



Inaugural Report on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at The Frederick Gunn School Fall 2020

When the Board of The Frederick Gunn School established a Working Group in fall 2019 to oversee the administration's leadership of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, it could not have foreseen the ways in which the United States would face the necessary public reckonings of 2020 on race in the United States of America. The creation of this task force was already an acknowledgement that our school has not always lived up to the standards of our founders, Frederick and Abigail Gunn, who worked to establish an inclusive school community in 1850—a profound legacy for this school to live up to. The Board and Administration of The Frederick Gunn School are united in our aspiration to meet and exceed the standards set by our founders, towards the ends of the thriving of students, faculty, and staff; the justness of our institutional practices; and ultimately our ability to lead students to be a force for good in the world.

In January 2020, the Board voted to approve a Strategic Plan that would establish as a foundational tenet the school's commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In that document, the following was established:

“Mr. Gunn founded a school upon broad, humanistic principles of inclusivity and equality between cultures, races, and genders. While his courageous precedent was not consistently followed in the school's history, we have no more apt exemplar than Mr. Gunn himself as we commit to the pursuit of a purposefully inclusive and diverse community.

This commitment should result in:

- Creating internal processes and structures to safeguard against exclusion and inequity in the student, staff, and faculty experience.
- Intentionally pursuing and fostering a diverse and pluralistic community that Mr. Gunn would be proud of as we seek to be a school that, despite growing cultural apathy, cynicism, consumerism and distraction, produces people who care deeply—who become wise, engaged, active citizens.
- Adopt a DEI scorecard to assess progress against stated goals.”

The Frederick Gunn School, newly renamed in July 2020 as a way to reestablish both internally and publicly our commitment to our founding ideals, is focused on pursuing lasting change. To provide public transparency and accountability to our alumni, parents, students, faculty, and friends, we commit to an annual Report on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In this inaugural report, we outline the recent work and

commitments of The Frederick Gunn School Board and Administration, our goals for the 2020/21 academic year, and a path and timeline for this work in the coming years.

The primary focus of this report, and our goals in 2020/21, is race, and within that, the experience of BIPOC students and employees at The Frederick Gunn School. Our ongoing work on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is inclusive of but not limited to this emphasis, and the future work of our school, and the work of the Task Force(s) (board and internal) will include sexual orientation, ability, gender, gender expression, place of origin, and other social identifiers that particularize the experience of each of our students, faculty and staff, especially those who identify with historically marginalized groups. It is our hope and intention that this report, which will be available on our website, will create internal and public accountability as we work to continually establish, year after year, a school community of which our founders would be proud.

Work towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at The Frederick Gunn School

Recent Action, Summer 2020

- **Outside Expertise |** The Frederick Gunn School hired consultant [Martha Haakmat](#) to play an ongoing role in equipping our leaders and board; advising our Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and reviewing our institutional priorities and goals. While she is not primarily a direct resource for our faculty and students yet, this may evolve in the coming years. This work will begin with training to build skills for doing and leading the work of DEI and anti-racism at a strategic level.
- **Board and Leadership Work |** Dates are on the calendar to begin the academic year at the board and leadership levels with intensive workshops facilitated by Martha Haakmat where senior level leaders and all trustees will focus on DEI and anti-racism as individuals, as teams and as managers of systems with structural anti-racism at the core of the work.
- **Internal Leadership |** A new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was named for the 2020/21 Academic Year, with an expanded job description and scope. Among other things, LaDarius Drew will:
 - Serve as a member of the Campus Life Team, which oversees the day-to-day operations of the school.
 - Co-lead the DEI Task Force, with Assistant Head, Emily Gum. This newly-formed Task Force is composed of the Head of School, Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning, CFO, Director of Enrollment, Director of

DEI, and the Chair of the Board's Working Group. This group plans to meet weekly.

- Participate in recruiting and hiring.
- Oversee student programming and affinity groups.
- **Building a diverse and inclusive community |** Steps have been taken at the student and faculty level to address concerns relating to the lived experience of BIPOC faculty and students, including:
 - Student and Faculty handbooks have been reviewed to immediately and explicitly outline expectations around conduct and resulting disciplinary actions with respect to instances of bigotry, discrimination, racism, verbal or physical assault, including the display or promotion of offensive images (flags, symbols, memorabilia, etc), and expectations for intervention and reporting by bystanders and third party knowledgeable parties.
 - The Admissions Team is now taking the lead on maintaining and growing our connections with BIPOC academic and leadership programs not only for enrollment but for partnership in policies and practices to support quality of life and experience for BIPOC students.
- **School-wide learning |**
 - Adult learning. As faculty returned on August 24, they immediately began year-long work together in Learning Teams to create opportunities for adult learning on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Head of School Peter Becker spoke to all employees of the school's commitment to anti-racist action and viewpoint diversity, as he kicked off programming to engage all faculty in discussion of Instagram Accounts BlackatGunneryOfficial and SpeakOutGunnery.
 - Student programming. Student orientation began with students participating in a workshop on Courageous Conversations with DEI Director LaDarius Drew and Director of our Center for Citizenship and Just Democracy, Bart McMann.
 - Curriculum. For the second year in a row, we are introducing a new course dedicated to questions of identity. This year, we launch "Humanities: Race in America." We are also planning to launch a Winterim program this year, and we expect additional courses from those efforts that explore race and diversity across disciplines.
 - The DEI director has reviewed and re-launched our internal resource library for faculty.

Short-term Goals, 2020/21 Academic Year

- **Locating ourselves in the work |** With the assistance and participation of Martha Haakmat and representatives of our students, faculty, alumni and parents, we will perform a broad review of our school specifically in regards to racism. We expect to continue to refine our practices, policies and planning for improvement in this area, and plan to update the community on our further thinking as it evolves. We expect this to be an iterative process, with further improvements and refinements as we complete further rounds of review and input from the community.
- **Pursuing a diverse and inclusive community |** We will expand training and participation to all staff, so that every adult on campus has access to resources with respect to anti-bias in hiring, recruitment, and retention. As we engage in this work, our Director will collaborate with peer schools to leverage learning in the secondary school community.
- **Regularly Seeking Feedback |** Communication and coordination with our alumni, parents, students, faculty and administration across all of these shorter term and longer term objectives are critical to the manner in which we are approaching these efforts. We welcome input from all of these parties, and plan to provide updates and opportunity for feedback on a regular basis.
- **School-wide learning |**
 - Adult learning. Faculty plan to meet with their established Learning Teams no less than once per month to pursue readings and shared practices that are focused on anti-racist action.
 - Student programming. We will continue to build on our student programming, with an emphasis on the interconnectedness of our DEI work and our mission and the launch of our Center for Citizenship and Just Democracy. The DEI Director will work in 2020/21 to establish goals for the 2021/22 academic year.
 - Curriculum. While departments engage in ongoing curricular review, our history department will also engage in specific professional development on teaching about race, equality, and politics in 2020/21.
- **Curriculum Review |** While individual departments conduct internal reviews on an annual basis, the DEI Director will work with the Curriculum Committee (our academic leadership body) to coordinate efforts across the broader curriculum to refine the learning experience in this area.
- **College Counseling |** Inequities in college admissions in the United States have received significant exposure over the last few years. The College

Counseling office will work with the DEI Director to review the FGS college counseling process with a focus on equity and inclusion for all our matriculating students.

- **Accountability |**

- We will enhance internal channels for anonymous reporting and feedback.
- We will develop surveys and other feedback channels for students, faculty, alumni, parents and other important stakeholders to give input and feedback.
- We will provide periodic reporting of our progress and achievements in these areas, in addition to this annual report.

Ongoing Achievement of our Institutional Objectives

- **Student Life and Experience |**

- We will continue to work towards the development and support of a robust calendar of cultural, DEI and anti-bias events and programming that is both on and off campus, involving current students and alumni, in partnership with other schools and institutional partners.
- We will continue to review our discipline system, and refine our discipline practices, with the objective that both the appearance and also the application of these systems and practices promote consistent and equitable outcomes.
- We will review our student achievements in academics, athletics, leadership positions, and college placement, and attempt to track the levels of success of our programs and practices in achieving equitable outcomes.

- **Dedicated Space |** One longer-term goal is the creation of physical space on campus that memorializes and celebrates the abolitionist and inclusive missions of our founder, and provides a recognized space for the appropriate affinity groups and members of our community to have safe space and/or programming space.

- **BIPOC Alumni Network |** Our BIPOC Alumni Network will continue to be supported by our alumni and development team and our administration with the goals of connecting our BIPOC alumni with one another, providing our current students access to this network, and an open two-way dialogue.

- **School-wide Learning |** We commit to an annual process to establish learning and growth opportunities for all employees and students that include discussions and training in the building of a just and inclusive community.

Conclusion

The Frederick Gunn School commits to the ongoing, iterative work of being the learning community that we were founded to be. The only way to build towards an inclusive, just institution is to constantly ask ourselves, with the help of outside expertise: What would constitute an inclusive, just school? The current board and administration humbly commit ourselves to pursue the answers to this question, and to the work involved on that journey, with a hope that the transformation we pursue is akin in its impact to the change of name we have just undergone. Our commitment to the challenge of pursuing the courageous ideals of Frederick William Gunn demands that we begin with his central mission—to work towards the realization of a just, inclusive school and community that develops leaders who will become a force for good in the world.