

PARADIGM SHIFT REGIONAL DAY OF PRACTICE:  
OUR DISTRICT, OUR SCHOOLS, OUR TALENT

August 13, 2019

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Participant Feedback Form: Results

Submitted to: Five Colleges, Inc.

Submitted by: Greta Shultz  
Green River Research, LLC

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This executive summary presents key findings from data collected through a feedback form that was distributed at the Paradigm Shift Regional Day of Practice: Our District, Our Schools, Our Talent, held on August 13, 2019. The purpose of the event was to increase capacity in Springfield and Holyoke public school districts for the development of a diverse teacher workforce. A full report detailing these findings is available under separate cover.

### PARTICIPANTS

54 participants completed feedback forms, for an overall response rate of 55%. Approximately half of the respondents are principals, and district administrators account for approximately 15% of all respondents. About half of the respondents come from Springfield Public Schools, and about one-quarter work in the Holyoke Public Schools.

### DESIGN AND FACILITATION OF THE SUMMIT

Participants uniformly appreciated all aspects of design and facilitation, including communication of objectives, facilitators’ preparation, the flow of activities, content, and pacing. There is some slight divergence of opinion concerning the allocation of time between large group and team work, with 69% of respondents finding the time for team work to be just right and 28% indicating not enough time for teams.

The evaluator identifies a few common themes in responses to Q10, “What did you most appreciate about today? Any changes you would recommend?” Themes and illustrative comments are displayed below.

*Table 1. Q10: What did you most appreciate about today? Any changes you would recommend?*

Theme: Appreciations and suggestions	Illustrative Comments
Honest, authentic conversation about important issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on the "elephant in the room" that needs to improve for all kids</li> <li>- I appreciate the honesty around the real issues and how to address the problems we are having as a school and as a district.</li> <li>- Having a meaningful conversation about diversity in the workforce (hiring practice etc.)</li> <li>- Thoughtful conversations</li> <li>- Listening to authentic experiences/sharing</li> <li>- Speakers, honesty, vulnerability</li> </ul>
Appreciation for collaboration and learning across districts, planning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The opportunity to collaborate across districts was wonderful</li> <li>- Springfield + Holyoke collaborating</li> <li>- Time to learn from the other districts and share action plans</li> <li>- The opportunity to listen to education and administration from outside the district with diverse backgrounds. I would not change anything.</li> <li>- Hearing different perspectives</li> <li>- Planning time with district/ Time to work w/ colleagues/team</li> <li>- Clear information sharing/Opportunity to define next steps</li> </ul>

Theme: Appreciations and suggestions	Illustrative Comments
Appreciation for speakers, insights and information provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keynote Speaker/Keynotes/The Keynote Speaker was wonderful</li> <li>- The insights guest speakers shared</li> <li>- The presenters were great.</li> <li>- Really love hearing from Commissioner Riley and Sharif El-Mekki. Ramon did a good job, as well.</li> <li>- The information provided (2)</li> <li>- The topic</li> <li>- Candidate interview ideas</li> </ul>
Suggested changes/challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The structure of whole group presentation was not a match for my needs, nor did it reflect best practices in instruction.</li> <li>- I wish we had more time to listen to speakers. I felt that their presentations were rushed.</li> <li>- Challenge to have the difficult conversations and time for school team to work</li> <li>- I would recommend different programs for schools in different stages of cultural proficiency.</li> </ul>
Overall appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lunch and breakfast :)</li> <li>- Really wonderful day</li> </ul>

## OUTCOMES

At the end of the Day of Practice, participants were asked to assess their understanding, awareness and readiness levels before the event and after the event, across six outcomes. A five-point scale was used; response categories included none, low, moderate, high and very high. The six outcomes were:

- Outcome #1 (Q11)      My understanding of the importance of a diverse teacher workforce
- Outcome #2 (Q12)      My awareness of the impact of Black and Latinx paraeducators’ experiences on their decision to become educators
- Outcome #3 (Q13)      My understanding of my role in supporting and/or hindering Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers
- Outcome #4 (Q14)      My awareness of key elements in my institutional context that support or hinder Black and Latinx paraeducator pathways
- Outcome #5 (Q15)      My readiness to support Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers
- Outcome #6 (Q16)      Our team’s readiness to support Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers

### Overview of Results:

Table 2 (below) presents an overview of percent change by outcome. The largest percent category is shown in bold format.

*Table 2. Percent change by outcome*

	O1 (Q11) Diverse workforce	O2 (Q12) Impact of experiences	O3 (Q13) My role	O4 (Q14) Instituti'l context <sup>1</sup>	O5 (Q15) My readiness	O6 (Q16) Team's readiness
No change	<b>44</b>	<b>35</b>	31	<b>33</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>
Low to moderate	0	4	2	2	4	11
Low to high	0	7	2	0	2	2
Low to very high	0	0	2	2	0	0
Moderate to high	24	28	<b>37</b>	31	31	26
Moderate to very high	4	7	2	6	2	7
High to very high	28	19	24	24	20	15

<sup>1</sup> Missing: 2%

A few observations:

- Given the small sample size (n=54), caution is advised when interpreting the results. The results describe the participants' experience, but they may not be generalizable to a broader population or different contexts.
- While the largest percentage of respondents demonstrated "No change" for five outcomes (Outcomes 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6), there is nonetheless evidence of important shifts within these outcomes. Composite change across three categories (moderate to high, moderate to very high and high to very high) accounts for approximately half of the responses for outcome 1 (56%), outcome 2 (54%), outcome 5 (53%), and outcome 6 (48%). The composite change is even greater for outcome 4 (61%) and reaches nearly two-thirds of respondents for outcome 3 (63%). In addition, within *each* outcome, some participants reported growth that spanned more than one point on the scale (e.g., from moderate to very high). These percentages are relatively small, overall, but they are an indication of the effectiveness of the event.
- Outcomes 3 and 4 are measures of participants' understanding of their role, and awareness of their institutional context, respectively. While many participants did not report change in their own or their team's "readiness to support Black and Latinx para-educators to become teachers" *per se* (41% for outcome 5 and 39% for outcome 6), their reported increased understanding of their role and awareness of key elements of their context arguably point toward increased "readiness." Change in these two outcomes aligns with the overall Day of Practice desired outcomes: increased knowledge and understanding of the importance of and strategies for developing a diverse teacher workforce, and enhanced readiness and skills for administrators to support Black and Latinx para-educators to become teachers.

A closer look at each outcome follows.

**Outcome #1:** Understanding of the Importance of a Diverse Teacher Workforce

All respondents came to the event with at least a moderate level of understanding of the importance of a diverse teacher workforce. All participants left the event with at least a high level of understanding of the importance of a diverse teacher workforce.

*Table 3. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 11a and 11b)*

My understanding of the importance of a diverse teacher workforce	None		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event	-	-	-	-	15	28	26	<b>48</b>	13	24
After Event	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	44	30	<b>56</b>

**Outcome #2:** My Awareness of the Impact of Black and Latinx Paraeducators’ Experiences on their Decision to become Educators

Participants came to the Day of Practice with differing levels of awareness of the impact of Black and Latinx paraeducators’ experiences on their decision, ranging from none to very high. All respondents left the event with at least a moderate level of awareness, and more than 90% of respondents developed high or very high levels of awareness.

*Table 4. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 12a and 12b)*

My awareness of the impact of Black and Latinx paraeducators’ experiences...	None		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event	2	4	4	7	20	<b>37</b>	18	33	10	19
After Event	-	-	-	-	3	6	27	<b>50</b>	24	44

**Outcome #3:** My Understanding of My Role in Supporting and/or Hindering Black and Latinx Paraeducators to become Teachers

Again, the range of participants’ understanding, on arrival at the event, is wide: from none to very high. All respondents left with at least a moderate level of awareness, and *nearly all* respondents (52, 96%) indicated high or very high levels of understanding of their role in supporting and/or hindering Black and Latinx paraeducators.

Table 5. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 13a and 13b)

My understanding of my role....	None		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event	1	2	2	4	22	41	20	37	9	17
After Event	-	-	-	-	2	4	28	52	24	44

**Outcome #4:** My Awareness of Key Elements in my Institutional Context that Support or Hinder Black and Latinx Paraeducator Pathways

While the range of participants’ “before” levels of awareness is wide, all respondents left with at least a moderate level of awareness, and more than 90% of respondents (50, 93%) indicated high or very high levels of awareness of key elements of their institutional context that support or hinder Black and Latinx paraeducator pathways.

Table 6. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 14a and 14b)

My awareness of key elements in my institutional context...	None		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event*	1	2	1	2	22	41	23	43	6	11
After Event*	-	-	-	-	3	6	27	50	23	43

\* Missing: 1

**Outcome #5:** My Readiness to Support Black and Latinx Paraeducators to become Teachers

Most respondents (51, 94%) began with at least a moderate level of readiness to support Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers. Slightly more than half of the respondents (29, 54%) began with a high or very high level of readiness, and slightly more than three-quarters of respondents (42, 78%) left with a high or very high readiness level.

Table 7. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 15a and 15b)

My readiness to support Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers	None		Low		Moderate		High		Very High	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event	-	-	3	6	22	41	16	30	13	24
After Event	-	-	-	-	12	22	21	39	21	39

**Outcome #6:** Our Team’s Readiness to Support Black and Latinx Paraeducators to become Teachers

Team readiness ranged from low to very high before the Day of Practice. All respondents indicated at least a moderate team readiness level afterwards, and more than three-quarters of respondents (42, 78%) reported high or very high levels by the end of the day.

*Table 8. Distribution of Before and After Frequencies (Questions 16a and 16b)*

<b>Our team’s readiness to support Black and Latinx paraeducators to become teachers</b>	<b>None</b>		<b>Low</b>		<b>Moderate</b>		<b>High</b>		<b>Very High</b>	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Before Event	-	-	7	13	24	<b>44</b>	14	26	9	17
After Event	-	-	-	-	12	22	21	<b>39</b>	21	<b>39</b>



## FOLLOW-UPS

Participants were invited to comment on potential follow-up(s) to the Day of Practice. Question 20 asked, “What follow-up(s) would be useful, either from Paradigm Shift or your district?” Respondents were asked to select as many options as needed, and to be as specific as possible. About half of the respondents (28, 52%) indicated that more opportunities to interact with principals outside their district would be useful. Some respondents would also find another Regional Day of Practice and periodic check-ins with their supervisor useful.

*Table 9. Aggregated Responses: Follow-ups (Q20)*

What follow-up(s) would be useful...?	#	%
Another Regional Day of Practice to learn more and report out on progress and challenges	22	41
Periodic check-ins with my supervisor	18	33
More opportunities to interact with principals outside my district	28	52
Other	4	-

Analysis by role shows that the greatest number of principals would find more opportunities to interact with principals outside their district to be useful.

*Table 10. Follow-up(s) Responses by Role (Q20)*

What follow-up(s) would be useful...?	Principal	AP	District admin.	Higher Ed	DESE	Others	Total
Another Regional Day of Practice to learn more and report out on progress and challenges	10	1	6	1	1	3	22
Periodic check-ins with my supervisor	11	1	2			4	18
More opportunities to interact with principals outside my district	19	2	4			3	28

## PARTICIPANTS' FURTHER REFLECTIONS

Four open-ended questions were posed. The evaluator identifies a few common themes, shown here with some illustrative comments. (All comments are displayed in the full report, available under separate cover.)

Table 11. Q17: One or two big “Aha’s” from today

Theme: “Aha’s”	Illustrative Comments
Unpacking bias and racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unpacking Bias PD vs Unpacking Racism PD</li> <li>- The breakdown of the levels of bias</li> <li>- Implicit bias and how often it is there</li> <li>- “oppressor vs. overseer”</li> </ul>
Importance of diverse staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “You can’t be what you can’t see” (2)</li> <li>- If I can see them, I can be them</li> <li>- Impact of POC on students of color</li> <li>- Outcomes for students who have teachers of color</li> <li>- Windows and Mirrors</li> <li>- The importance of attracting a diverse staff</li> </ul>
Urgency to diversify the teacher workforce and strategies to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As diverse of a district that we are, we have much work to do</li> <li>- I liked how we were given the what, why and how behind what we need to do for our kids. It’s deep and is needed, urgently.</li> <li>- Only 2% of teachers are black.</li> <li>- Need for cultural growth within school to retain diverse staff once in building</li> <li>- We need to build from within and support aspiring educators</li> <li>- Educators are <u>activists!</u></li> </ul>
Needed changes in interviewing and hiring processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We need to systematically change our interview process and postings Job description and interview processes and products. I’ll take a closer look.</li> <li>- Create inclusive job descriptions and include identity in interview process</li> <li>- The way our job descriptions and interview process may be pushing away the candidates we want</li> <li>- The concept of “hiring for fit” has to be reframed</li> </ul>
Changes specific to principals and buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Principals walking their boundary streets to talk to parents. I will be doing that.</li> <li>- Make people of color visible in school more – only photos on wall are white men right now</li> </ul>

Table 12. Q18: We are interested in gauging the relevance of today's event. How, if at all, will you apply what you heard today to your professional practice?

Theme: Apply to your professional practice	Illustrative Comments
Strengthen building culture, share through conversation and professional development, follow-through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will use much of the information at my PD [professional development] this week. Share out continually with all building leaders and all staff at my school</li> <li>- I will use what I learned today to build staff and strengthen the culture within the building</li> <li>- Continue to build a culture of welcome, safety and learning</li> <li>- Further discussion around next steps</li> <li>- Follow through with action steps and keep convo going</li> <li>- Push systematic conversations around bias and equity</li> <li>- Everything!</li> </ul>
Professional learning and intention to improve practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to consider my personal bias and profiling as a leader</li> <li>- Will try and expect to improve</li> <li>- Building my understanding of the process to hire POC and supports provided</li> <li>- Changing the way I recruit and hire</li> <li>- Get to know all staff—paras, maintenance staff and cafeteria staff</li> <li>- Intentionality in reaching out to TOC and recruiting TOC</li> <li>- Continually work with my department to address implicit biases</li> </ul>
Seek out and support paraeducators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will seek out qualified paraprofessionals and candidates of color</li> <li>- As a new administrator, I plan to focus on para educators and developing and supporting them in becoming educators</li> <li>- I will begin speaking w/my paras and figuring out ways to support their growth professionally and educationally</li> <li>- Continue to look for qualified Black and Latinx paras to become teachers</li> <li>- Having intentional meetings with Paras being explicit</li> <li>- Help to develop the system to identify and support paras in the district</li> </ul>
Review hiring practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hire quality teachers, paras and support staff of color</li> <li>- Hiring practices (2)</li> <li>- This practice will open more doors for minority candidates</li> <li>- Look at hiring process, including the job descriptions/post</li> <li>- See above. Also, looking at all candidates with due diligence</li> <li>- Recruiting</li> </ul>

Table 13. Q19: What will you need in order to continue to diversify the teaching workforce at your institution?

Theme: What you will need	Illustrative Comments
Improved search process and appropriate candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to find diverse candidates</li> <li>- Improve my search process</li> <li>- Candidates that fit/apply</li> <li>- Applicants</li> <li>- Recruits, alumni</li> <li>- Attracting and energizing qualified diverse candidates</li> </ul>
District-specific conversations and continued collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More conversation and the work as a district team and need!</li> <li>- Time and clear procedure for how the district will proceed in this matter – the simple Sort button on Talented can make a difference</li> <li>- Continued work</li> <li>- More conversation about antiquated systems for hiring and promotions</li> <li>- Frequent opportunities to “check myself” with peers</li> <li>- Ongoing discussions for diversity</li> <li>- Continued collaboration with others vested in the work</li> </ul>
Resources, including how to support diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More resources and how to specifically support diversity and recruitment of POC and TOC candidates</li> <li>- More days like today with more time on the How!</li> <li>- More workshops like this. This can't be a 1 and done.</li> <li>- Trainings and support</li> <li>- Continued PD</li> <li>- Continued support from the District/Human Resource Department (2)</li> </ul>
Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Principals to be aware of their bias and anti-racism training for all school staff</li> <li>- Awareness</li> </ul>
Assistance and strategies specific to paraeducator pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More assistance in building a path to certification for paras without bachelors</li> <li>- The ways around hiring without the MTEL (from the Commissioner)</li> <li>- Communication of changes to laws that provide multiple opportunities to licensure</li> </ul>

Table 14. Q21: Additional comments?

Theme: Additional?	Illustrative Comments
Gratitude and appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thank you! The partnership with Holyoke and the message from the new Commissioner was the supercharge we needed! Thank you!</li> <li>- Thank you 😊</li> <li>- I would make it a half-day session rather than a full day. Thank you for this useful workshop. Presenters were outstanding. Food was diverse and excellent. Hospitality was outstanding and thoughtful. Very relaxing and enjoyable workshop.</li> <li>- Thank you for bringing Sharif and Ramon! Can they do PD w/our staff?</li> <li>- Great job!</li> <li>- Thank you!</li> <li>- Great workshop!</li> </ul>