



Diversity and Inclusion

December 2020 Update

To ensure that every boy regardless of his race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or background enjoys a deep sense of safety, dignity, and belonging at McCallie is our responsibility in living up to our ideals and fulfilling our mission.

McCallie has renewed its commitment to diversity and inclusion work with a seriousness and comprehensive perspective like never before. The [*Moving Forward Together as Brothers*](#) initiative is currently addressing racial bias, prejudice, and inequity in our school community. The [*Belonging at McCallie*](#) initiative is focused on inclusion, particularly as it relates to identity and sexual orientation. In these beginning stages, these two issues have been organized separately but will overlap more and more as we take concrete action steps to more deeply understand and address the issues surrounding being a learning community that values diversity, respects everyone, and promotes equity and social justice. We will fully realize our vision that through their education and experience at McCallie, boys will develop the willingness, knowledge, and skills needed to fully engage in the complex realities of society.

Task Force Updates

Supporting Students

(Chair: Ricky Thomas, Director of Community and Brotherhood)

McCallie School is a community rooted in the belief that we honor our faith by caring for our McCallie brothers, faculty, staff, and community by treating every person with respect. In supporting students, we commit to engaging in thoughtful, intentional conversations that educate the community while uplifting members of our community historically marginalized because of race, ethnicity, identity, sexual orientation, or any other reason. We show respect to each other by valuing students for who they are and the perspectives they have, and by appreciating the blessings of diversity. This task force will work to ensure the safety, security, and full inclusion of our black and brown students and gay students to raise awareness of social justice issues in our community, nationally, and globally. Our lessons and practices will advance our school mission and

values by guiding our students to glorify God and respect each other through actions and words that enhance the campus community, individually and collectively for all.

Some of the activities designed to engage students around the topic of equity and social justice this school year are:

- VOICE (Value Others In Connected Expressions) is a digital platform that invites students to share thoughts and ignite discussions among others in twenty-five words or less. Submissions are made via email and monitored by faculty. Selected expressions are to be shared on the monitors across campus.
- *The Alexandre Dumas Project* is an original theatrical experience created by McCallie students and faculty which was performed on November 12 under the direction of Stevie Ray Dallimore. The story follows four friends living in the present with the backdrop of COVID 19, social-justice protests, and disturbing political upheaval. Students and faculty co-created the play together working with dramaturgy (historical research), improvisation, writing, acting, video, music, and stylized movement. Through the development of the play, students were able to see parallels of social unrest and injustice from the 19th century that are similar to those in effect today.
- The task force is working towards establishing an advisory curriculum that teaches the skills required for students to engage in difficult, honest conversations around sensitive topics and diverse perspectives.
- McCallie Filmmaking teacher Dave Porfiri has produced an award-winning short film about the Nashville Sit-Ins which includes historical footage of John Lewis. He also has a short film documenting the Chattanooga Sit-Ins as well. These films will be shared with students and faculty, followed by discussion.
- The task force is working on events to engage conversations among the boarding students to promote awareness, understanding, and further unity in the boarding community.
- The task force is leading the initiative to reimagine the school's commemoration of the Martin Luther King national holiday and provide an educational program for all McCallie students in lieu of sending students off-campus community service for community service.

- Five McCallie students engaged in the online Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) and three faculty members participated in the online People of Color Conference (PoCC) of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) this year. Last year was McCallie's first time having students attend. We had four students and two faculty members participate last year. This year, there certainly was more interest in participating because of the global spotlight on social justice issues. The number of participants each year is budget-driven.

Training Faculty and Staff

(Chair: Sumner McCallie, Dean of Faculty and Curriculum)

Our goal is to develop a professional learning environment and system that allow each faculty and staff member to develop the competencies needed to support a diverse student body. Faculty will know the historical background of systemic racism in the United States and have considered how they personally and their classes academically can work to dismantle racism. They will know the history of the LGBTQ movement and gain knowledge about the experience of being gay in America. They will develop the skills to listen to students who have felt marginalized, the background and willingness to understand these students' perspectives, and the ability to engage marginalized students more fully in the McCallie experience. Professional learning will help develop specific curricular and interpersonal practices to use in the classroom to create productive dialogue. The school will have a consistent system of professional development in place to keep faculty and staff growing in their knowledge and perspectives.

The task force is creating a schedule for faculty workshops and training to occur beginning in January 2020. Faculty development will follow this learning progression:

- understanding the history of racism and systemic racism
- understanding of the history of the LGBTQ movement
- recognizing and eliminating implicit bias
- creating equitable classroom experiences
- exploring diversity at McCallie

In early January, faculty and staff will participate in a half-day workshop with Eric Dozier '87 and Homa Tavanger of [The Oneness Lab](#). This workshop focuses on developing

diverse communities of respect, love, and unity. We will also begin the work of understanding the LGBTQ experience in American and at our school. We will be adapting modules of [Own Our History](#) which was created by Bob Eager '63 for use with faculty and staff. The history department has already utilized some of the *Own Our History* materials in their course to broaden the perspectives from which we study history.

Also in January, faculty and staff will learn about implicit biases and begin the work of each person assessing their own biases, awareness and learning the impacts of holding onto these beliefs and blindspots. The workshop will conclude by presenting countermeasures to implicit biases.

Later in the early spring, faculty and staff will learn and work with the data points of the McCallie student population to broaden our awareness of our students and what emotions, perspectives, and sensitivities we need to consider as teachers as we design lessons and experiences for them. Some of the data points we will analyze include:

- income ranges
- general demographics: race, faith, learning differences, family composition
- composition of students in core studies
- composition of students in AP and Honors
- percentage of students without internet at home
- percentage and distribution of students without internet at home
- grade distribution overlaid on demographic information.

The work that we are engaging in as a school begins with each person better understanding themselves, their backgrounds, and their own beliefs. A new awareness gives each person new sensitivities by which they can scrutinize the rest of their work: their curriculum, teaching, and interactions with students, colleagues, and parents. There is not one path through this journey. Each person begins at their own unique starting point. By developing in the adults at school new knowledge and skills, they will be able to take responsibility for more inclusive and representative content in their courses and more equitable student-teacher interactions.

Recruiting and Developing Leadership in Diverse Faculty and Staff

(Chair: Thomas Hayes '88, Dean of Faculty for Recruitment and Human Resources and

General Counsel)

Our goal is to develop specific ways for McCallie to recruit, retain, and cause to flourish a more diverse faculty and staff. Our work includes spending time examining McCallie's current practices (both those internally- and externally-focused) and imagining new ones. We will engage with parents, alumni, and external organizations to expand our thinking around our recruiting and developing a more diverse faculty and staff. We hope to eliminate practices that create barriers for diverse candidates, create strong new partnerships and networks that regularly ensure a diverse pool of candidates, appropriately mentor new faculty and staff members for fulfilling careers at McCallie, and develop leadership opportunities for diverse faculty and staff within McCallie.

The task force has now had a number of brainstorming sessions on recruitment and leadership development. The key ideas which emerged for recruitment include: defining what we mean by cultural diversity, strategic networking, strategic marketing, a gap year/fellows/internship program, hiring flexibility, improved internal procedures, and gathering feedback from former employees. The key ideas that emerged from the leadership development session include more intentional training so that diverse employees deeply understand and are equipped to advance the mission of the school (e.g. mentorship, professional development, etc.), a position dedicated to diversity initiatives, a process to identify persons interested in leadership, more diversity on the board of trustees, celebrate achievements of our diversity and inclusion work, a balance of affinity groups and community-wide gatherings, and more opportunities for residential life involvement.

The pandemic has curtailed our ability to get out to diversity hiring fairs and other places like Historical Black Colleges and Universities to develop relationships and seek our potential candidates. We expect to begin this work in earnest as soon as it is safe to do so.

Designing Curriculum, Programs, and Student Training

(Co-Chairs: Chris Carpenter '96, Dean of Student Academics and Scotty Jones, Middle School Principal)

Our goal is to examine what McCallie can do to improve the academic and extracurricular experience for students in matters of race and inclusion. This includes identifying what the school is currently doing well, how it can improve through additions

and subtractions within its current curriculum, and what it can learn from other schools and academic minds. We hope to help McCallie create an academic curriculum and extracurricular offerings that offer a mirror within which all students can see themselves as well as a window in which students can learn about the experiences and ideas of others.

The task force has met on multiple occasions to discuss what McCallie can do to improve the academic and extracurricular experience for students in matters of race and inclusion. We met with a school administrator of a local public high school for feedback on our mission as well as insights into best practices for an improved academic environment for students of color. We purchased, evaluated, and discussed a potential anti-racism workbook for middle and high school classes. Much of our initial work centers on creating a foundational curriculum for 6th and 9th graders that focus on social justice. We are also planning an audit of our middle and high school curriculums for an overall evaluation of their effectiveness regarding matters of race and inclusion.

Identifying, Recruiting, and Enrolling Diverse Students

(Chair: Jim Daughdrill '05, Dean of Admission)

Our task force's work focuses on attracting and enrolling students of color. We have ten task force members representing several different areas and perspectives from across the school – Middle School, Upper School, residential life, admission, financial aid, business office, and college counseling. Many of our task force members are also parents of current students or graduates and have thus lived the admission experience first-hand. Our initial focus is to identify *signs*, whether literal or figurative, we have at McCallie that either encourage or discourage prospective families from considering the school. Our work will continue along the admission journey from awareness to enrollment. We seek to identify and eliminate barriers to families' considering McCallie at each step along the way.

We decided to divide into subcommittees to look at three different aspects of enrollment. The first is the awareness stage, the period when families are collecting information about the school, but we do not yet know they exist. This group is looking at all sources for how families learn about McCallie, including our website and digital presence, key feeder schools and partner organizations, and financial aid awareness.

The second is the application process stage, the period that starts when a family expresses interest in McCallie and lasts until they enroll. This group is looking at printed materials, campus visits and events, and the steps required to apply for admission and financial aid.

The third is McCallie's admission decisions process. This group is looking at how admission and financial aid decisions are made and how we can be even more deliberate in our approach to enrolling students of color.

Summer programs are closely related to admission, and each of the above steps also apply to summer camps. Our summer programs team has given each member of the Black Alumni Steering Committee a summer camp voucher to give to a family or organization to encourage more young men of color to attend summer programs.

Engaging Constituents and Community Outreach

(Chair: Bess Steverson, Director of Development for Special Initiatives)

The McCallie community extends beyond current students, faculty, and staff. We aspire to engage all of the constituent groups of the school in the work of anti-racism and inclusion that the school is undertaking. We have much to learn from our alumni both about their time at McCallie and regarding the knowledge and experience they have gained since. We will engage McCallie parents and seek out partnerships in the greater Chattanooga community.

The task force is in the process of compiling a list of four to five organizations/individuals in the local community where we can convene a group of students to listen to the needs of our neighbors. From this, we will begin to consider potential partnerships. We will also create a list of all the organizations in the McCallie neighborhood to use as resources for moving forward with community outreach projects. A team of senior administrators, faculty, and staff are beginning to examine current community service projects at the school in an effort to coordinate and help create funding for the community service program going forward. Lastly, the McCallie Middle School will be partnering with Chattanooga Preparatory Charter School for Boys in an afterschool program entitled [Own Your History](#). This character and leadership building program was created by McCallie alumnus Bob Eager '63. Currently, the program is scheduled to occur for five Saturdays in February and March and will be facilitated collaboratively by

McCallie and Chattanooga Prep teachers.

Black Alumni Steering Committee (BASC)

A number of Black McCallie alumni have been meeting regularly since the summer. They have been instrumental in providing helpful insights and ideas to support the school and the *Moving Forward Together As Brothers* initiative.

BASC has been a collaborative group and resource for the school. Some of their ongoing discussions center around how to identify mission-appropriate prospective students and faculty of color, best ways to serve as ambassadors to prospective families and students, providing speaker and training recommendations, developing Tornado Term and internship opportunities, mentoring current Black students, alumni outreach and funding opportunities around diversity. Some of the ideas that the committee is moving forward with include:

- Meet N Greet being set with parents of our current black students and the Black Alumni Steering Committee for early January
- Mentor Program between BASC and current students to get underway early next semester
- Compiling a list of Black Alumni who are of an age to possibly have sons who could be part of the admission process and/or summer camps.
- Developing a Black parent group to support admissions and parent programs as it relates to race and diversity

Steering Committee

(Chair: Lee Burns '87, Head of School)

The purpose of the steering committee is to integrate information and insights from the task forces, measure progress, secure resources and funding, and manage overall communication of the initiative to various constituent groups. The steering committee meets with the task force leaders every two weeks to hear about the work of their group, offer suggestions, and facilitate connections between the task forces.