



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Lisa Coons, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2120
RICHMOND, VA 23218-2120

Office: (804) 225-2057
Fax: (804) 371-2099

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Honorable Members of the
General Assembly of Virginia
1000 Bank Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Honorable Members:

Pursuant to § 2.2-602(B) of the Code of Virginia, all state agencies are required to submit an annual report documenting diversity and inclusion programs, policies, and practices by July 1. The following report provides the plans and actionable items the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has established to promote the expansion of opportunities for both the agency's workforce and the broader population VDOE serves. The three goals that serve as the framework for the report are:

- Goal 1: Access and Success
- Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture
- Goal 3: State Agency Infrastructure & Training

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Coons".

Lisa Coons

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DIVERSITY, OPPORTUNITY, AND INCLUSION REPORT

This annual report documents the plans and actionable items the Virginia Department of Education has established to promote the expansion of opportunities for both the agency's workforce and the broader populations we serve.



Diversity Opportunity and Inclusion Report

2024 Agency Goals

Goal 1: Access and Success

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Objective 1: Provide all employees with an ongoing mechanism to enhance their skills and knowledge that can lead to mastery of their current jobs, promotions, and transfers to new or different positions.

- a. Establish leadership development and mentorship programming.
- b. Ensure that training programs are available to all employees, including through multiple modes of facilitation (e.g., in-person facilitator-led, virtual, online self-paced)
- c. Increase training opportunities and workshops available through VDOE Professional Development catalog.

Objective 2: Continue to improve hiring process and increase access to potential applicants from diverse populations.

- a. Utilize interview panels that include members of diverse backgrounds and perspectives when possible.
- b. Continue to utilize the “Alternative Hiring Process” for people with disabilities.

Objective 3: Increase opportunities for every learner in every community to have access to high quality education and multiple pathways for success.

- a. Strengthen academic support through ALL IN high-intensity tutoring programs to combat pandemic learning loss.
- b. Increase grant opportunities and pathways to become a teacher so every learner has access to licensed, certified teachers.
- c. Update career and technical education (CTE) standards to ensure innovative pathways to post-secondary success.
- d. Coordinate and prioritize intensive supports for schools and school divisions under federal/status improvement status.
- e. Leverage the Virginia Literacy Act to ensure all students have access to high quality, evidence-based reading instruction.



Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture

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Objective 1: Create a culture of continuous feedback and transparent communication where concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

- a. Collect employee feedback from multiple sources, including exit and stay interviews, surveys, listening sessions, virtual suggestion box and address validated concerns.
- b. Provide access to training, coaching, counseling, and mediation to promote constructive approaches to conflict resolution.
- c. Implement a standard process to promptly address complaints and inappropriate workplace behavior.

Objective 2: Create and maintain a climate that is supportive, respectful, and inclusive.

- a. Provide employees with disabilities the necessary accommodations for them to be successful.
- b. Clarify expectations for collegial interactions and compliance with the *Civility in the Workplace Policy*.
- c. Enrich the employee experience by providing opportunities to interact across departments through engagement initiatives and events.
- d. Improve the onboarding experience to enhance employees' connection to the agency and create a sense of belonging.
- e. Provide a one-stop shop (SharePoint site) for accessing HR related tools and resources to support the employee experience.

Objective 3: Become a “best in class” customer service organization.

- a. Ensure stakeholders have the resources, support, and subject matter expertise to support their educational needs.

Objective 4: Invest in healthy safe and healthy schools with a zero-tolerance for discrimination.

- a. Ensure every school in every community has a safe school building that meets the VDOE model of “safe and healthy” by launching the Stronger Connections grant, conference, and network.
- b. Leverage the Office of Parent Engagement to support parents in every community having access to resources they can use to support their child's success.
- c. Launch an Office of Behavioral Health.



Goal 3: Infrastructure and Training

Goal 3: DOI Infrastructure and Training

Objective 1: Continue to provide training and workshops available to all employees.

- a. Ensure completion of mandatory training in the Commonwealth of Virginia Learning Center, to include Working Together for Virginia (all employees) and Fundamentals of EEO Law (supervisors).
- b. Increase training opportunities to ensure all employees are aware of the Fundamentals of EEO Law.
- c. Offer support to enhance effective employee performance management and the development of inclusive teams.

Objective 2: Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness within the Office of Human Resources.

- a. Review, assesses, and update policies and procedures related to recruitment, hiring, and internal promotions to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
- b. Engage agency leaders in reviewing and analyzing reports to identify achievements and opportunities for continuous improvement.
- c. Institute and communicate systems of assessment, reporting, accountability, and continuous improvement to optimize the successful attainment of desired outcomes.

