

Piedmont Unified School District

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Randall Booker, Superintendent
Cheryl Wozniak, Assistant Superintendent

DATE: December 8, 2021

RE: Appointment of Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On September 9, 2021, the District posted the Director of DEI position and received over 150 applications in the month it was posted on Edjoin and Indeed. An interview panel consisting of 21 members representing classified staff, teachers, administrators, high school students, members of PADC and PREC, and the School Board interviewed the 5 strongest candidates. The complete interview process consisted of four rounds which included a video and written response and three rounds of live interviews.

Round One Interviews - Video and Written Response

After the screening process was completed, the top five applicants were asked to submit a video and a written response to questions which were reviewed by the 21-member interview team. Interview panel members used a rubric to rate each applicant on each of the following four competencies: knowledge of DEI, strategic thinking/planning skills, interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills. The results of the ratings were collated and used as part of the criteria for which applicants would advance to the live interviews round.

Part 1: VIDEO

Record a 3-5 minute video introducing yourself to the interview panel and addressing the following three prompts:

- **Why *you*?** Tell us why you are a good fit for the position of Director of DEI.
- **Why *us*?** Tell us why Piedmont Unified is where you want to lead DEI work.
- **Why *now*?** Tell us why at this point in your career you wish to pursue the role of Director of DEI.

Part 2: WRITTEN RESPONSE

Choose **one** of the following prompts and submit a written response.

1. What work outlined in the attached Board Policy/Administrative Regulation 0415.1: Racial Equity excites you most? Discuss your approach to leading this body of work.
2. PUSD hired a consultant to lead focus group discussions about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. As Director of DEI, how would you utilize the information collected from the focus groups to move DEI work forward in PUSD? For more information on the focus groups, see the attached document.
3. Share a personal or professional story related to equity and inclusion.

Round Two Interviews - Virtual Interviews with Interview Panel (17 members)

Live interviews took place virtually on November 9, 2021. A series of questions was asked of each candidate and interview panelists completed a feedback form that was submitted electronically. Everyone's feedback was shared with all members of the interview panel and the group used a consensus process to determine which candidate(s) to move to the second round of live interviews. The group selected only one applicant to move forward.

Round Three Interviews - Interviews with Members of the DEI Lead Team (5 people)

On November 16, 2021, the DEI Lead Team interviewed the top candidate selected by the larger interview panel. Fewer questions were asked to give each of the candidates an opportunity to provide more detailed responses. The same rubric was used to measure the four competencies. The interview panel unanimously agreed to move the top applicant forward for the final interview round.

Round Four Interviews - Interview with Members of the Executive Cabinet

On November 17, 2021, the top applicant was interviewed by the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent and the position was offered.

II. SUPPORT INFORMATION

The District is pleased to recommend Dr. Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Piedmont Unified School District. Dr. Vanden Wyngaard begins her appointment effective immediately. Piedmont Unified is fortunate to have found someone with such a high level of knowledge and expertise. We welcome her to Piedmont Unified and look forward to her leadership as we continue to work together to advance the work of racial justice and educational equity outlined in our Board policies.

Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard, Ph.D., is a third-generation musician, and followed in her family's footsteps by becoming a choral music director. Effective in schools, civic, and church choir leadership, she honed her skills in facilitating large groups of people toward a common goal. While this may be easily dismissed by many, Dr. "V" has utilized her gifts of facilitation to bring many people from divergent viewpoints to a common commitment and understanding of a universal goal. Eager to move beyond the limitation of music, she earned a Ph.D. in curriculum, and instruction, and within that program studied, and worked tirelessly within urban communities of Ohio including, Cleveland, Akron, Canton, and Youngstown. It was here that she was "called" to provide exceptional leadership for the world by providing superior leadership in schools with a targeted focus on students who have been historically underserved.

With students as the focus and transformation as the goal, Dr. V. has a wide range of experiences including tenure track professor, state department of education, county education office, and as a central office administrator for four different urban and suburban school districts, as well as Superintendent of schools. In all leadership positions, she has led from a position of social justice and has provided professional development, data-focused conversations, and policy reviews to elevate the issues driven by racism that support high levels of poverty, mass incarceration, and limited access to housing and jobs. In this next step in her journey, Dr. V. is honored to serve the students, families, Board of Education and entire educational community as Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Piedmont community.

III. REVIEW AND ACTION: RATIFY APPOINTMENT

The Board is requested to ratify the appointment of Dr. Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard as the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Piedmont Unified School District.