

CVS names new diversity, school culture consultant

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Harry Weaver has been named Chippewa Valley Schools' new diversity, equity and school culture consultant. He has experience as a facilitator of anti-bias/diversity and inclusion training.
Photo provided by Harry Weaver

MACOMB TOWNSHIP/CLINTON TOWNSHIP — Chippewa Valley Schools realized that now was the time to have a person who can focus solely on the district when it comes to cultural proficiency.

That person is Harry Weaver, the district's new diversity, equity and school culture consultant.

At a December Chippewa Valley Schools Board of Education meeting, Donald Brosky, assistant superintendent for educational services, addressed the board about the district's strategic plan related to culture.

He analyzed activities to date related to the plan and reviewed Weaver's background.

Born and raised in Detroit and residing in Canton, the 43-year-old Weaver started with the district at the end of November. The position is part-time, with Weaver's contract expiring in June. Weaver said both parties agreed the contract will extend.

Weaver indicated he wanted to apply for the position because of his diversity and equity background.

"I've been doing it for 20 years," he said. "Once I interviewed and talked with everyone about the sincere desire to do diversity work, it seemed like a good fit."

Weaver said it takes some vulnerability from the district to admit it doesn't necessarily have the capacity in place to handle diversity.

He said responsibilities as a consultant include making sure that all students have equal access to resources and that there are fair and equitable hiring practices.

"When you talk about a school, where you're dealing with young people who are in their formative years, you want everyone to get a fair shot and you want teachers and administratives to understand how to give them a fair shot," he said.

Brosky said that Chippewa Valley Schools has a very diverse student and parent population in all of its K-12 buildings.

“We were looking for someone who could talk about the need for us to be culturally proficient and to look at things from a different perspective,” Brosky added.

The district hopes to enhance the community by embracing and celebrating diversity and by connecting students, families and community.

Strategies for the goal area include implementing professional development of staff to increase cultural awareness and student support strategies; providing programs for all students to ensure opportunities for cultural awareness and positive behavior supports; and fostering a welcoming atmosphere where all community members feel a sense of pride and connection to the district.

Brosky said the district contacted local universities to ask for recommendations.

In 2018 and at the beginning of this school year, the district contracted Dr. Jay Marks, the diversity, equity school culture and climate consultant for Oakland Schools, who addressed all teachers and administrators on cultural proficiency for educators.

“He had other things he was doing through Oakland Schools and through the use of our grant funding, we wanted to contract someone we could have in-house or working with us directly,” Brosky said.

Brosky added the district wanted someone who would be available to work with teachers, students and parents on a consistent basis.

“We wanted to do this right, so the candidate needed the right mixture of knowledge, experience and the ability to connect with students, staff and parents,” he said.

Weaver has experience as a facilitator of anti-bias/diversity and inclusion training, as well as program design. He worked as an education director, certified trainer and facilitator for the Anti-Defamation League for a number of years. He has a bachelor’s degree in history from the University of Michigan and is married with two children.