**Affirmative Involvement Plan Goal: Transform Education Minnesota into a recognized advocate for education equity and social justice through member engagement, leadership development, internal education, external partnerships, by actively supporting programs/efforts to fight poverty and racial disparities, and transparency.**

| **Strategies** | **Tactics** | **Resources** | **Rationale** | **Action Steps** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Member Engagement** | One on one conversations and small group discussions with members of color | Racial Equity Organizer,  Educators of Color Forum Leaders,  Field Staff, Officers, Governing Board | We have had multiple opportunities for our members of color to provide feedback to EM staff about union involvement. This includes conversations with EMAC leaders, participants in the MLTP, and focus groups held with members of color throughout the state. The most common feedback is that EM has different values from our members of color. EM’s narrative is that Minnesota is great and teachers are great. Our narrative does not recognize that we are failing our diverse students by having the largest achievement gap in the nation. Our members of color believe EM is part of the institutional racism inherent in public education. The fact that many members are not being contacted by the union (except during contract negotiations) supports their belief that EM does not care about members of color or equity. EMAC believes that one on one conversations and small group discussions with members of color need to happen constantly to promote member involvement and equity within EM. | * Hired racial equity organizer * Write and begin implementing member-led 1-to-1 conversation plan * Engage in ongoing 1-to-1 conversations * Adopt racial equity lens for decision-making at every level * Put achievement gap issues to a more prominent position in legislative goals and issue work on EPIC teams |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Create Educators of Color forums for each of the target groups | Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant | Members of color feel racially isolated and disconnected, so creating spaces to network and have conversations will ensure that members feel more involved and care about their union. | * Determine forum names * Determine forum logos * Determine forum mission statements * Identify forum leaders * Host gatherings for the forums |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Map member involvement with communities of color and anti-poverty groups | Community Engagement Coordinator, Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant |  | * Maintain up-to-date organizational power maps and work to increase member involvement in key organizations * Recruit EM members who are community leaders to be activists within EM. * Use data from member of color survey and 1-to-1 conversations to map member involvement and community engagement |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Run issue based organizing campaigns in locals | Community Engagement Coordinator,  Racial Equity Organizer,  Field Staff committee | Corporate education reform organizations have full-time organizers in MN. These organizations have signed up hundreds of our members by tapping into our members’ frustration with the lack of equity in public schools. | * Building issue-based coalitions in key communities, currently focused on full-service community schools advocacy. * Engage young members and members of color by convening them around professional issues and the achievement gap using EPIC and MEA |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Recognize excellent educators by encouraging nominations for state and national awards | Public Affairs | This includes nominations for the State and National Human Rights Awards, the State and National Teacher of the Year Award, the State and National ESP of the Year Award. | * Connect members of color in informal support networks – back-to-school, end of the year and winter celebrations. * Create recognitions within forums for members based on Teacher Leadership Competencies model |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Promote member involvement in upcoming integration rule hearing at the state and local levels | Public Affairs, Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant, Legal | Our members of color are directly impacted by these decisions, so we need them to be present at the table to help lead the conversation. | * Create clear communication and education to explain to members the rule and what changes might look like * Organize members to have their feedback and ideas included in district integration plans |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Promote member involvement in upcoming desegregation lawsuit | Public Affairs, Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant, Legal | Our members of color are directly impacted by these decisions, so we need them to be present at the table to help lead the conversation | * Convene a focus group of educators of color to brainstorm solutions to desegregate * Train members to advocate and lead the conversation around desegregation |
| **Member Engagement (continued)** | Create and track accurate data on ethnicity of members, and engage locals in the process of identifying members of color | Racial Equity Organizer, Field Staff, Locals, Membership Staff, PA staff, Data Specialist/Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant | We have inaccurate and incomplete data on which of our members self-identify as a member of color. Because many members are not on our self-identified list, some members of color may not be informed of opportunities for involvement within Education Minnesota. | * Work with America Votes on our VAN lists to identify members of color * Engage locals to improve our data * Use a check in system at all Education Minnesota events that allows individuals to self-identify potential minority status |
| **Leadership Development** | ID social justice/racial equity activists through the one on one conversations above | Racial Equity Organizer, Field Staff committee, Officers, Governing Board, Locals | Our opponents have labeled EM as a blocker to positive change towards education equity, and call us the greedy teachers’ union. EM’s commitment to strong contracts and job security has the unfortunate consequence of supporting that negative narrative. Many of our members prioritize education equity and the issue of poverty over contracts and job security. For that reason, many members do not identify with EM and do not want to be involved. This is an opportunity for EM to identify new leaders. | * Engage in 1-to-1 conversations * Conduct a survey for educators of color * Look at bargaining language in each local contract that can help leverage our racial equity plans |
| **Leadership Development (continued)** | Establish a mentoring program for members of color | Racial Equity Organizer, Ed Issues staff | Members of color, particularly in greater Minnesota, report feeling culturally isolated at school. Many members report that because of their race and a lack of a supportive network, there’s a need to work twice as hard as their white counterparts to be successful as new educators. | * Creating online support networks for members of color via ConnectED Learning * Develop a cadre of teachers of color to serve as informal mentors via email and phone * Leverage and modify existing resources from the Teacher Support Partnership to create a framework for state and regional mentoring for members of color |
| **Leadership Development (continued)** | Provide additional development and training opportunities for leaders of color | Officers, Governing Board | It is difficult for EM to claim that we are working on the achievement gap, and to build coalitions around education equity when almost all of our active members are white. Part of changing the negative narrative around EM is literally putting a new, diverse face to the union. | * Encourage non-elected delegations to state and national meetings to reflect diversity. * Encourage local leaders to promote involvement of educators of color within local leadership positions, and recommend members of color for EM committees |
| **Leadership Development (continued)** | Provide opportunities and pathways for members of color to attend leadership conferences and events (locally and nationally) | Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant | There are lots of opportunities both nationally and locally for our members to be trained on race and equity issues, but there needs to be one place where members can access these events. | * Create a list of all national conferences and deadlines to register for them so that all members of color can access it * Bring NEA to Summer Seminar to offer Minority Leadership training, Diversity training, Cultural Competence training, Social Justice training, and Women’s Leadership training |
| **Leadership Development (continued)** | Encourage leaders of color to run for delegate seats and other elected positions | Officers, Governing Board |  | * Officers and Governing Board members will make personal contacts to members of color who have previously attended state and national conventions * EM will create formal and informal spaces for members of color to network and connect during major conferences and events * Develop ‘Equity Leads’ similar to the Teachers as Leaders and Learners (TALL) network |
| **Internal Education** | Anti-racism and racial equity training for the governing board and leaders | Racial Equity Organizer, Officers, Governing Board, Local Presidents, Regional Governing Boards | Instead of taking a defensive stance against the negative narrative around teachers’ unions, it would be more effective for EM to become a leader in promoting education equity. EM governance and leaders already understand the need for education equity, and the EM Governing Board has recently attended a year-long, intensive anti-racism training. | * Governance and local leaders will attend racial equity training |
| **Internal Education (continued)** | Develop a “race rubric” for each EM department to fill out to assess the department’s racial equity in regard to members as an accountability and transparency piece | EMAC, Public Affairs, Legal, Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant | In order for equity to be recognized as an organizational priority, staff members need to assess their current ways of interacting with members of color. Education Minnesota needs to evaluate race impact of its policy advocacy, issues, campaigns and communications on members, students, and the public education system. | * Use the ‘Intercultural Development Inventory’ (ICI) assessment model and work with EMAC members to develop further * Certify EM staff as ICI administrators * Develop guidelines and trainings for departmental race equity analysis * Each EM department has an annual racial equity assessment/report |
| **Internal Education (continued)** | Anti-racism and racial equity training for staff | Equity training subcommittee, Staff Meeting Planning Committee | If EM is to be a leader in promoting education equity, staff need to be equipped to articulate the need for racial equity to members and the public, and be able to organize around the issue. Our self-interest in education equity needs to be defined and articulated to staff and the members. Racial equity training in June and Sep of 2015. | * Engage staff in racial equity training |
| **Internal Education (continued)** | Create a new ER&D strand for anti-racism and racial equity | Racial Equity Organizer, Education Issues staff | There needs to be more discussion about the racial gaps in education, and practical strategies to address these gaps. Educators state-wide need to hear the same message, and Education Minnesota cannot wait for another group to try to take this on. | * Distribute application for members to join the professional development workgroup for this sequence of trainings * Together with selected members, Education Issues staff will identify framework and resources for training(s) * Education Issues staff will consult with workgroup as needed throughout development process, and identify strategies for training additional trainers * Implement anti-racism and racial equity professional development in a variety of venues (face-to-face, hybrid, online) through MEA |
| **Internal Education (continued)** | Encourage all sponsored conferences to demonstrate inclusiveness in presenters, materials and content | Staff, Officers |  | * Integrate into all of our Requests for Proposals. * IE – Speakers at MEA conference |
| **Internal Education (continued)** | Reflect diversity in organizational publications | Public Affairs |  | * Publications will include racially diverse pictures, and articles dealing with members, organizational leadership, and students interacting in a meaningful way. Publications will also acknowledge ethnic and diverse celebrations |
| **External Partnerships** | Build and maintain cooperative relationships with community organizations. | Governing Board, Community Engagement Coordinator, Officers, Racial Equity Organizer | With public education and Education Minnesota in uncertain times with powerful interests aligned against us, we need to have strong external allies committed to supporting public education and educators. | * Connect interested members into community organizations * Build active and powerful partnerships between Education Minnesota staff, leaders, and members and community organizations * Continually evaluate whether our work reflects our commitment to new paradigm for community engagement – listening and valuing voice and priorities of parents, students, communities of color |
| **External Partnerships (continued)** | Invite staff and members from partners who have been fighting poverty and/or racism to speak at staff meetings and governance meetings | Community Engagement Coordinator, Racial Equity Organizer, Officers | EM is working on equity projects with external partners. We need to build on our existing relationships with community partners to create more buy-in from staff and leaders. | * Build on existing relationships with partners * Support ongoing partnerships with organizations including Headwaters Foundation for Justice, Take Action Minnesota, MRLF, Navigate MN, Coalition for Quality Public Schools, NOC, ISAIAH, SEIU, MnEEP, CTUL |
| **External Partnerships (continued)** | Run external organizing campaigns to promote meaningful ways to address racial disparities in public education | Officers, Governing Board, Community Engagement coordinator, Racial Equity Organizer, Public Affairs, Field | Members of color, community leaders, elected officials, unions and education leaders criticize Education Minnesota for a lack of equity focused policy solutions and messaging that reframes race and the education debate. Our efforts must be powerful, public and offer meaningful ways for parents and communities of color to work with educators to address racism and racial disparities. | * Continue external campaign to promote race equity through full-service community schools. * Continue working with educator of color forums to further refine and develop their issue campaigns, and identify community partners with whom to work. * Build community alliances into integration and desegregation efforts. |
| **Actively Support Programs/Efforts to Fight Poverty and Racial Disparities** | Full-service community schools policy and organizing campaign | Community Engagement coordinator, Policy department, Public Affairs |  | * Expand coalition in support of Full Service Community Schools * Advocate for more funding for Full Service Community School pilots in 2016 legislative session * Continue partnerships with NOC and Navigate MN * Continue leadership of the MN Network of Community Schools * Use EPIC research and tool-kit to support local campaigns for FSCS |
| **Actively Support Programs/Efforts to Fight Poverty and Racial Disparities (continued)** | Research effective teachers of color preparation programs, and ways to recruit teachers of color from other states to teach in Minnesota | Governing Board, Education Issues staff | One of the reasons we do not have educators of color in leadership positions is because there are few educators of color, and there are few students of color going into teaching. | * Commission research on effective teacher of color preparation programs, in the hopes that these programs could be replicated here in Minnesota. * Provide mentoring and professional support for teachers of color * EPIC paper on recruitment and retention of teachers of color * Members of color survey on retention and recruitment * Ask MACTE for their list of programs related to retention, recruitment, and racial equity |
| **Actively Support Programs/Efforts to Fight Poverty and Racial Disparities (continued)** | Community engagement with parents and organizations working to eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline and racial disparities in suspensions and discipline | Community Engagement Coordinator, Racial Equity Organizer, Local and Governing Board leaders | This issue is one of the top priorities in education of civil rights advocates in Minnesota. Union leaders and educators are not a part of the current conversation or reform efforts. | * Continue commitment to resolving school discipline disparities * Continue engagement with MnEEP, ISAIAH, and the Solutions Not Suspensions coalition |
| **Transparency** | An annual report summarizing what progress has been made within the work of racial equity | Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant, Public Affairs | It’s much easier for EMAC to see what progress has been made and where work needs to be done if there is an annual document highlighting what was done during that year in regard to racial equity. The report will also hold EM staff accountable. | * EM staff meet to create the report * Distribute the report to EMAC members |
| **Transparency (continued)** | A process where members of color are informed of local or national events in advance and can apply to attend them | Racial Equity Organizer, Racial Equity Assistant, Public Affairs | There needs to be a process developed where members can apply to attend professional development events so there isn’t unfairness or lack of transparency when sending members. | * Create a streamlined process where members can apply to attend state or national conferences |