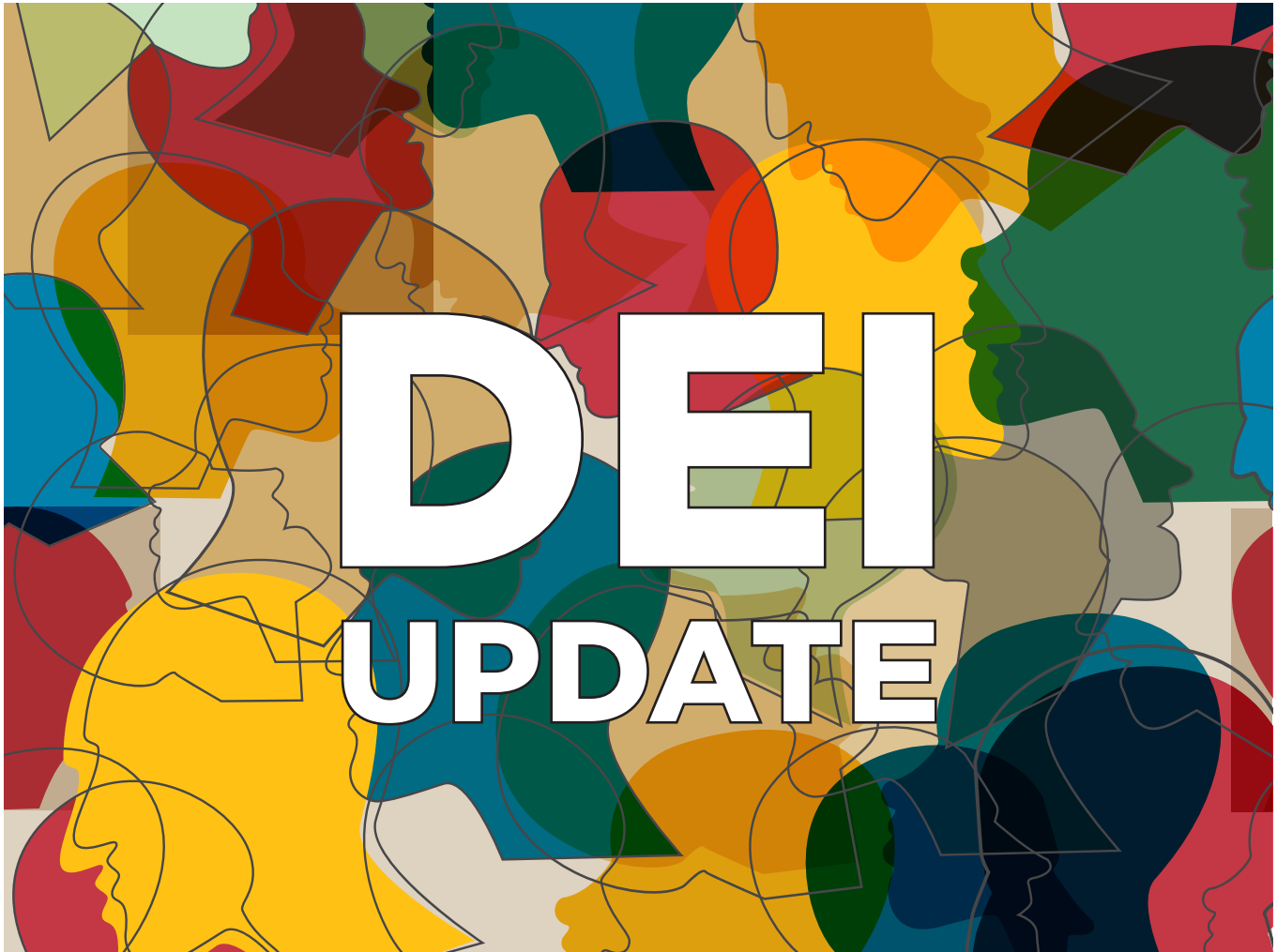




diversity | equity | inclusion



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Action Plan

Our Mission, Values, and Commitment to Equity establish the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion that guide our school community. Our bilingual and international school includes many kinds of diversity, all of which we value, and we are committed to working toward an equitable and inclusive experience for all members of our community.

This past year, the impact of systemic racism became more visible in this country and the world, challenging us to reflect critically on our school community as well. As a school, we de-

liberately centered the voices of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) in our work this year. We began by listening. In initial conversations with alumni, families, and trustees, we heard critical feedback and valuable insights that we grouped into overarching themes under Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In order to move toward an equitable and inclusive experience for all members of our community, we created an initial plan for key work in each of the areas. We have accomplished much this year, and will reflect on that here, but we recognize there is still more to do in each area. This mission-critical work will continue for years to come.



Increasing Diversity

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our search for our next Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was initially challenged last spring by COVID restrictions, but we were excited to complete the search this fall and welcome our new Director of DEI, Dereke Clements, who started at French American and International in January. The search involved our faculty and staff, trustees, Parent Association leaders, students, and parents of students of color. Dereke's focus during his first few months of school was to connect with students—especially our Affinity Group members—faculty, staff, and families, while partnering with other members of the Leadership Team and the DEI Committee in implementing our DEI action plan. His energy, creativity, and collaborative spirit will serve us well in this important leadership role.

DEI Committee

New this year, our school-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee included faculty coordinators, counselors, section deans, assistant principals, and other administrative staff. Committee members were charged with supporting students and Affinity Groups in their sections and with helping to plan faculty and staff professional learning. The entire committee received training and support from Rosetta Lee, our diversity consultant this year, and the committee was also supported by section Principals, the Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Leadership Team. Beginning in February, the DEI Committee worked directly with our Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dereke Clements.

Faculty and Staff Recruitment

Our alums, students, and parents have described the importance of representation across our faculty and staff. Children flourish, and all children benefit, when they see themselves represented in the adults on campus. As part of our strategic plan, three years ago we committed to ensuring that every candidate pool included at least two applicants from underrepresented communities. This year, we focused on ensuring we included BIPOC candidates in each pool. In addition, we broadened the scope of where we recruit, identifying recruiters that work with BIPOC candidates and organizations that facilitate BIPOC-targeted recruitment. Over the past five years, these efforts have resulted in an increase in the number of faculty and staff of color, with the total percentage of employees of color growing from 15.98% to 18.62% for the 2020-2021 school year. While our hiring is still underway for the upcoming school year, we have hired 13 faculty and staff of color since August of 2020. Increasing the number of BIPOC faculty and staff at our school will remain an important area of focus going forward.

Student Recruitment

Our recruitment of students of color has also been part of our strategic work for many years. Over the past three years, the total percentage of newly enrolled, self-reported students of color has ranged from 49.4% to 56.7%. This year, in addition to building upon existing feeder program relationships, we undertook outreach to targeted daycare centers and preschools and collaborated with additional middle schools to build an even more diverse applicant pool and to support BIPOC families' transition to our programs. As a result of these outreach efforts, we increased the number of newly enrolling Black and Latinx students next year: the percentage of new students who are Black will grow from 5.4% this year to 10.1% next year, and the percentage of new students who are Latinx will grow from 4.2% to 7.6%.

Board Recruitment

Board recruitment was challenged by COVID limitations last spring, and as a result we committed to recruiting a larger, more diverse group of trustees this year. We increased BIPOC representation on our Board, added more female trustees this summer, and have identified a large pool to support continued progress in Board diversity. This development has been possible because of the work we began three years ago, as part of our strategic plan, to intentionally cultivate BIPOC representation in parent leadership across our school, including our Parent Association, advancement, and admissions volunteer groups.

“Children flourish, and all children benefit, when they see themselves represented in the adults on campus.”



Attending to Equity

Access to our Program through Financial Support

Approximately one third of our school families receive financial aid, which contributes to the socioeconomic diversity that our school community values. Ensuring full access to all aspects of our program is critical to an inclusive and equitable experience of school, especially during the pandemic. Our robust financial aid program allows every student to take advantage of every opportunity in our school, including not only the academic experience in the classroom, but also the experiences that make French American and International unique—arts, athletics, and travel. To that end, we have a comprehensive financial support program which addresses all areas of school life. The SUCCEED Program provides supplemental support for school spirit events, lunch assistance, academic equipment, and athletic equipment and gear. We offer financial assistance for our Global Travel Program, enabling all students to participate regardless of their means, and a device support program which offsets the costs of acquiring a computer in High School.

The pandemic created additional need in our community, and we have met this in several ways. To meet the increased need for financial support this school year, we increased our financial aid budget by an additional 10% to more than \$7 million annually. During Remote and Hybrid Learning, we provided technology support including devices and internet access in order to ensure that all of our students could continue their education while learning at home. We created the Temporary Childcare Support Program, which provided assistance for families facing additional childcare expenses as a result of required Remote Learning in K- Grade 5 the fall.

Course and Classroom Materials Review

Using a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens, we embarked on a review of our major course resources—literature, textbooks, websites, and other materials. Focusing

on the texts we use in class and provide in class libraries, we sought to achieve equitable, diverse representation of identities in our curriculum and to cultivate an inclusive classroom environment for all our students. Guided by our DEI consultant, we implemented a checklist-based tool to evaluate the key resources we use in our classes and reflect on our choice of texts and topics.

In the Maternelle, representation in literature is essential in helping our students claim and understand their own identities, and many books representing diverse racial and gender identities were introduced this year. These books were available for faculty to include in their classroom libraries, and all titles were provided in digital format as well so that all Maternelle faculty and staff could access them at any time.

In the Lower School, we added new library books that offer additional perspectives and a range of identities, and these books were distributed to classrooms so students had wider access to them. Additionally, teachers added new novels to the curriculum in Grades 2-5, and added a new unit of study in social activism for our youngest readers.

In the Middle School and High School, our Humanities faculty launched a collaborative planning approach that identified important DEI themes to be taught in every grade level, from Grade 6 to 12. This approach helps to identify and address any gaps that may occur and also encourages continuity of pedagogy over the course of the seven years of Middle and High School. Some themes included: migrants and migrations; economics, labor, and industrialization; nationalism and self-determination; and civil rights. Within each of these themes were developmentally appropriate units, highlighting a broad array of diverse voices, stories, and experiences.

In the English department, more novels and poetry were added to the curriculum in Grades 6-8. To support the new texts, teachers guided students in deeper analysis of the historical context of each of the works. In addition to the classroom texts, grade level reads were assigned and discussed in Advisory. These readings engaged our students in critical analysis of Bay Area and U.S. history and culture as well as discussions about citizenship and activism.

In the High School, English teachers reviewed their syllabi in order to ensure more diversity of experiences and perspectives and also to explore the social, cultural, and historical contexts of chosen texts. These new units of study allowed students to study new novels and Black history, particularly the social, cultural, and historical contexts of Black life in America. Several of our seniors focused explicitly on issues of race in their IB orals this year as a result of these studies.

Our curriculum and materials matter. It is critical that all our students see their identities and experiences in what we teach and that they encounter new perspectives there as well. Our ongoing, systematic review of our materials positions us to be intentional about the texts and topics we teach as we realize our international school's mission of empowering students to think critically and communicate across cultures.



Ensuring Inclusion

Understanding and Addressing Microaggressions

Our students and parents speak movingly about the power of microaggressions to undermine their sense of belonging in our community. This year, in order to support inclusion for all members of our community, we trained the faculty in every school section in identifying and responding to microaggressions, so teachers can intervene when microaggressions occur.

Board Learning

Last year, our Board of Trustees developed our Commitment to Equity as a guiding statement along with our Mission and Values. Beginning at the Board retreat this year with DEI consultant Rosetta Lee, trustees have continued to develop their understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices throughout the year, and the Board has formed a DEI task force, which will lead strategic work in DEI going forward.

Affinity Groups

We launched Affinity Groups in High School four years ago, and have continued to develop these each year. What research shows, and what students and parents who participate in Affinity Groups tell us, is that students feel more included in the larger school community when the school acknowledges and supports their individual identities. Affinity Groups provide a space for students who identify similarly. They contribute to a sense of belonging in school and are a contributor to student engagement and success.

Groups are created when there is critical student interest, so each year there is flexibility in the number and types of groups.

Our Affinity Group program has also grown to include alliance groups—groups of students who have a genuine interest in the issues facing a particular identity group, and want to serve as allies—such as the Anti-Racism Allies and Advocates in Middle School, and the Gender Sexuality Alliance in Middle and High School. Alliance groups provide an opportunity for even more students to be involved in this work.

This year, we continued our High School affinity groups and added more alliance groups, expanded our affinity group offerings in the Middle School, and developed a Students of Color Affinity Group in the Lower School.

We are committed to working toward an equitable and inclusive experience for all members of our community.

Systemic change requires commitment and consistent effort, and involves making and learning from mistakes. We know that to have an effect on the experience of our students, families, faculty, and staff, we need to do deliberate work in each of the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In some areas, we have made significant progress this year in achieving our aims; in others, we learned from our work this year, and are refining our plans.

As we move forward, we will continue to listen to our community, evaluate the impact of our efforts, and adapt our goals and plans accordingly. There is still work to be done, but we are proud to share what our faculty, staff, families, and students have accomplished this school year.

“Our goal in this work is to teach empathy and perspective taking so that we create a school environment that is respectful and inclusive of everyone.”