



The **Diversity**, **Equity**,
and **Inclusion** Journey
at Brentwood School

As we examine Brentwood School's path and approach in order to be more inclusive, our work will always be ongoing. We share this journey to communicate the steps taken, the steps in progress, and the many steps we have yet to make. Our commitment is stronger because of our community. Our community is stronger because of our commitment. Together we will create better systems, policies, procedures, and programming to better meet the needs of every person in the community and value them for who they are.

Dr. Trina Moore-Southall
Director of Equity and Inclusion

Brentwood has always been a school with ambitious goals, and the work ahead of us around equity, inclusion, and anti-racism is the most transformative goal we have undertaken. Ours is a community that seeks out the best, in others and ourselves. By listening with our hearts, questioning with genuine curiosity, and thinking with compassion, I am confident that we will become the anti-racist institution to which we aspire.

Dr. Mike Riera
Head of School

Racism can show up in every one of our institutions, sometimes loudly and violently, and sometimes quietly and mistakenly. That is the systemic nature of racism. Sometimes it is there when you don't even know it's there. But we, as a community, must be aware of this. We must all look at ourselves, have hard conversations, learn, and raise our hands to say we want to be part of the solution.

Brian Lee
Chair, Board of Trustees



DIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

THE BRENTWOOD SCHOOL
COMMUNITY **ACTIVELY SEEKS** DIVERSE
PERSPECTIVES AND **EMBRACES**
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION
AS ESSENTIAL.

WE **CREATE** AN ENVIRONMENT
THAT **FOSTERS** OPENNESS AND
APPRECIATION OF MULTIPLE
DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE AND
IDENTITY.

WE AIM TO **ENGAGE** MINDFULLY IN
OPEN AND FREQUENT DIALOGUES
TO **ENSURE** THAT EACH MEMBER IS
VALUED, INCLUDED, AND RESPECTED.

DIVERSITY IS IN THE FABRIC OF
WHO WE ARE.

(CREATED 2011 • UPDATED 2020)

The Office of Equity and Inclusion

- In the fall of 2016 a full-time Director of Equity and Inclusion was hired to facilitate the growth and expansion of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at Brentwood School by providing broader, deeper, and more impactful work throughout the school.
- An Administrative Assistant was hired to support the work of the Office of Equity and Inclusion (fall of 2017).
- A full-time Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion (summer 2019) was hired which increased the efficacy of the work moving forward.
- **Equity and Inclusion Division Specialists were developed (fall 2020) as additional resources. One experienced faculty member in the Lower School, Middle School, and two in the Upper School have expanded the Equity and Inclusion team to increase effectiveness.**
- A Multicultural Center was established (fall 2019) to provide a safe space for students and to support equity and inclusion efforts. The Multicultural Center houses the offices of the Director and Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion.
- Members of the Equity and Inclusion team are involved in every aspect of the school, including but not limited to: Board of Trustees, Leadership Team, Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School Administration Teams, Curriculum, Discipline, Student Life, Advisory, Teaching, Professional Development and Coaching, Student Support, Admissions, Financial Support, Affinity Groups, Hiring, and BCIL.
- **An article in the weekly *Tuesday Insights*, highlights people and departments that make an impact in DEI.**
- **We launched Brentwood School Inclusive Excellence Racial Equity Initiative (December 2020). Dr. Damon Williams with The Center for Strategic Diversity Leadership and Social Innovation has been contracted by the school to increase, enhance, and amplify current efforts as well as hear from various stakeholders in the community to assess our climate and work with us to build a DEI action plan.**

ITEMS IN **BOLD** INDICATE INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED DURING THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR.

Professional Development

- The National SEED Project (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) “partners with schools, organizations, and communities to develop leaders who guide their peers in conversational communities to drive personal, organizational, and societal change toward social justice.” **A minimum of one year participation in a monthly 3-hour SEED seminar is required for all faculty and staff.**
- Summer Reads have included *Between the World and Me*, *Whistling Vidaldi*, and *White Fragility*. **All faculty and staff participate in small discussion groups that are facilitated by trained employees throughout the school year. They use the Summer Read as a foundation to examine racism, values, biases, privilege, and identity.**
- Brentwood has partnered with nationally renowned Visions, Inc., to implement multicultural training during our annual inservice days.
- On the first day of new employee orientation, all newly hired employees participate in multicultural training, facilitated by the Office of Equity and Inclusion, rooted in identity and experience.
- Brentwood employees participate annually in the NAIS People of Color Conference as well as a plethora of additional opportunities focused on antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- An optional DEI monthly Book club is offered for faculty and staff with a different selection each month.
- **A racial trauma workshop was presented by a Dr. Gimel Rogers for faculty and staff, focused on recognizing signs in students and better understanding the experience of students of color.**

Hiring and Retention

- Brentwood has expanded the marketing of available positions to enhance our pool of applicants and create a more diverse pool of qualified candidates.
- All cover letters submitted ask applicants to provide evidence of their commitment to equity and inclusion.
- **The Office of Equity and Inclusion is involved in all hiring committees and participates in the hiring process.**
- The Diversity Council meets with all finalists.
- Brentwood partnered to create an annual Southern California Diversity Recruiting Fair.
- **The Office of Equity and Inclusion participates in additional hiring fairs.**
- Hiring and retention efforts have resulted in over 20 key hires identified as Latinx and African American from 2016-2020 including, but not limited to, the following departments: Equity and Inclusion, Counseling, College Counseling, Business Office, Facilities, Administration, Lower School Lead and Associate Teachers, Middle School Faculty, Upper School Faculty, Communications, Admissions, and Service Learning.
- **Over 50% of faculty hired for the 2020-2021 school year identify as people of color.**
- The Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion helps to mentor, lead, and support new teachers both as a group and through individual touchpoints with faculty of color.
- The Office of Equity and Inclusion hosts regular affinity group gatherings for Brentwood POC and an affinity group for African American employees.
- The employee handbooks are available in both English and Spanish.

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Admissions

- Brentwood has a longstanding partnership with a number of organizations that are committed to diversity, including: ABC (A Better Chance), PSV (Private School Village), The Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs, and YES (Young Eisner Scholars).
- The Director of Equity and Inclusion speaks at all K-12 Admissions Open Houses.
- Prospective families are specifically asked about the value of diversity and all Middle School and Upper School families participate in a multicultural exercise during Open Houses.
- West Campus hosts a “Coffee and Conversation” and East Campus hosts “Community and Conversation” focused on DEI for prospective families, which includes the opportunity to hear from parents and guardians and students about their Brentwood experience.
- The Director of Equity and Inclusion sits on the West Campus and East Campus Admissions committees.
- In 2019, 6th Grade became a new entry point with the transition of Grade 6 to the Middle School. This contributes to a higher number of families from public schools with opportunities for greater ethnic, geographic, and socio-economic diversity.
- The Admissions teams have forged relationships with local public elementary schools, which has resulted in increased applications from a wider variety of schools.
- **Admissions materials are available in both English and Spanish.**
- **The current composition for students of color is 41%. Entry points for the 2020-2021 school year include students of color for Kindergarten=46%, Grade 6=42%, Grade 7=47%, and Grade 9=42%.**



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Student Leadership Development

- Brentwood students can participate in the following affinity groups: Asian Student Alliance (ASA), Black Student Alliance (BSA), Girl Impact, Indian Subcontinent Student Alliance (ISSA), Jewish Student Alliance (JSA), Latinx Student Alliance (LSA), Middle Eastern Student Alliance (MESA), Multiracial Student Alliance, and Pride Project (LGBTQ+).
- Leadership of the student affinity groups developed a Student Diversity Council to connect and communicate with each other and meet with the Office of Equity and Inclusion to support their ongoing efforts.
- The ADL (Anti-Defamation League) facilitated a year-long program in 2018-2019 that began with a 2-day workshop for anti-bias entitled "No Place for Hate."
- Brentwood sends the maximum number of students to the annual NAIS Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC).
- Brentwood participates in the annual Pollyanna conference, created to "improve inclusion within communities and the understanding that racial, socioeconomic, religious and sexual diversity enhances all elements of the community."
- Students from SDLC were invited to attend the Southern California Alliance for Innovation with a theme of STEM, diversity, and inclusion.
- African American students in grades 6-12 attend the annual Education and Empowerment Coalition Conference for Black students in independent schools. Brentwood hosted the 2020 conference.
- **Student affinity leaders created a committee of students for anti-racist curriculum. The inception came after a well-researched curriculum presentation to the administration by LSA officers.**
- Students participate in the planning and execution of "It's Our Turn: Young Women's Conference at Brentwood School" and "Diversity Day: The Power of Personal Stories."
- Eagle to Eagle is our student transition program where Upper School students are assigned as mentors for all students in grades 6-11 who are new to Brentwood.
- Upper School peer leaders, teaching assistants, and affinity group leaders provide a "Power of Words" seminar for Lower School students. Students read books, facilitate role-playing, and teach lessons on anti-bias with a focus on being an upstander.
- **Upper School students participate in Youth Summit, a national conference on social justice, which featured speakers such as the iconic Angela Davis.**
- **Black students in grades 4-9 participate in "From Little Rock to Berkeley," a 6-week study in Black History.**

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Curriculum

- Foundations, composed of ethics, human development, and multiculturalism is a required class for all 9th Grade students.
- A redesign of the 10th Grade English class from the theme of British Literature to Modes of Communication emphasizing what it means to represent self with respect to race, gender, religion, and class.
- 11th Grade English moved from American Literature to American Identity and Culture to explore self through diverse authors.
- Women's Studies became Gender Studies: Exploration of Identity and Intersectionality.
- **Lower School, Middle School, and Upper School classes have all been reimagined with a focus on diverse experiences. The curriculum is always evolving. All faculty were challenged by the school leadership to examine current curriculum and practices with an eye toward anti-racism and DEI.**
- Grade-level themes include: 3rd Grade Cultures Around the World; 4th Grade Social Justice; 5th Grade Identity and Power; 7th Grade Global Studies Migration (dictatorships, propaganda, censorship, and the suppression of minority voices and dissenters); and 8th Grade American Government (civil rights, who holds power and who writes history, current events, government programs).
- Upper School Elective Courses include: Latinx in LA, Refugees and Resettlement, Modern Hispanic Literature in Translation, Ethics in Contemporary Society, Modern Issues in the Post Colonial World, Diversity Studies, The Middle East in Modern Memory, Documentary Filmmaking for Social Change, and **Advocacy, Activism, and Social Justice.**
- Current examples of literature include:
 - LOWER SCHOOL: *The Color of My Words, Separate Is Never Equal, One Crazy Summer, Front Desk, The Land of Many Colors, King and King, Which Lane?, Out of My Mind, Save Me a Seat, A Long Pitch Home, Other Words from Home, The Colors of Us, and Who Was Sacagawea?*
 - MIDDLE SCHOOL: *Merci Suarez Changes Gears, Dear Martin, Patron Saints of Nothing, Stamped, and Nickel Boys*
 - UPPER SCHOOL: *Homegoing, A Raisin in the Sun, Everything I Never Told You, The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, and select short stories and poetry from a wide array of diverse authors*

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Student Life and Programming

- Lower School Community of Caring and Upper School advisories foster conversations on identity and social justice.
- The Middle School Advisory Program offers a different experience for students in grades 6–8. The curriculum consists of:
 - 6th Grade: Ally Behavior—defining what it means to be an ally and analyzing the inhibitors
 - 7th Grade: Conflict Resolution—recognizing that our beliefs around conflict are influenced by family and culture; determining our “go to” responses to conflict when it inevitably comes; and exploring new ways to respond to conflict that lead to different results
 - 8th Grade: Challenging Standards of Beauty and Identity Work—recognizing that there are images of beauty that have negative impact on self-worth, and challenging the validity of the images depicted; recognizing the value of the beauty within; exploring target and non-target statuses within varying identities—including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion
- Lower School assemblies have included: African American Read-in, Diwali, Día de los Muertos, Authors Kwame Alexander and Randy Preston, Lucy Meyer, Special Olympics, 4th Grade Dream Speeches, Shannon and Dean Hale with LeUyen Pham Princess in Black, Power of Words Workshop, and Dr. Terrance Roberts (of the Little Rock 9).
- Middle School assemblies have included: Dr. Terrance Roberts (of the Little Rock 9), African American Read-in, Gender Identity, Cultural Appropriation, The History and Meaning of the N-Word, Ally Behavior, Conflict Resolution, Challenging Standards of Beauty and Identity Work, and a Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Upper School assemblies have included the opportunity for each affinity group to serve as a host: Affinity Welcome, Social Justice and Immigration (based on the students’ work in Tijuana), The Power of Storytelling, LSA Presentation of Richard Blanco poem and Día de los Muertos celebration, Diversity Day, Jewish Student Alliance presented for Holocaust Remembrance, Black History Month panel focused on African American culture, and Damian Minna on finding hope after tragedy, ability, and disability.
- Cultural celebrations have included, but are not limited to: Día de los Muertos, Nowruz, Diwali, Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage, Asian Pacific Islander, International Day of the Girl, GayLA (dance for LGBTQ), and Gay Friends and Family Social.
- Grade-level retreats have been redesigned to include activities and exercises focused on inclusion.
- **The Office of Equity and Inclusion holds space for students to reflect and process during critical times of mourning and loss, local or national social unrest, polarizing political contests, and more.**
- **Dr. Nicole Green offered a workshop on racial trauma for Upper School students, which included stereotype threat, code switching, anxiety, and recommendations for success in a predominately white school.**
- **All 9th Grade students participated in programming facilitated by the Office of Equity and Inclusion to examine the ways that people of various identities experience Brentwood differently.**
- **All 10th Grade students experienced programming aimed at examining various scenarios involving race to further understand systemic racism in schools.**
- **All 5th Grade students experience programming led by the Director of Equity and Inclusion focused on identity and various identity qualifiers, including: race, gender, family structure, social economic status, and ability.**

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Parents and Guardians

- A SEED group is offered for parents and guardians (K-12) by a trained Brentwood facilitator.
- Parent University offers workshops specific to DEI, including a panel of parents and guardians of color to speak to their children's experiences at Brentwood.
- The Parents Association (PA) includes two affinity group leaders on the executive board.
- Parent affinity group leaders meet four times a year with the Office of Equity and Inclusion and other members of the administration.
- The annual All-School Celebration of Diversity invites all families to come together to share in one another's cultural traditions.
- **Dr. Allison Briscoe-Smith gave a talk (October 2020) called "How to Talk to Your Tweens and Teens About Race" hosted by SSALA (School Speaker Alliance of Los Angeles).**
- **Dr. Brenda Stevenson will be the February 2021 Parent University speaker on the topic, "Exploring and Celebrating Multiculturalism—the Impact on Our Children."**
- **Dr. Elizabeth Denevi and Dr. Howard Stevenson will be part of a speaker series for parents and guardians in March 2021 on the topic, "How to Talk to Your Children About Race."**

Alumni

- **A young alum of color occupies a seat on the DEI committee of the Board of Trustees.**
- **The Director and Assistant Director of Equity and Inclusion talked about their roles and initiatives at the fall alumni meeting.**
- **The Alumni Association has established a sub-committee for alumni of color to ensure alumni programming represents the diversity of our alumni and their interests.**
- **The Office of Alumni Engagement initiates a mentoring program for current Brentwood students and alumni of color.**



Policies and Procedures

- **An Anti-Discrimination Policy is in place to complement the school's Policy Against Harassment.**
- **The Office of Equity and Inclusion is included in conversations regarding student discipline.**
- **An Anti-bullying Policy clarifies expectations of student behavior.**
- **An application in the Brentwood website allows for communication in multiple languages, including email blasts.**
- **Report cards are translated for families who indicate Spanish as their primary or preferred language.**
- **Expanded bus routes serve students from a wide geographic range.**
- **Gendered language has been removed from school handbooks and communications.**

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Financial Support

- **Communication is clarified about the way that financial support is need-based and not scholarship or merit-based.**
- Families receiving financial support are issued an automatic credit toward school supplies at the start of each year.
- **This year the amount of support increased from \$7 million to almost \$9 million to serve a larger number of families and provide for greater socio-economic diversity.**
- **18% of families receive financial support.**
- The Director of Equity and Inclusion participates on the Financial Support Committee.
- Financial support is available to students for various travel opportunities, activities such as prom, summer programs, athletics, lunches, AP/SAT/ACT testing, college application fees, and educational testing/tutoring/ed therapy.

Board of Trustees

- **The Board established a standing DEI Committee which includes parent representatives from affinity groups, a young alumni, and key administrators.**
- **The Director of Equity and Inclusion serves as the liaison for the DEI Committee.**
- **Visions, Inc., facilitated a DEI training for the Board.**
- **The current make up of board members is over 30% POC.**
- **The Board Chair and a DEI Board Co-Chairs participate on the Governance Committee for the consulting firm.**



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