Minneapolis Public Schools is committed to recruiting, hiring and retaining a workforce that better reflects the racial and linguistic diversity of the communities that we serve, which we know is critical to the success of all of our students, especially our students of color. While this has been a district focus, the Human Resources and the Accountability, Research, and Equity divisions have partnered to complete a comprehensive Equity and Diversity Impact Assessment (EDIA) to determine where we are as an organization in meeting this critical commitment.

We did this work in deep partnership with our EDIA Committee, which represents a number of community based organizations and whose members are committed to helping MPS eliminate institutional racism and promote equitable practices across a number of key issues.

Through this process, we were able to do a deep review of quantitative trends, as well as a qualitative analysis of the lived experiences of our principals and our teacher of colors. While our data trends for recruitment, hiring and retention are moving in the right direction, we continue to face significant systemic challenges, which we will detail in the presentation and report. More importantly, we surfaced numerous and significant challenges that our teacher of color face in our district. Specifically, we found that our teachers of color experience isolation, micro-aggressions, job insecurity, persistent negative interactions, and insufficient support on a regular basis, which has negatively impacted their lived experience as teachers in MPS. We also know that these findings are likely applicable to our staff of color throughout the district, as well as our students of color. These findings are a call to action at all levels of the district and will require district office staff, school leaders, teachers and our community partners to ensure collective accountability and action.

The support from the EDIA Committee throughout this process has been critical in helping us to not only surface these findings, but also develop a plan to address them. We thank them for their time and their ongoing partnership in this work, as well as for their honest and candid feedback about where we can improve, and how we might approach solving these difficult challenges. We believe that the action steps that we are proposing represent a constructive path forward, and that they reflect the thoughtful and deliberate input and feedback that they have provided us so far. We look forward to our continued partnership with the Committee moving forward, to help us ensure that we stay accountable to our proposed plan of action.
While our plan is comprehensive, many of the proposed actions represent technical solutions to what is fundamentally an adaptive problem. Addressing the deeper structural issues highlighted in the EDIA report will require shifts in thinking and in actions among staff and partners across our system. The challenges that the EDIA process surfaced necessitate collective ownership and sustained investment on the part of HR and other stakeholders and partners in and outside of Minneapolis Public Schools.

Many action steps in our proposal outline changes are improvements that Human Resources can directly impact and implement, but truly substantive change will require a districtwide commitment to a long-term effort and collective strategy. As a start, we have already met with leadership from our teacher and principals’ unions, and have requested their commitment to supporting the committee’s recommendations and our proposed plan.

We know that we cannot solve these complex challenges alone, and we look forward to our continued work with our staff, the EDIA Committee and other community partners as we implement immediate and longer-term action plans over the next several years. This work is critical in creating environments where our employees are able to do their best work and be their authentic selves for all of our students. Together, we will ensure that Minneapolis Public Schools becomes a leader in the critically important work of making our district a welcoming, respectful, and supportive environment for all of its staff, and especially its staff of color.