

CATLIN GABEL

STRATEGIC INCLUSION PLAN

Fall 2021 to Spring 2024



Catlin Gabel

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January 27, 2022

Dear Catlin Gabel Community,

We know that students thrive in school when they feel known and valued, and when they have the opportunity to develop a positive sense of identity. We know that educational excellence requires that students learn in a diverse community and understand systems of power and privilege. To send our graduates into the world without these experiences and knowledge would limit their opportunities and fall short of our mission.

Over the last two years, driven by events all around us and a deeper understanding of the experiences of school community members, we have committed to live more fully by our values of integrity, kindness, and inclusion. Building on years of community conversations and steady progress, we now need to sharpen our focus on the most urgent priorities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The following three-year Strategic Inclusion Plan is based on input and suggestions gathered from all constituents over the past eight months, and highlights what we consider to be essential action steps and outcomes.

The Plan provides for transparency, accountability, and change, in keeping with our commitment to progressive education. It will require, and we will expect of all Catlin Gabel community members, a shared commitment to action, the courage to ask questions, and the desire to understand the perspectives and experiences of others. It is not a comprehensive plan that incorporates all activity in this domain; it is a strategic commitment to specific actions that we believe are most needed and will most benefit our students for the next three years.

The Plan has been approved by the School's Board of Trustees and Administrative Team, and will inform teacher professional learning, curriculum and learning experiences; hiring and enrollment practices; and institutional decision-making. Progress on the Plan will improve the experience of every Catlin Gabel student, now and in the future, and further a more equitable and inclusive experience for all.

Please read the Plan carefully, including information linked in the Plan, so that you can understand and join us in the necessary and complex work ahead. On behalf of our students and employees, we appreciate your partnership and support.

Sincerely,



Tim Bazemore
HEAD OF SCHOOL



Indira Nallakrishnan
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC INCLUSION PLAN

At Catlin Gabel, we have long understood the importance of diversity. In 1928, founder Ruth Catlin wrote that having “students of the school represent a cross-section of American life” was essential to preparing graduates for democracy. We know now that diversity alone is not enough to ensure educational excellence; we also must strive to be equitable and inclusive if we are to achieve our mission and live by our values. To that end, we define “diversity” as the range of differences in our community; “equity” as individuals receiving what they need to enjoy access, opportunities, and a fair chance to succeed; and “inclusion” as active engagement that supports every community member’s identity and sense of belonging. More definitions can be found in the school’s [Glossary of Inclusion Terms \(see page 8\)](#).

In recent years, we have initiated structures and activities to make progress towards being a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive (DEI) school community. Students and employees are increasingly diverse; teachers have revised curricula to include a broader range of voices and perspectives; the school has created a board-level diversity and inclusion committee; and affinity groups are available to many. Catlin Gabel has also committed financial resources to staff roles responsible for overseeing and implementing the school’s DEI work. And we know there is more work to be done.

Across the country, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students are struggling to acknowledge and address historic inequities, combat racism, and make their schools more inclusive. In some settings, DEI work is creating division, instead of unity; fear, instead of joy; and retreat, instead of progress. We believe we can find a better path at Catlin Gabel, and ensure that every student feels known and valued, and that every graduate is equipped to take responsible action in the world.

Over the last two years, Catlin Gabel has received feedback that has identified areas of immediate need from historically-marginalized and underrepresented community members. Last year, the school announced a [vision towards becoming a more antiracist institution](#). In an

effort to make progress on our inclusive vision and increase institutional accountability, the school has developed the following three-year Strategic Inclusion Plan. The Plan focuses on several priority goals that will positively influence all DEI efforts at the school and begin to address our antiracism commitment. *This plan is not intended to include all of the school’s DEI work in any given year, and prioritizing these goals does not mean other DEI work stops.* We are highlighting these goals to ensure progress and institutional accountability in specific areas.

The Strategic Inclusion Plan positions us to realize our mission and values-based vision for a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive school. Material to our success will be creating conditions for progress, meant to support the current campus climate and evolve over time. The responsibility for creating these conditions is primarily that of the Head of School and Administrative Team, with support from the Board of Trustees and the Parent Faculty Association. Conditions for progress include:

- Recognizing that we are starting in different places with different life experiences
- Defining and communicating DEI terms and vocabulary
- Ongoing communication regarding action steps and outcomes
- Opportunities for historically-marginalized community members to shape our efforts
- Including diverse educational and political points of view (as long as those views do not diminish the identity of others)
- Opportunities for all community members to learn and ask questions
- Age-appropriate discussions and materials
- Guiding students to envision for themselves what changes will lead to a more equitable society and school
- Dedicating institutional time and financial resources to support sustainable progress

GOAL 1

EDUCATION

Ensure that the curriculum, teaching methods, and school culture reflect our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

DESIRED OUTCOMES (BY THE END OF SCHOOL YEAR 2023-24)

- All faculty are engaged in ongoing professional learning to effectively develop and employ equity-based and antiracist instructional methods and materials
- Baseline expectations of equity-based teaching competencies are defined and teachers have support to achieve them
- The curriculum reflects diverse identities and experiences, including developmentally-appropriate lessons about equity and privilege in society

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Equity and Inclusion Office
- Assistant Head of School
- Instructional Coaching Team
- Division Heads of Beginning and Lower School, Middle School and Upper School

ACTION STEPS BY YEAR

Year 1: 2021-2022

- Dedicate professional learning time as a priority
- Establish teaching competencies for equity-based instruction (see page 7) and create professional learning plan for teachers to apply equity lens to teaching practices

Year 2: 2022-2023

- Dedicate professional learning time to continue implementation of teaching competencies for equity-based instruction
- Develop plan to incorporate equity-based teaching competencies into faculty evaluation process
- Create onboarding process for new teachers to understand and learn expectations for equity-based instruction
- Outline curricular review process

Year 3: 2023-2024

- Dedicate professional learning time as a priority
- Incorporate equity-based teaching competencies into faculty evaluation process
- Launch curricular review process

GOAL 2 COMMUNITY VOICES

Ensure that the school's decision-making processes reflect our commitment to include community voices and experiences and inspire engagement, understanding, and action.

DESIRED OUTCOMES (BY THE END OF SCHOOL YEAR 2023-24)

- An inclusion and belonging assessment tool for students, families, and employees leverages multi-year data to inform institutional decision-making
- Expectations and consequences regarding behaviors, comments, and actions that demean individual and group social identities are clarified and communicated
- Annual Report and community data indicate progress toward goals and inform action steps for the next Inclusion Plan

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Equity and Inclusion Office
- Assistant Head of School
- Marketing and Communications Office

ACTION STEPS BY YEAR

Year 1: 2021-2022

- Conclude design of schoolwide inclusion and belonging assessment tool
- Develop a format for annual reporting on the Inclusion Plan to include community profile data, progress to Plan, resources committed
- Ensure the school's tipline and response protocols are designed to address concerns related to DEI issues from students, families, and employees

Year 2: 2022-2023

- Pilot inclusion and belonging assessment tool
- Share findings and insights about possible revisions to the tool with the school community
- Share annual Inclusion Plan Report

Year 3: 2023-2024

- Deploy inclusion and belonging assessment tool
- Share findings and how data will impact institutional decision-making in the year ahead
- Share annual Inclusion Plan Report and next plan goals

GOAL 3

COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

Increase the school's student and employee diversity and provide increased access and influence for underrepresented groups.

DESIRED OUTCOMES (BY THE END OF SCHOOL YEAR 2023-24)

- The enrollment outreach plan results in increased Black/African-American, Latinx/Hispanic, and Native American student representation
- The racial/ethnic diversity of faculty, staff, and administrators increases through improved recruitment, hiring, onboarding, and retention practices
- The Board of Trustees membership and leadership reflect the school's diversity commitment
- Effective structures are in place for student, parent/guardian, and employee affinity groups to build community and voice concerns and needs to the school

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

- Enrollment Management Office
- Human Resources Office
- Equity and Inclusion Office
- Head of School
- Board Governance Committee

ACTION STEPS BY YEAR

Year 1: 2021-2022

- Review the current enrollment plan and identify goals
- Research the experience of employees of color and other historically-marginalized groups
- Re-affirm purpose and structures for affinity groups across constituents

Year 2: 2022-2023

- Report on enrollment plan progress
- Establish a baseline plan for recruiting and retaining employees of color
- Begin affinity group communication process to share themes and recommendations
- The Board Governance committee develops a more intentional plan for diverse trustee recruitment

Year 3: 2023-2024

- Report action steps taken by school in response to affinity group feedback and perspectives
- Report enrollment and recruiting plan progress



DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC INCLUSION PLAN

The Plan was developed between May 2021 and January 2022 through an inclusive process led by Jasmine Love, Director of Equity and Inclusion; Dr. Barbara Ostos, Assistant Head of School; Tim Bazemore, Head of School; Indira Nallakrishnan, Chair, Board of Trustees; in collaboration with Erica Babino, George Zaninovich, Krystal Wu, Alison Ward, and Dr. Connie Kim-Gervy of the Equity and Inclusion Office.

The process originated with input from the Board Inclusion and Diversity Committee, the School's multi-constituent Diversity Action Council (DAC), various affinity groups, as well as alumni. Drafts were shared between September 2021 and January 2022 at a variety of community events so constituents could provide input and suggestions. Each group's feedback was considered and led to revisions in an evolving series of drafts.

Those constituents and opportunities included:

- Board of Trustees
- Administrative Team
- Equity and Inclusion Office
- Parent Faculty Association Town Hall
- Parent Faculty Association Executive Council
- Employees
- Upper School Students

EQUITY-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & TEACHING COMPETENCIES

As of December 2, 2021

EQUITY-FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING GOALS

By the end of the 2022 academic year, PS-12 teachers* will

- Understand professional expectations for equity-focused teaching practices at Catlin Gabel.
- Be able to independently apply an equity lens in a reflective cycle to “re-see” their curriculum and instruction practices.

***Teacher:** anyone working directly with students.

EQUITY-FOCUSED TEACHING COMPETENCIES

1. Identify and disrupt biases, inequities, and oppressive ideologies in classroom systems and practices.

The teacher

- Seeks outside evidence and perspectives to identify ways in which their worldview and multiple identities shape their educational beliefs and instructional practices.
- Actively works to eliminate biases and inequities in classroom materials, policies, and practices and works to cultivate a similar awareness and ability in students.
- Draws on social-emotional competencies, facilitation skills, and content knowledge to intervene effectively when biases or inequities arise in a classroom or school setting, including microaggressions.

2. Support all students’ academic successes.

The teacher

- Communicates confidence that students are capable of intellectually challenging work and offers the support and guidance to ensure each learner meets expectations.
- Recognizes and affirms all students for their contributions, ideas, effort, and participation.
- Creates multiple ways for students to engage with learning, taking into account the individuality and context of each student.

3. Build strengths-based relationships with and between students.

The teacher

- Uses multiple strategies to get to know all students and learns about and communicates respect for each student’s background, strengths, skills, and unique contributions.
- Cultivates a learning environment that uses identity-affirming strategies to create an engaged community of learners.
- Approaches and interprets student behaviors with questions, taking into account each student’s identities and cultural contexts.

Works Consulted: CASEL: “SEL: What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where are they Promoted?”; Elena Aguilar’s Bright Morning: The Equity Rubric; Equity Literacy Institute: Equity Literacy Definition; Jasmine Love: “Culturally Responsive Teachers Will...”; Zaretta Hammond: Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain

GLOSSARY OF INCLUSION TERMS

The following definitions were first developed in 2016 by Catlin Gabel educators to provide a common framework for open and healthy discourse to foster an inclusive, diverse, and equitable community. The Glossary is meant to be a dynamic document, guided by the School's Equity and Inclusion Office and reflecting our growing understanding of the experience of community members.

ALLY: Someone who recognizes their privilege, and works in solidarity with marginalized groups in the struggle for social justice.

ANTIRACISM: Antiracism is the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably.

ANTISEMITISM*: The belief or behavior hostile toward Jews just because they are Jewish. It may take the form of religious teachings that proclaim the inferiority of Jews, for instance, or political efforts to isolate, oppress, or otherwise injure them. It may also include prejudiced or stereotyped views about Jews.

BIAS: An inclination, often implicit or unconscious, that hinders impartial judgment.

BIGOT: A person who practices bigotry.

BIGOTRY: Intolerance of opinions, lifestyles, or identities not necessarily backed by the power of dominant culture systems and institutions, often accompanied by discriminatory behavior.

CLASS: A system of ordering society which divides people into sets based on perceived social or economic status.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION: The adoption or use of the elements of one culture by members of another culture, often without understanding, acknowledgement, or respect for its value.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE: Practicing an ongoing awareness of one's own identity and biases, and taking action to learn and honor the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families.

DIVERSITY: The range of differences represented in our community.

EQUITY: Everyone gets what they need in order to enjoy access, opportunities, and a fair chance to succeed.

GENDER EXPRESSION: The physical and behavioral manifestation of one's gender identity.

GENDER FLUID: Of, relating to, or being a person whose gender identity is not fixed.

GENDER IDENTITY: A person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female.

HETERONORMATIVE: A gender binary viewpoint that presumes heterosexuality as the standard and "normal" sexual orientation instead of being one of many possibilities.

INCLUSION: Active engagement that supports every individual's identity and sense of belonging.

INTERSEX: Umbrella term denoting a number of variations in an individual's bodily characteristics that do not match strict medical definitions of male or female. (The "I" in LGBTQIA: Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning/Queer Intersex Asexual)

-ISM/-PHOBIA: Suffix describing attitudes, actions, or systemic structures that oppress a person or group because of their group identity. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- skin color (racism)
- gender (e.g., sexism, transphobia)
- economic status (classism)
- age (ageism)
- religion (e.g. Islamophobia)
- language/immigrant status (xenophobia)
- ability (ableism)
- sexual orientation (heterosexism, homophobia)

GLOSSARY OF INCLUSION TERMS

HOMOPHOBIA and **HETEROSEXISM** are two terms between which a key difference can be identified. Homophobia is the fear of "homosexuality" and "homosexuals". Heterosexism is the idea that heterosexuals are superior to others. Homophobia refers to attitudes and behavioral patterns that people have against homosexuals; heterosexism is ideologies that stigmatize and oppress homosexuals.

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning/Queer, Intersex, Asexual

MACRO-AGGRESSION: Large scale or overt aggression towards persons of marginalized groups.

MARGINALIZE: To treat a person, group, or concept as insignificant or peripheral; to exclude from power and full participation.

MICRO-AGGRESSION: Commonplace verbal or nonverbal slights and indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate derogatory messages to persons of marginalized groups.

MULTICULTURALISM: The practice of promoting the respectful coexistence of diverse cultures.

POWER: The capacity to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events.

PREJUDICE: Prejudging a person or group of people based on stereotypes and biases, often accompanied by ignorance, fear, or hatred.

PRIVILEGE: Systemic access to unearned advantages, resources, and opportunities which come at the expense of others.

RACISM: Race prejudice backed by the power of dominant culture systems and institutions. A system of disadvantage based on race.

RACIST: A member of a dominant culture who practices racial prejudice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The ideal of full and equal participation of all groups within a society that is mutually shaped to uphold human rights. Social justice includes a vision of society that is equitable, and in which all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS (SES): The perception of social standing or class of an individual or group measured not only by income but also educational attainment, financial security, and access to the opportunities and privileges within society.

STEREOTYPE: Generalizations about groups of people that negate individuals.

WHITE SUPREMACY*: The belief that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that white people should have control over people of other races; the social, economic, and political systems that collectively enable white people to maintain power over people of other races.

*Definitions in discussion and development
(Sources: ADL; Merriam-Webster)

Dedicated to Ann Fyfield for her inspiration and work on this document and for modeling healthy discourse. Summer 2017