



Maine School of Science and Mathematics

A Residential Community of Academic Excellence

Joint Letter from MSSM Board of Trustees and the Faculty and Staff of MSSM.

We, the Faculty, Staff and Board of Trustees, of the Maine School of Science and Mathematics, wish to affirm with you our dedication to providing an equitable, safe, dynamic community for our current students, our future students, and the diverse communities we serve. We are committed to honest self-examination about how our past and present practices have -- and have not -- created equity and diversity. As we move forward, we pledge renewed commitment, empathy, and urgency on this work, and we look to all the members of our community to participate with us.

In light of these ongoing events, which have made starkly evident the continuing injustice, inequity, and disenfranchisement experienced by so many Americans on a daily basis, we thought it appropriate to underscore the steps MSSM has underway both to redress inequities within our own institution and to ensure an engagement of these issues, current as well as historical, among our entire community.

In 2018, the MSSM Board of Trustees and the Administration engaged in a process to focus more attention on student welfare, launching a special ad hoc committee to review best practices in residential high schools. In its report to the Board (found at: <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1580158668/mssm/kja7fcatevhj1nsl8ltn/08-MSSMCommunityHealthandStudentCareReport.pdf>), the ad hoc committee made several recommendations, including the formation of the Student Welfare Committee, a new and permanent committee of the Board of Trustees.

The Student Welfare Committee engaged in several community wide activities in its first year, including the definition of a Mission Appropriate Student and the Portrait of a Graduate which can be found under "Our Guiding Principles" on the MSSM Website (<https://www.mssm.org/fs/pages/576>). The Committee also established a reference library on student welfare to encourage greater awareness and sensitivity to issues related to student safety. In its second year, the Student Welfare Committee plans to address issues like student stress, self awareness and social misconduct.

In addition to these actions, the Board of Trustees and the Administrative team plan to review our admissions process to ensure that we are reaching as many of Maine's underserved and underrepresented students as possible. The work of assuring a diverse, inclusive and safe MSSM begins anew with each academic year, a function of the annual cycle of student and teacher turnover.

Having to end in person instruction in March this year has underlined how valuable our daily face-to-face interactions and residential program is in providing opportunities to forge enduring and transformational relationships, express friendship and care for others across the boundaries of race, nationality, and background, and through empathy and moral concern, honor and learn from the differences that define each of us.

In summary, the Maine School of Science and Mathematics is committed to improving and maintaining a community culture that is diverse, inclusive and safe for all of its members, but especially for its students.

The Maine School of Science and Mathematics recognizes its responsibility to provide a safe and welcoming environment. We also affirm our responsibility in providing an educational environment that provides our students with an awareness of the legacy of racism and injustice that is an undeniable component of our society as well as modeling the behaviors and best practices that make positive change within our society possible. Finally, as a pre-eminent educational institution within the State of Maine and far beyond, we affirm our collective responsibility to provide leadership in redressing inequities, dismantling systemic injustice, and ensuring a better world for us all.