DIVERSIFY OUR NARRATIVE
DISTRICT ACTION GUIDE

Welcome to our **DISTRICT COALITION** Action Guide!

Learn more about how district coalition organizing is similar and different to what you do on a chapter level. *Many of the tasks and skills you learn on a chapter level are directly transferable to district-coalition organizing.*

Contents:

- What is a district coalition?
- How is a district coalition different from a chapter?
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- District-Coalition action steps

WHAT IS A DISTRICT COALITION?

→ District coalitions are composed of the individual school-wide DON chapters in the same school district.

→ They focus primarily on district-wide policy efforts (i.e. anti-racist curriculum mandates, revising punitive disciplinary practices across the district, etc), which require working with, speaking to, and/or lobbying to the school board.

Example of a District Coalition:

Fruit School District consists of the following schools: Mango High School, Apple High School, and Banana High School. If Mango High School is the only one with a DON chapter so far (i.e. Apple/Banana High School have no DON chapters), Mango High School is the only school in the district coalition.

The Mango High School DON Chapter can continue with its daily chapter activities as planned. Additionally, they can also try to achieve district level goals.

*Three months later, Apple High School starts a school-wide chapter DON. Apple High School is now automatically part of the District Coalition for Fruit School District. Apple High School and Mango High School should **work together**, arrange meetings together between their general members, etc to work on district-level initiatives.*

Your Director of Communications will automatically organize a group chat for your coalition on GroupMe.

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HOW IS A DISTRICT COALITION DIFFERENT FROM A CHAPTER?

→ **School-wide DON chapters** are great because they **give each chapter the autonomy and freedom to conduct their own activities**, decide the vision for their chapter, and make changes with members of their team which all come from the same school.

→ **District coalitions** are great because they **allow chapters** (within the same school district) **to** collaborate and **work** with one another **towards a common, shared goal** (that isn't just limited to their own school's chapter members). If there's a unified policy everyone in the school district wants to push for, it's better to mobilize as a unified group, with a unified vision (rather than a bunch of individual chapters separately advocating for similar demands at different times).

→ Chapters *usually* meet during school hours (lunch / after school)on campus with a teacher advisor because school clubs take place during school hours.

→ District Coalitions *usually* meet after school hours, on Zoom or at a community location (i.e. a library, a bookstore, a cafe, etc) because they are not officially sponsored by one school.

WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF A DISTRICT COALITION LIKE?

→ Because District Coalitions are made up of individual DON chapters, the leadership structure will build off of these chapters. Each DON chapter has a Chapter Lead. Each Chapter Lead for every school will automatically be on the District Council of Chapter Leads.

→ Every member on the Council of Chapter Leads should work together to appoint a "Chair/Co-Chairs" of the Council. The Chair(s) of the Council will be in charge of administrative / organizational tasks for the District Coalition (i.e. coordinating meeting times, creating agendas, etc).

→ The rest of the Chapter Leads on the Council should work together in conjunction with the Co-Chairs to achieve the goals set by the district. To do this, they will be responsible for mobilizing their own respective chapters towards the district's chosen end goals.

WHAT IF I NEED ADVICE WHEN ORGANIZING IN MY DISTRICT COALITION? WILL I STILL BE ABLE TO ASK MY DOCO FOR HELP?

→ Your DoCo will still be accessible in the same exact manner as they are for your chapter-level affairs to provide advice on district-coalition organizing!

→ Rather than texting/calling you individually, they will place you in a group chat with the other Chapter Leads in your coalition through GroupMe.

→ DoCos will check in with you bi-weekly on the progress of your chapter **and** your district coalition. Feel free to reach out to them in your group chat or individually to set up a call with them when needed!

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TO SUM IT ALL UP…

- **District coalitions are formed from individual chapters** within the same school district.
    - District coalitions are **automatic**— this means that if you are currently the only school in your district with a DON chapter, but one at a different school joins later, both of your school chapters now make up the district coalition.

- **District coalitions are inherently similar to school chapters**, but organizing takes place at a **district level,** will work more closely with district administration + policy**, and efforts are spread across all school chapters**.
    - Ex. mandating a curriculum change affecting *every school* in your district
- **District coalitions co-exist with school chapters**. You, along with your chapter members, can be involved in both at the same time! For your chapter members, they can opt to be involved with both, or only one (if they have limited time).

- **District coalitions can utilize almost all of the same steps in the chapter action guide**, but just scale the scope of the activities to the district level.
    - For example, set district-wide goals instead of chapter-specific goals, make a district coalition Instagram instead of a chapter-only Instagram, etc

DISTRICT-COALITION ACTION STEPS

1. **Join/found a chapter** (bit.ly/DONOrganizer). Once you have a chapter or join one, you are automatically part of, and will be connected to, your district's coalition, regardless of how many pre-existing DON chapter's in your district there are.

2. **Wait to be added to your district GroupMe.** Your DoCo will add you to the necessary chats once there are multiple chapters in your district.

3. **Convene a meeting with other Chapter Leads in your district.** At this meeting, allocate roles and decide who is the Chair/Co-Chairs of this District Council, as well as what other roles/committees are necessary. Follow Step #1 "Logistics and Getting Started" of the chapter-level action guide for further instructions.
    a. *Feel free to skip the step on filling our school paperwork to legitimize your chapter– because district coalitions are district-wide, there is no need to achieve school-level club status. School-level club status is for your individual school-wide chapter ONLY.*

4. **Create a vision for your district-coalition.** Think through what your coalition wants to accomplish at a district-level, and what impact you hope to see. Brainstorm problems in your district, and what needs attention with regards to education equity/racial justice. Follow Step #2 "Identifying your People, the Issue(s), and Creating a Vision" of the chapter-level action guide for further instructions.

5. **Create goals— make your vision a reality for your district-coalition**. Every vision is not concrete until it is acted upon! To maximize impact, plan out the logistics and timeline of how you plan on achieving this vision by setting specific goals and a timeline of how you plan on accomplishing them. Follow Step #3 "Converting your

Vision Into a Reality" of the chapter-level action guide for further instructions. *Because this is a district coalition,* ***only focus on large-level goals that can be tackled across your entire district***.

6. **Mobilize and advocate for your goals.** This is the part where you work towards the goals you've set for your coalition. Do you need to call school board members to discuss a new policy? Do you need to give public comment at a board meeting to dispute a harmful, punitive policy against BIPOC students? Follow Step #4 "Advocate" of the chapter-level action guide for further instructions.

REMEMBER...

MEET → VISION → GOALS → ADVOCATE

For further questions on this district coalition action guide, contact National Co-Director(s) of Communication, Kaviya (kchidambaram@diversifyournarrative.com) and Maya (msilberman@diversifyournarrative.com).