

RECRUITMENT TOOLKIT

A HUMAN RESOURCES GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Opportunity Culture roles have attracted great teachers across the country, producing strong recruiting results for schools of all kinds. But having great roles is not enough. **Early, active recruitment and strong communications are essential to reach great candidates**—both within a district and from elsewhere—and encourage them to apply for Opportunity Culture (OC) roles.

Districts that rely on passive strategies—waiting for candidates to find out about available positions and apply—will not get the recruitment results they want and need to spread excellence throughout schools.

This five-page toolkit walks districts through the key recruiting steps. Each step includes actions and tools, also available on OpportunityCulture.org/recruitment-toolkit/. Page 5 summarizes all the actions into one checklist.

The major recruiting steps include:

1. IDENTIFY THE HIRING NEED
2. PREPARE FOR OUTREACH
3. BEGIN ACTIVE RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH
4. SUPPORT SCHOOLS' RECRUITMENT

1. IDENTIFY THE HIRING NEED

Action Steps: November–January

- Gear up for recruiting. Read this toolkit and its tools. Watch and read *Recruiting in an Opportunity Culture: Lessons Learned*. Skim basic OC materials on OpportunityCulture.org.
- Identify the number and type of positions to be filled, and special qualifications (such as subject expertise), in cooperation with principals.
- Set goals for diversity.
- Plan ahead to launch recruitment by March at the latest; some districts start by November.
- Consider using applicant pool process to pre-screen applicants before schools know exact hiring needs.

Considerations

The district must work with principals to determine the number of positions open for each role and any special qualifications. The district should compile this information so administrators know the total hiring needs.

While determining the number of positions, set goals for diversity. Research indicates that having some

teachers in the K–12 years of the same race produces significant long-term learning benefits for students. Other elements of culture, past experiences, or personal characteristics—including **race, gender, sexual orientation, or religious, economic, and/or other backgrounds**—can also produce real and perceived prejudices. Students may benefit from having teachers who are like them in these characteristics, to ensure that they feel valued and to provide role models.

Here are strategies to achieve your goals:

- **Targeted recruiting** can increase the pool of highly qualified applicants who increase the diversity of your teaching force. Reach out to specific groups for people who are underrepresented among your teachers, to better match your student population. Professional associations representing various cultural groups and historically black colleges and universities are two examples. Federal law prohibits discrimination in actual hiring in most circumstances; please consult with your district's attorneys for the requirements and limits in your district.

- **Paid, full-time teaching residencies** may allow more college students and career-switchers who are from historically economically disadvantaged groups to enter teaching in your district. Contact **Public Impact** for help designing such residencies within regular school budgets.
- **Ensure follow-through on this targeted recruiting in the screening process**, using the *Opportunity Culture Teacher and Staff Selection Toolkit*.

Schools may not be certain about final hiring needs until mid-spring or later. The district may need to ask incumbent teachers to formally declare their intent to return to Opportunity Culture schools by late March, so that offers to new candidates can begin as early as possible.

However, *the district should not wait to begin recruitment*. Recruitment should start well before every school knows which of its teachers will remain or advance in roles, and in all cases recruitment should begin **no later than March** to attract many excellent candidates. Districts should consider using a pool process so candidates can apply for Opportunity Culture positions before they are posted for individual schools. The pool: lets districts start recruiting earlier in the year; pre-screens to identify the most highly qualified applicants, keeping the bar high; and by providing a pool of top candidates, removes some burden from principals to sift through stacks of applications. Once schools know their needs, they can begin to interview from the pool.

Additionally, making offers to top candidates early may increase acceptance rates.

2. PREPARE FOR OUTREACH

Action Steps: December–February

- Prepare postings for job openings, to use on your district’s website and other posting sites.
- Prepare a recruiting web page specifically for OC roles, and highlight it prominently on your home page and main recruitment page. Include video(s) with OC teachers, and links to positive media about your OC schools or educators. See *Guidance for District Website Job Postings for Opportunity Culture Roles*.
- Prepare a brochure to link online and share at job fairs and other in-person events; tell why your district is using OC roles.

- Prepare OC role descriptions to link and share.
- Prepare your application materials using the *Selection Toolkit*. Link from web page.
- Prepare and post an OC **FAQ** page. See *Sample Opportunity Culture FAQs for Applicants* for a document you can modify to fit your district.
- Identify places/ways to target specific individuals who would be strong candidates. Plan to target professional networks such as TNTP, Teach Plus, Teach For America.
- Identify recruiting sources to increase diversity.
- Identify and plan for other outreach methods: webinars, tweeting, and other social media, for example. See Step 3 for more ideas.
- Develop talking points for recruiters and principals to deliver a clear, concise, and consistent message about OC positions.
- Use these tools to help with all of the above:
 - *Opportunity Culture Teacher and Staff Selection Toolkit* (for job descriptions)
 - *Opportunity Culture Recruitment Brochure* (use for brochure and web language)
 - *Quotes from Teachers and Principals*
 - *Sample Tweets for Recruitment*
 - **Free video(s) from Voices on Video page.**

Considerations

Recruiters must clearly communicate to applicants the nature of the new school models, the roles within, and the benefits to teachers and students. This begins with clear, accurate, and compelling job descriptions, such as those available in this toolkit’s recruitment sample materials and in the *Opportunity Culture Teacher and Staff Selection Toolkit*.

Along with the descriptions, districts should develop a clear, concise, and consistent message about the district’s/school’s mission, and why OC positions are special, including collaboration, support, on-the-job learning, career advancement, and pay. This will be especially important when a district is just beginning its Opportunity Culture work, to build awareness of what an Opportunity Culture is.

Recruiters should also be planning now for ways to target specific, high-quality candidates, through professional networks and social media, such as LinkedIn and EdJoin.

3. BEGIN ACTIVE RECRUITMENT AND OUTREACH

Action Steps: January–Spring

- Post positions prominently on your website with PDF brochure link, application, videos, etc.
- Add them to any “news” posts on your website.
- Contact Public Impact to post openings on OpportunityCulture.org/jobs.
- Make a list of all online and in-person venues/media you will use for outreach—local, regional, and national. Use the [Checklist—Advertising and Outreach for Opportunity Culture Roles](#).
- Determine who is responsible for covering each of these venues/media.
- Re-check that all venues/media are covered.
- See [Step 1: Identify the Hiring Need](#), above, to ensure adherence to and outreach to meet hiring goals for diversity.
- Use the materials and messaging you developed in [Step 2: Prepare for Outreach](#), above; use consistent messaging across venues/media.
- Engage OC teachers to use their social media and other connections to recruit candidates.
- Inform local media about the OC schools & jobs.
- Identify high-potential applicants, or possible applicants, and reach out to them personally. See sample [Informational Session Slide Deck](#) that you can edit with your district’s and schools’ details.
- Use analytics to evaluate your efforts, to see what makes the best use of your time (such as how applicants found your job postings, which postings or literature got the most views, or what tweets got the best response).
- Share the [Human Resources Annual Data Tracker](#) with Public Impact to compare your results with other Opportunity Culture districts.

Considerations

Successful recruiters invest substantial time in active recruitment, reaching out to potential candidates using many venues and media, and communicating their Opportunity Culture roles and the benefits to teachers and students of OC models.

Use the [Checklist—Advertising and Outreach for Opportunity Culture Roles](#) to decide all the venues and media to use. Use a variety of methods to reach a large audience.

Provide Public Impact with your Opportunity Culture recruiting webpage link, and we will include it in an e-blast and on our Jobs web page: [Opportunity Culture.org/jobs](#). Contact us here for postings: <http://opportunityculture.org/our-initiative/feedback/>

Engage teachers already working in your Opportunity Culture schools to share their experiences and refer teachers they believe would be strong OC candidates. Highlight positive publicity about your OC teachers and schools. Use [OpportunityCulture.org](#) videos, vignettes, blog posts, and other materials in this toolkit to share the experiences of teachers and principals in other Opportunity Culture schools.

Positive interactions during recruiting may attract candidates in future years, too. For example, short phone calls to high-potential applicants, made shortly after they apply, will enhance your district’s reputation. (Guidelines are listed in the [Opportunity Culture Teacher and Staff Selection Toolkit](#).)

Districts can boost future recruiting by including student teachers in Opportunity Culture models.

4. SUPPORT SCHOOLS’ RECRUITMENT

Action Steps for districts & schools: January–Spring

- Identify and recruit high-performing teachers currently teaching in the district
- Identify and recruit high-performing teachers in neighboring districts
- Identify and recruit high-performing teachers in local charter schools
- Contact local education schools that may track alumni performance for recommendations and connections with high-performing graduates

Considerations

District recruitment efforts are valuable for casting a wide net to pull in an initial pool of applicants. But recruitment at each school—led by active principals and design teams—may provide even better returns, attracting candidates who are motivated to work at a specific school.

Districts should guide and support principals in high-value efforts to identify and recruit great candidates.

Principals should actively contact various networks through emails, calls, and in-person meetings to identify and recruit candidates. Contacts may include teachers who previously applied for or served in school leadership positions such as assistant principals, instructional coaches, or facilitators at the school or district; great teachers who have expressed interest in moving into school leadership; or great teachers who previously taught in the district but moved to a neighboring district.

Principals should also ask each school's design team members and other formal and informal leaders to contact their own professional networks and identify possible strong candidates.

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RECRUITING ACTION STEP CHECKLIST

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