

Diana Griffith

Subject: RE: Answering an ESTEP Question

From: Lee Schmitt <lee.m.schmitt@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, September 07, 2021 10:37 AM

To: Becca Nash <becca.nash@lccmr.leg.mn>

Subject: Answering an ESTEP Question

Ms. Nash,

Thank you for the LCCMR committee updates, the work that you do, and for the opportunity to present our ESTEP proposal to the committee on July 15.

With the release of the final proposal scores, I noted a member comment that asked: "**What is outreach to teachers of color & students of color?**" I had not been asked this question before, and I think it important that I respond to the committee.

Key components of the ESTEP professional development program are to promote outdoor learning, promote the use of Minnesota natural resources as the core element in all units of study, but also to focus on strategies that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the science classroom. Students of color will find new engagement in ESTEP classrooms that will use the new 3-dimensional pedagogy as their voices are heard and their cultural contributions toward preserving the environment are highlighted. Equity is a vibrant, essential component of the new science standards and the new pedagogy they require. Students of color will notice the difference and feel included in the classrooms of ESTEP teachers.

In terms of recruitment of teachers of color, MnSTA has already devoted extensive resources toward finding and encouraging teachers of color to participate in its programs. The MnSTA equity statement is on every flyer and application that provides the option to identify as a teacher of color and/or from an impoverished school.

Even with LCCMR funding, a small charge to school districts is needed to cover instructor lodging and travel. MnSTA will offer scholarships that waive this fee for teachers of color and those from poorer districts. Using the District Science Leaders Network from MDE, a direct recruitment effort will focus on teachers of color to attend ESTEP over the three years of project fulfillment.

Thank you in advance for forwarding this response to the committee, and please let me know if there are any further questions.

Sincerely,

Lee Schmitt
ESTEP Planning Team - Proposal 2022-169