

JUNE 2021 ANTIRACISM UPDATE

# Steps Toward Racial Justice at Catlin Gabel

# Table of Contents

**01**

**ANTIRACISM VISION  
& STRATEGIC  
PLANNING**

**02**

**COMMUNITY  
VOICES**

**03**

**CURRICULUM &  
CLASSROOMS**

**04**

**ANTIRACISM  
TRAINING**

**05**

**HIRING &  
ENROLLMENT**

**06**

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT &  
THE CENTER**

---

# ANTIRACISM VISION & STRATEGIC PLANNING

The school's Board of Trustees and leadership team adopted an aspirational vision toward becoming an antiracist institution in October 2020. All members of the Catlin Gabel community are expected to help us realize this vision through collective and individual action, policies, practices, and behaviors. The vision was incorporated into Catlin Gabel's employee handbook, which every employee signed and submitted to Human Resources. Catlin Gabel's vision for an antiracist institution can be accessed [here](#).

Integrating ongoing DEI work and antiracism action is the basis for the school's strategic equity plan. That plan will include clear goals, action steps, measures of progress, financial resources, and a timeline. The plan will include, among other goals, measures of:

- Enrollment and employee recruitment and retention
- Community data about the experience of attending and working at Catlin Gabel

- Demonstrable changes made in curriculum and environment
- Training and staffing commitments
- Policy changes and budget impact

To help determine action steps based on the antiracism vision, the Diversity Action Council (DAC) formed six work groups in October, led by Catlin Gabel teachers and staff. This cross-constituent group of teachers, staff, students, and parents organized around the following topics: Antiracist Curriculum; Antiracism Training for Teachers and Staff; Community Partnerships; Beyond Eurocentric Culture to Equitable Practices; Truth and Reconciliation; and Admissions and Hiring. These groups have been actively engaged in researching these areas and developing recommendations to share with the school this summer.

---

# COMMUNITY VOICES

Inspired by the voices of last summer, various forums have been created to ensure ongoing feedback and input from historically marginalized voices.

DAC, the student-led Antiracism Collective (ARC), and staff from the Inclusion and Outreach Office met with a variety of administrative departments to gain an understanding of processes, share feedback, and provide ideas on lifting up BIPOC voices. Opportunities for sharing voices also were pursued across communication channels, including the student newspaper, "CatlinSpeak," the "Elevate" podcast, *The Caller* magazine, as well as on the website and social platforms. A recent addition includes "[Voices of Change](#)," a series of online first-person perspectives from the Catlin Gabel community.

The Office of Inclusion and Outreach continued to support a variety of affinity groups and elevate their perspectives. Leaders of the Asian American Parent Affinity Group led a listening session with the board and school leadership in April, and the board's Inclusion and Diversity Committee met with the Black Parent Affinity Group in May. At both meetings, we identified questions, concerns and opportunities for taking action in the near term on curriculum, hiring, and enrollment.

The office also is developing a more formalized structure for an ongoing "white accountability group," which is intended to provide space for white colleagues to explore their role and responsibility in antiracism work.

We have promoted use of the school's anonymous tip line, *Safe Schools*, and shared how tips are processed. The Truth and Reconciliation DAC Group proposed that the anonymous tip line be modified so that employees and students of color can report microaggressions or other race-based harassment.

Teachers have invited BIPOC and AAPI parents, guardians, and speakers to share their stories and increase the representation of adults in the classroom.

As part of the work of the Antiracism Collective, a student survey on the experiences of race/ethnicity was conducted in the Upper School. An Upper School student and member of the Antiracism Collective is collaborating with a Catlin Gabel statistics teacher, as part of their senior project, to aggregate the results to better inform us and understand student perspectives regarding race and ethnicity.

---

# CURRICULUM & CLASSROOMS

A part-time antiracism curriculum coordinator position was established to help guide teachers in reviewing the curriculum, developing benchmarking standards, and incorporating recommendations from external and internal sources that will ensure multiple perspectives and voices in the curriculum. Upper School English teacher Krystal Wu is in this role, which will be expanded in 2021-22, to include professional learning for equity for teachers across the school. Led by Krystal, the DAC Antiracist Curriculum Work Group also is working with Upper School administrators to determine how to best incorporate Ethnic Studies into the curriculum, through either a course or emphasis.

A new policy and protocol have been created to address concerns regarding the use of oppressive and offensive language by students or teachers in the classroom and to provide more accountability. The policy is designed to prevent this type of language

being used in ways that are degrading, careless, or gratuitous. The protocol provides teachers with a step-by-step method to determine if the content and language they are selecting and using is educational and valid given the context of a specific lesson.

The Diversity Action Council Work Group on Eurocentric Culture is examining dominant culture norms embedded within our school. Such norms may be seen in school events, vocabulary, and symbols which reflect default assumptions about who we all are or what we all believe.

A Diversity Summit was held in May 2021 for Upper and Middle School students. The focus of the event was amplifying marginalized voices, and the keynote was given by Schuyler Bailar, the first Division I transgender athlete. He also spoke to the intersectionality of his Korean heritage and gender identity.

---

# ANTIRACISM TRAINING

Ten Catlin Gabel teachers completed the [Equity Literacy Institute's \(ELI\) Racial Equity Facilitator Training](#) program over the summer of 2020, which included virtual training to equip them to facilitate racial justice work during the academic year. In May 2021, the Institute met virtually with all divisional employees to present their framework for applying an equity and antiracist lens to teaching, learning, and school design. The Equity Literacy Institute's framework for this partnership will help equip faculty to:

- Recognize subtle biases and inequities in learning materials and classroom interactions.
- Respond and intervene effectively when biases or inequities arise in the classroom.
- Redress biases and inequities by addressing the root causes in the system of the school.
- Actively apply an equity lens to policies and practices.
- Sustain a bias-free and equitable classroom and institutional culture.

To ensure all teachers integrate the concepts of this framework into their planning, curriculum, and work with students, the school is developing a two-year professional learning trajectory centered on these competencies. Teachers will become more adept at recognizing and managing microaggressions in the classroom; evaluating the materials they are using in the classroom; uplifting diverse voices; and presenting positive representations of people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Teachers also will learn how to become more self-reflective in their teaching and continue to do their own work around implicit bias.

All employees participated in an equity and inclusion workshop in November 2020, which was facilitated by Darrell Butler from [Butler Consulting Group and BC Innovations](#), who has over 20 years of experience helping organizations facilitate discussions around race and cultural responsiveness. Inclusion and Outreach Director Jasmine Love is developing equity and antiracism training for staff members in the coming year to parallel the faculty's work with ELI.

---

## HIRING & ENROLLMENT

We are continuing work in the area of increasing our racial and cultural diversity in our faculty and staff by assessing the experience of employees of color on our campus and interviewing candidates for all positions for cultural responsiveness and training in diversity and bias topics. We are reviewing and revising questions we ask during the interview process for cultural responsiveness, and continuing to learn from departed employees of color by conducting exit interviews. This work is happening through a partnership between the Human Resources and Inclusion and Outreach staff.

The Assistant Director for Inclusion and Outreach part-time position was expanded to full-time, thanks to a generous donation from an alum. Erica Babino's role was enhanced to improve our capacity to recruit, hire, and retain a diverse workforce. Thanks to the support of donors, this role will continue in the 21-22 academic year.

Throughout the year, the enrollment team met with members of the Antiracism Collective, the Board Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and the DAC Group focused on Admissions and Hiring to discuss enrollment and financial assistance policy and practices. A common theme was on quotas. While we do not have quotas in enrollment, we do seek to enroll a student body that is diverse in many facets, including race. Currently 48% of students enrolled at Catlin Gabel for next year are students of color. This percentage has grown significantly over the last ten years and is now more diverse than the overall Portland metro area (70% of the population is white). However, our focus now is on increasing the percentage of students who identify as Black, Hispanic/Latinx, or Native American/Indigenous. Over the summer, the enrollment team will work with staff from the Inclusion and Outreach Office on establishing enrollment goals for the strategic equity plan.

---

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & THE CENTER

With input from DAC and other community members, we are redefining our vision for community engagement to be informed by equity, inclusion, and antiracism principles. In addition to reinforcing our existing relationships with organizations in the Portland metro community, we seek to expand our efforts to develop new partnerships informed by community needs and a wider geographic focus. To reflect this change, the position of Catlin Gabel's PLACE program director has been restructured and the title has been updated to Director of Community Engagement to better reflect these new responsibilities. George Zaninovich, who led the DAC Community Engagement work group, will continue as the director of these efforts. More information about our new vision for Community Engagement is available [here](#).

Over the past five years, the work of The CENTER, Coalition partners, and the PLACE program helped expand youth-led programming around the Portland metro-area, meeting key goals of the original vision.

The CENTER supported these efforts by providing a place where students could study urbanization and equity. Over time, The CENTER's success was rooted more in its community partnerships than the space itself. For the past 14 months during the pandemic, The CENTER has been closed, creating an opportunity to rethink its utility. At the same time, the rent increased significantly, making the space no longer financially viable. For these reasons, the school has chosen to not reopen the space.

It is important to note that Catlin Gabel is committed to sustaining our established community partnerships, including those with The CENTER Coalition members: Black United Fund of Oregon, De La Salle North Catholic High School, Urban League of Portland, KairosPDX, and Latino Network. These partnerships will continue to be essential in our ongoing efforts for our students to engage, connect, and take action in communities throughout the Portland region and beyond.