

Facing Forward

AN UPDATE ON THE PLAN FOR
DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION
FOR PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL

August 2020



PRINCETON DAY SCHOOL

Facing Forward

Through the course of the summer months, members of the Princeton Day School community have called upon its leadership to address cultures of racism, intolerance, and hatred within its walls. They have demanded that the School acknowledge its complicity and seek change wherever it has failed to meet the needs of all of its members. They have encouraged the School to build a way forward that listens to every voice, responds to every question, and makes room for all who wish to participate. The *Facing Forward* initiative is our School's first response. It will not be the last.

With the start of a new school year that will be momentous in every way, Princeton Day School stands at the threshold of an experience that will transform, inspire, and endure. It will aspire to nothing less.



Paul Stellato
Head of School



Anthony McKinley
Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Work to Date

LEADERSHIP FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The June appointment of Anthony McKinley as Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion provides institutional leadership for this essential area of school life. As Director, Mr. McKinley serves as a member of the school's Leadership Team and plays a key role in the creation of school-wide policy and programs.

Following soon after Mr. McKinley's appointment, the school partnered with Olive Branch Educators and its founder and CEO, Dr. Diana Artis. In her work with dozens of independent schools, Dr. Artis has proved successful in motivating, educating, and inspiring those seeking a path to enhanced diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her style is highly collaborative, engaging all members of a school community in a focused, forward-moving process. Dr. Artis is working closely with Mr. McKinley, Head of School Paul Stellato and Board Chair Rebecca Bushnell '70.

The Community and Multicultural Development Team (CMDT), the School's standing committee for diversity programming for students and faculty, expands its membership and mandate in the coming year. It is now chaired by veteran faculty member and diversity practitioner Caroline Lee.

FOCUS GROUPS AND TOWN HALLS

The *Facing Forward* initiative began with seven town halls for Black members of our community: students, parents and alumni. It continues even now, through the work of the School's consulting partner, Dr. Diana Artis of Olive Branch Educators, whose 15 focus groups have engaged a wide range of constituent groups within our community. With the knowledge, wisdom and direction acquired through those many gatherings, the School will now begin to identify and address the ways in which its current policies and practices will need to change to ensure that all may participate equally.

Seeking to address the challenges that stand between the community we are today and that which we aspire to be, the School will embark on a multi-year strategic plan to examine every facet of school life, leading to recommendations that, when implemented, will encourage and make possible the equal participation of all of its members.

A RESOURCE HUB

Robustly expanded content on the School's website serves as a resource and a transparent accounting of our School's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion work. [Our Journey: Teaching and Learning for Social Justice](#) offers a transparent accounting of our School's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion work. [Elevating the Conversation](#) is the Community and Multicultural Development Team's resource center for the community.

These pages are a digital archive of the work, marking where we have been and where we are headed. This content is a window into the hallways of the School, where plans for our community become its daily practice, elevating our school-wide conversations. Residing here will be the structural and cultural change outcomes of every thread of our DEI tapestry: Town Halls, Working Groups, Affinity Groups, the work of the DEI Director and CMDT, the Focus Groups and the programmatic work of Dr. Diana Artis, the efforts of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Alumni Council, the experiences shared through @blackatpds, and the collective efforts of the entire School community. It will be a dynamic, regularly updated repository for educational material that will also include a guide to Black-owned businesses in the area.

Next Steps (Fall 2020)

1. WORKING GROUPS

While the work of the *Facing Forward* initiative is, in the broadest sense, the responsibility of every member of our school community, it will be shaped and led by seven working groups focused on two goals:

- To review the School's policies, programs and practices and identify those that restrict or compromise the full and equal participation of all community members
- To recommend the process, timetable and steps for ensuring full and equal participation of all community members

Mr. McKinley will chair the entire effort and will work closely with Dr. Artis and the chairs of the seven working groups. During the week of August 24, Dr. Artis and Mr. McKinley will meet with the seven working group chairs as they develop and agree on common methods and approaches for their work. From there, the chairs will build out the membership of their groups. Wherever possible, the working groups will be composed of faculty, students, alumni and parents. While all groups will have a specific charge to guide them, the groups will define their scope of work and report back to the School community at regular intervals. To be wholly transparent in this work, group progress updates will be made available at regular intervals on the School website.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

A comprehensive review of the PreK-12 curriculum, to ensure that the program fully incorporates the experiences and contributions of Black and other underrepresented and marginalized communities. It will consider the academic program and, in particular: reading lists at all levels, grading policies, standardized testing, and course placement/prerequisites.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

A review of standards of conduct and behavioral policies, academic honor policies, judiciary and student handbooks, to see that all expectations are fair and applied equally; and to ensure that discriminatory conduct of any kind is not tolerated.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A plan for the incorporation of anti-racism and cultural competency education for students and parents, faculty and staff, to provide shared language and understanding of the responsibilities of membership in a diverse community. With Dr. Artis and Mr. McKinley, the working group will build and implement a year-long education and training program for faculty and staff, students and parents. It will also consider the role the Community and Multicultural Development Team will play in these efforts.

HIRING, RETENTION, ADVANCEMENT, EVALUATION

A review of hiring, orientation, retention, professional advancement and evaluation policies and programs, to increase and enhance the diversity of faculty, staff and leadership across the School and to make available resources sufficient to retain and support a diverse faculty community.

STUDENT LIFE

A review of student life, college counseling and athletics programs and policies, to provide equal opportunity and benefit of these essential programs for all students. Its areas of focus may also include counseling and academic support, speakers clubs, Peer Group and Bridges, affinity groups, NAIS Lead for Diversity and People of Color Conference, athletic offerings and team membership, college advising practices.

ADMISSION, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, RETENTION

A review of admission, financial aid and retention policies and programs, to build a diverse pool of candidates and allow enrollment to fully reflect the communities from which it is drawn. The working group will assess and make recommendations about admission practices, the uses and goals of financial aid, admissions outreach and the retention of current students and families of color.

PARENT AND FAMILY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

A review of parent and family orientation and outreach, to welcome, connect, and support Black families and other families of color. The working group will review the practices and goals of the Parents Association, new parent orientation, and ongoing engagement of families of color with the School.

2. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

During the week of August 31, Dr. Artis will lead her first training session with all members of the faculty and staff. Dr. Artis and Dr. Bushnell '70 have prepared and distributed a board survey which will serve as a prelude to her work with the Board of Trustees. As Dr. Artis concludes her focus groups just before the start of the new school year, she and Mr. McKinley will partner with the Training and Education working group to build a calendar of opportunities for faculty and staff, students and parents and school leadership.

3. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE OF THE ALUMNI COUNCIL

Arising from several town hall meetings, during which Black alumni expressed a strong interest in involving themselves more deeply in the life of the School, the Committee will work with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director and the Alumni Office to reconnect the School to its underrepresented communities; to determine the interest and feasibility of establishing affinity groups within the alumni community; and to promote the talents and interest of those alumni within the broader School community. The Committee will help to ensure that all alumni enjoy the full benefits of membership within Princeton Day School community; afford opportunities for alumni to play roles in the lives of current students and young alumni; shape alumni programming to serve all alumni better and more fully; and provide guidance and counsel to the School as it strives to become more inclusive and equitable. Its co-chairs will sit as members of the Alumni Board Executive Committee.

QUESTIONS OR FEEDBACK?

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