to provide employees with confidentiality and/or anonymity
* Utilize technology resources to develop an exit interview form that provides additional questions based on previous responses for more detailed information (e.g., if a candidate answers yes to a question about experiencing harassment based on race, they are presented with a subset of more focused questions on the topic)
* Normalize the exit interview process within a culture of interest in employee experiences (positive and routine, feedback-driven institution, campus culture norm)
* Identify and implement incentives for employees to complete exit interviews (e.g., required when offering an early-retirement, early-notification, or other form of separation incentive)
* Post exit interview forms on the District website and allow former employees to submit forms any time after their departure; provide link(s) to exit interview forms in separation documents (e.g. resignation/retirement acceptance letters)
* Provide opportunities for employees to share feedback in person, by phone or video conference, or in other forms of live interaction in addition to completing a form
* Develop processes for immediate review of exit interviews and contact employees/former employees to follow up on key issues
* CCCCO EEO & Diversity Advisory Committee adopt a sample interview and survey questions, templates, and best practices for CCC across all employee groups and include in the EEO Plan template
* Utilize Exit Interview content and findings to review and revise institutional climate surveys to identify ongoing issues

# EEO and Compliance Considerations and Recommendations

* Effective DEI-focused exit interviews demonstrate compliance with § 53024.1. (b): Developing and Maintaining Institutional Commitment to Diversity
* Effective DEI-focused exit interviews provide evidence of implementing California Community College Chancellor’s Office EEO Multiple Methods #5: Procedures for addressing diversity throughout hiring steps and levels
* DEI-focused Exit Interviews may disclose potential EEO violations, discrimination, and/or harassment issues which must be investigated
* Consult with legal counsel to protect confidentiality of personally identifiable information in exit interviews and protect respondents from any negative impacts of participation
* Ensure reporting on analysis findings, trends, and patterns does not reveal identity of any individual respondent (e.g., reporting findings by race when only one or a few people of a particular race have resigned during a given reporting period)

# Attachments and Resources

* UCLA HERI: <https://heri.vainc.com/preview_survey.aspx?SurveyID=92&SchoolID=6342>
* Attachment A: Sample DEI-Focused Exit Interivew
* Attachment B: Sample Exit Interiew Summary Report to the Governing Board

# Attachment A

Sample DEI-focused Exit Interview

1. Name:
2. Current Primary Position:
3. Additional Current Positions:
4. Initial Hire Date:
5. Hire Date in Current Position:
6. Do you identify as transgender?
7. What is your current gender identity:
   1. Man
   2. Woman
   3. Non-binary
   4. Genderqueer/non-conforming
   5. Identity not listed above (please state):
8. Current age:
9. What is your current sexual orientation:
   1. Heterosexual/Straight
   2. Asexual
   3. Bisexual
   4. Gay
   5. Lesbian
   6. Pansexual
   7. Queer
   8. Not listed above (please state):
10. Race/Ethnicity Identification (select all that apply):
    1. Native American or Alaska Native
    2. Asian
       1. East Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Taiwanese)
       2. Filipina/o/x
       3. Southeast Asian (Cambodian, Vietnamese, Hmong)
       4. South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Nepalese, Sri Lankan)
       5. Other:
    3. Black
       1. African American
       2. African
       3. Caribbean
       4. Other:
    4. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    5. Hispanic or Latina/o/x
       1. Mexican/Chicana/o/x
       2. Puerto Rican
       3. Central American
       4. South Americans
       5. Other:
    6. Middle Eastern
    7. White
       1. European
       2. Other:
    8. Other:
11. Current Supervisor’s Name:
12. College/Campus/Division/Department:
13. Reason(s) for leaving (check all that apply):
    1. Retirement
    2. Moving out of the area
    3. Career change/new job opportunity
    4. Lack of advancement/promotional opportunities
    5. Dissatisfied with current position
    6. Dissatisfied with current manager/supervisor
    7. Dissatisfied with Department/Division
    8. Dissatisfied with District/College
    9. Dissatisfied with compensation/benefits
    10. Other:
14. Please rate your satisfaction with your primary position in each area:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| My supervisor talked with me about my job and performance regularly |  |  |  |  |  |
| My supervisor provided the tools and resources I needed to do my job |  |  |  |  |  |
| I understand how the work I did contributed to the District’s mission |  |  |  |  |  |
| I had a good relationship with my supervisor |  |  |  |  |  |
| I had good relationships with people I worked with |  |  |  |  |  |
| My feedback was welcomed and valued |  |  |  |  |  |
| My salary was competitive with similar jobs in other organizations in the local community |  |  |  |  |  |
| My benefits were competitive with similar jobs in the local community |  |  |  |  |  |
| I had opportunities for professional growth and development |  |  |  |  |  |
| I had opportunities for career advancement |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details (if working in multiple positions, use this area to address items above for non-primary positions):
2. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the District in each area:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Can’t Rate/Don’t Know |
| Racial/ethnic diversity of faculty |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Racial/ethnic diversity of staff |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Racial/ethnic diversity of student body |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Racial/ethnic diversity of administration |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gender diversity of faculty |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gender diversity of staff |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gender diversity of administration |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Commitment to hiring women in all disciplines/jobs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Commitment to hiring and retaining people from communities of color and indigenous communities |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals from a variety of racial/ethnic identities |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals from a variety of sexual orientations |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals from a variety of political perspectives |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals from a variety of religious affiliations |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals from a variety of gender identifications |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Inclusive culture for individuals with disabilities |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration’s response to emergencies |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration’s response to sexual harassment/assault |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administration’s response to discrimination issues |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details:
2. Please indicate extent to which you agree with the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Can’t Rate/Don’t Know |
| Faculty concerns are considered when policies and procedures are developed/reviewed |  |  |  |  |  |
| Staff concerns are considered when policies and procedures are developed/reviewed |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel respected by faculty |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel respected by staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel respected by students |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel respected by managers/supervisors |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details:
2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Can’t Rate/Don’t Know |
| I feel safe at work |  |  |  |  |  |
| My contributions are valued by my direct supervisors |  |  |  |  |  |
| My contributions are valued by my peers |  |  |  |  |  |
| My contributions are valued by senior administrators |  |  |  |  |  |
| My contributions are valued by students |  |  |  |  |  |
| My professional skills have been acknowledged by others |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have to work harder than my peers to be recognized by others |  |  |  |  |  |
| My job responsibilities were clearly defined |  |  |  |  |  |
| My job responsibilities increased and/or changed over time due to staffing changes, budgets, and/or other factors |  |  |  |  |  |
| My workload was manageable |  |  |  |  |  |
| I was able to maintain a healthy balance between my personal and professional life |  |  |  |  |  |
| I had at least one person I considered a mentor at work |  |  |  |  |  |
| I feel like I belonged here |  |  |  |  |  |
| People like me are welcome here |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details:
2. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Can’t Rate/Don’t Know |
| Staff are encouraged to share their perspectives openly |  |  |  |  |  |
| Faculty are encouraged to share their perspectives openly |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administrators are encouraged to share their perspectices openly |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administrators talk about the value of diversity regularly |  |  |  |  |  |
| People are encouraged to value cultural differences |  |  |  |  |  |
| People are encouraged to raise concerns |  |  |  |  |  |
| People are rewarded for contributing to equity and inclusion |  |  |  |  |  |
| Current hiring processes tend to increase diversity |  |  |  |  |  |
| There is a lot of racial tension |  |  |  |  |  |
| When I have seen issues around race, gender, and similar characteristics, I felt safe saying something |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details:
2. While working here, how often have you:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Decline to State |
| Challenged others about biases |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Educated yourself about other cultures |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Participated in work addressing diversity, equity, and/or inclusion |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Attended an event focused on diversity, equity, and/or inclusion |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. While working here, how often have you:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Decline to State |
| Assisted someone with a concern about discrimination |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Witnessed discrimination |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reported discrimination to a supervisor/HR/appropriate authority |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experienced forms of sexual harassment (including sexual orientation and gender identity) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experienced forms of racial harassment |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experienced forms of religious harassment |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Felt dismissed by others |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Heard insensitive/disparaging remarks about race/ethnicity |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experienced microagressions by others |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. While working here, how often did you feel excluded or treated poorly because of your:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Decline to State |
| Ability/disability status |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Age |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Citizenship status |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gender/gender identity |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Job classification |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education level |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political beliefs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Race/ethnicity |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Accent and/or English language proficiency |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religious/spiritual beliefs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sexual orientation |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Socioeconomic status |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Parent/guardian status |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details:
2. While working here, how satisfied were you with the following aspects of your primary position:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Can’t Rate/Don’t Know |
| Autonomy/ Independence |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Collegiality among peers |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Competence of my coworkers |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support for work/life balance |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Flexibility to address personal needs |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Job security |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Opportunities to participate in Professional Development |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Overall job satisfaction |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Physical working conditions |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ability to get reasonable accommodations |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Please expand on any items above you wish to provide more details (if working in multiple positions, use this area to address items above for non-primary positions):
2. How likely are you to:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Very Likely | Likely | Unlikely | Very Unlikely |
| Apply for a job here in the future |  |  |  |  |
| Recommend someone like me apply for a job here |  |  |  |  |
| Tell others this is a good place to work for people like me |  |  |  |  |
| Tell others people like me aren’t treated well here |  |  |  |  |

1. How much are the following priorities at this District:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | High Priority | Medium Priority | Low Priority | Not a Priority |
| Creating an inclusive environment for diverse individuals |  |  |  |  |
| Protecting its reputation in the community |  |  |  |  |
| Creating accessible workspaces |  |  |  |  |
| Projecting a positive image even if it’s not really true |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding the real needs of its students |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding the real needs of its employees |  |  |  |  |
| Understanding the real needs of its communities |  |  |  |  |

1. While working in the District, did you participate in the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Area | Yes | No | Not Eligible | Not Available |
| Diversity, equity, and/or inclusion trainings |  |  |  |  |
| Technical skills development/training |  |  |  |  |
| Leadership development |  |  |  |  |
| Interpersonal skill development |  |  |  |  |
| Relationship skill development |  |  |  |  |
| Public safety/security training |  |  |  |  |
| Health and wellness programs |  |  |  |  |
| Mentorship |  |  |  |  |
| Policy and procedures training |  |  |  |  |

1. Additional information you would like to share:

# Attachment B

**Sample Board Report: Exit Interview Findings and Action Plan**

**Executive Summary**

The District’s Exit Interview process provides an opportunity for feedback on the work environment, culture, and experiences of employees departing the District. The perspectives of retiring, resigning, or otherwise leaving the District are highly valuable for identifying potential barriers to retention and negative aspects of the work environment that need corrective action.

In 2020, the Governing Board directed the District to enhance its Exit Interview Procedures by adding a clear focus on the experiences of employees in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The District’s Human Resources Department adopted a new Exit Interview form utilizing a wide variety of DEI-focused questions to identify potential policy and process, work culture, and work environment issues preventing the District from achieving its DEI goals and objectives.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the District conducted DEI-focused exit interviews with 22 employees that voluntarily resigned or retired and seven employees that were involuntarily separated from employment.

Overall, the feedback suggests the District provides an inclusive work environment that promotes equity for employees across a wide variety of individual characteristics and identities. However, there were consistent patterns observed in the responses from non-white respondents suggesting a culture of “politeness” in which uncomfortable conversations about race, ethnicity, gender identity, structural racism, group biases, and similar concerns are avoided in participatory governance committees, screening committees, and similar workgroups.

To address the issues raised, the District has developed the follow action plan:

1. Conduct a series of workshops with administrators, faculty, and classified professionals led by a professional facilitator on strategies to engage in difficult conversations about race, ethnicity, gender identity and other identities in a productive manner.

Implementation: Fall 2021 semester

Progress Measurement: Report on workshops conducted, employee participation, and feedback from workshop evaluations to be provided to the Board at January 2022 meeting

1. Agendize specific discussion topics in participatory governance committee meetings on DEI, anti-racism, and similar topics relevant to the work of the committee.

Implementation: Ongoing, starting Spring 2022

Progress Measurement: Progress will be evident in policy and procedure recommendations incorporating DEI-focused elements to the Board through participatory governance processes. Overall success of this effort will be part of the annual EEO/DEI report to the Board in May.

1. Require an Equity Advocate/EEO Representative for each selection committee with a specific focus on increasing the role of DEI in evaluating applicants and selecting individuals for 1st and 2nd level interviews

Implementation: Ongoing starting in Spring 2022

Progress Measurement: Participation of Equity Advocate/EEO Representatives will be reported to the Board as part of periodic EEO screening and hiring data analysis presentations

1. Revise Mentorship Program parameters to include specific activities and outcomes related to meaningful inclusion in a diverse work culture; engaging in difficult conversations about race, ethnicity, gender identity, anti-racism, biases, and similar topics in the workplace; and to increase cross-cultural mentor partnerships.

Implementation: Ongoing started Fall 2021

Progress Measurement: Mentorship program evaluation forms will be updated to include DEI-specific criteria and reported to the Board in periodic EEO data analysis presentations.

**Exit Interview Analysis**

The District’s revised DEI-focused Exit Interview questionnaire includes 32 total questions, with 22 directly addressing or closely related to DEI-related work environment and culture.

Demographic Make-Up:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| White | 52% |
| Black | 10% |
| Hispanic | 21% |
| Asian | 14% |
| AI/PI | 3% |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| Male | 45% |
| Female | 52% |
| Non-Binary | 3% |
|  |  |

1. Reason for Leaving (29 total responses)

Retirement: 12 employees

Moving Out Of Area: 3 employees

Career Change/New Job: 5 employees

Dissatisfied with Compensation/Benefits: 2 employees

Involuntary Separation: 7 employees

1. 93% of employees responded Strongly Agree or Agree to all questions about job satisfaction. All Disagree responses identified salary/benefits.
2. 86% of employees responded Very Satisfied or Satisfied with employee diversity, commitment to hiring a diverse workforce, and a culture of inclusion. All Dissatisfied responses identified inclusive culture issues.
3. 97% of employees responded Strongly Agree or Agree to staff input in policies and procedures and feeling respected.
4. 86% of employees responded Strongly Agree or Agree to feeling safe at work, feeling valued, and maintaining work/life balance. Disagree responses identified workload and job responsibility concerns.
5. 79% of employees responded Strongly Agree or Agree to feeling encouraged to share perspectives, encouraged to raise concerns, and diversity is discussed and encouraged routinely. 21% of employees Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed people or encouraged to raise concerns. Open-ended responses indicate people feel an unspoken pressure to maintain harmony and avoid raising uncomfortable topics around individual identities that conflict with cultural norms.
6. 96% of employees responded Very Often or Often to participating in events addressing DEI related topics. All employees responded Rarely or Never to challenging other about biases.
7. No employees responded indicating they had experience harassment or witnessed discrimination.
8. No employees responded indicating they were excluded or treated poorly based on a protected identity.
9. 93% of employees responded Very Satisfied or Satisfied to support for work/life balance and flexibility to address person needs.
10. 86% of employee responded Very Likely or Likely to recommending the District to others as a good place to work.
11. 79% of employees responded High Priority or Medium Priority to the District’s commitment to creating an inclusive environment.

**Demographic Analysis**

Race/Ethnicity Analysis:

All negative ratings concerning inclusive culture and encouragement to raise concerns were provided by non-white respondents.

Gender Analysis:

There were no negative patterns identified by gender identity.

Intersectionality Analysis:

There were no negative patterns identified within intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

**Action Steps**

1. The Human Resources Department has identified a professional facilitator to lead workshops on engaging in difficult conversations about individual identity, structural racism, and similar topics. The goal of the sessions is to build the capacity of all employees to engage in productive discussions in the workplace that advance equity and create inclusion as a fundamental feature of the culture.
2. The College Council, Academic Senate, Classified Senate, and President’s Cabinet have agreed to schedule agenda items at meetings during the 2021-2022 academic year directly focused on DEI-related topics.
3. The District, in consultation with Academic Senate, is revising selection processes to require an Equity Advocate/EEO Representative position on each selection committee to prioritize DEI in the selection process.
4. The Human Resources Department is revising the selection committee/EEO training content to include strategies for engaging in DEI-related discussions during application screening and interview deliberations, recognizing and mitigating biases, and prioritizing DEI as a key qualification for all jobs.
5. The Human Resources Department is drafting revisions to the District’s employee mentorship program to include specific activities and outcomes related to meaningful inclusion in a diverse work culture; engaging in difficult conversations about race, ethnicity, gender identity, anti-racism, biases, and similar topics in the workplace; and to increase cross-cultural mentor partnerships.