

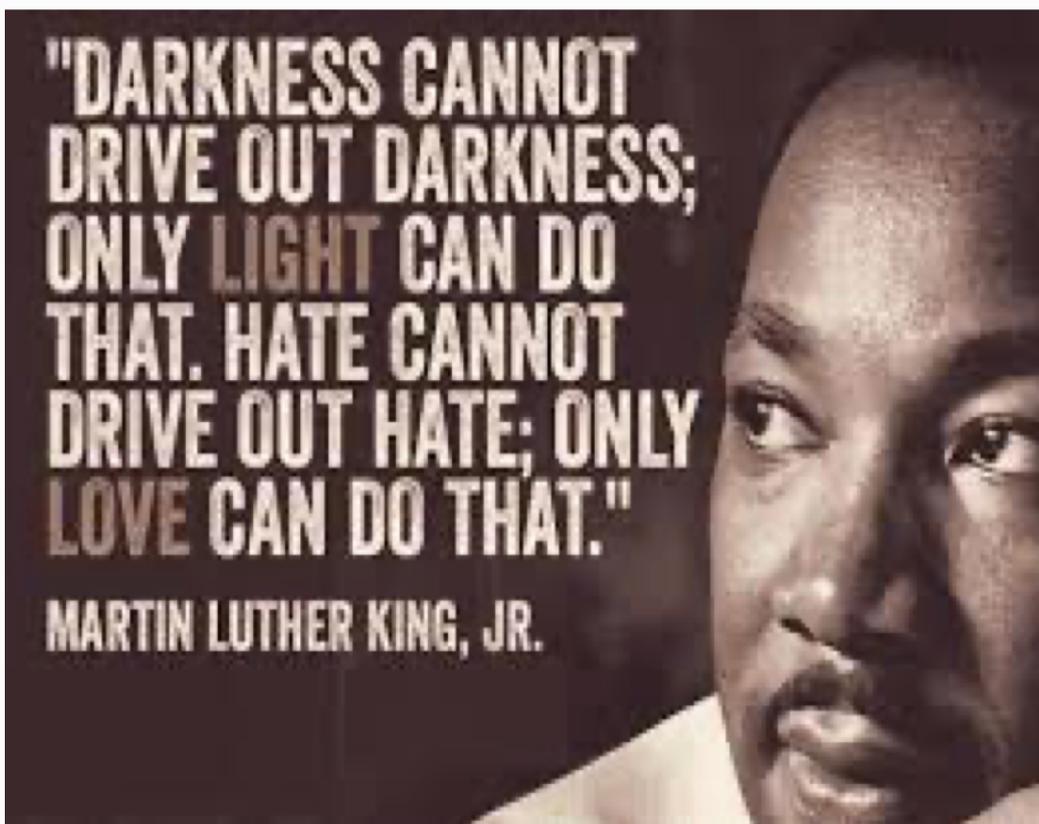


**Parent Diversity Committee and  
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Office**

## Welcome to 2022!

by Dr. Tawanda Owens

We hope that your New Year is off to a great start and we thank you for attending our December Parent Diversity meeting. You may recall one of the ways RPCS teachers are receiving DEI training is through Culturally Responsive Teaching, which are professional development opportunities to help keep our teachers connected to this important work. During our December meeting, I presented a version of this training for parents to consider what Culturally Responsive Parenting could look like. The group discussed mapping cultural reference points and how “deep culture” influences our ways of thinking, interacting, and being, often subconsciously. I provided tips and resources for parents to consider while engaging with children. Parents digested the information that was offered and provided ways to incorporate these strategies at home. We look forward to more learning and growing opportunities.



**This month we honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

### PARENT DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

**Wednesday, February 2,  
12pm-1pm**

**via Zoom**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81106823184>

Meeting ID: 811 0682 3184

Passcode: Diversity

\*copy/paste link into browser\*

**All RPCS parents/guardians are invited to participate. Find out more about the Parent Diversity Committee [here](#).**

# BIPOC Business of the Month

The DEI office continues to support both personally and professionally Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), or Small Family-Owned Businesses monthly. These businesses are owned and/or operated by diverse groups of people and are intentionally selected. The DEI Office's initial focus is to support businesses right here in Maryland, with the possibility of expansion to other states. Each month, we share a business of choice to support for the month, and if you choose to support them too, it would be much appreciated. Last month (November – December), we supported the [Baltimore American Indian Museum](#). A special thank you to those who supported last month's business, we hope you will continue to uplift our community. This month, January 1, 2022 – Feb 1, 2022, RPCS is supporting Bottoms Up Bagels, <http://www.bottomsupbagels.com/>

“Inspired by traditions of bagel-making dating back to the 1940s, these Jersey girls (Joan Kanner & Michelle Bond) founded Bottoms Up Bagel in 2015, 10 years after making Charm City home. Bottoms Up Bagels brings classic flavors to long-time residents and transplants alike.”



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## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Highlights

### Lower School

To highlight the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., RPCS kindergarten classes read several books about his life and social contributions. Students highlighted Dr. King's focus of love and peace and discussed ways to show those characteristics in the classroom. In 5th grade, students completed Paper Plate Awards to spread appreciation within our community.



### Middle School

Grace Lin's Tedx Talk, "The Windows and Mirrors of Your Child's Bookshelf" is an insightful lecture on the lack of representation and the importance of diversity in children's books. Ms. Lin recalls growing up as the only Chinese American in her class. Her goal to assimilate into American society came with the cost of forsaking her Chinese heritage. Ms. Fox's 6th grade class reflected on the speaker's experience as an author and artist. Students discussed their own reading choices and why "mirrors and windows" in literature are important to young readers.

## DE&I Highlights continued...

### Upper School

Upper School students participated in an MLK assembly where three students choreographed and performed a tribute to Dr. King's legacy. Students took the lead with organizing a donation drive with the local nonprofit Share Baby to help underserved young children in the Baltimore community, honoring Dr. King's concept of Beloved Community.

## RESOURCES FOR YOU

These resources are provided to stay engaged on your journey within DEI. While all these resources may not work for you, select one and try it on to see how it fits. Our goal is to offer information that could reach and stretch you in ways that strengthen your awareness. See what you think:

[Diversity and Cultural Awareness in the Classroom](#)

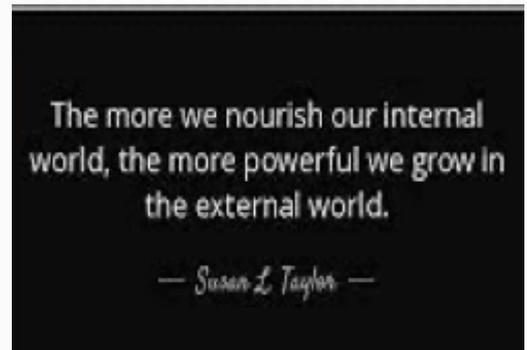
[Raising Compassionate Children](#)

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## Exciting News to Share!

We have hired a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator. Courtney Mercado joins us from the Board of Child Care, where she worked as an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Facilitator. A licensed social worker and proud HBCU alumna of Morgan State University and Howard University, Courtney's professional passions have always shown commitment to ensuring that the spaces she inhabits are those that prioritize diversity and exemplify the importance of working towards equity.

Throughout her professional career, Courtney has worked with marginalized youth and families in various settings, creating programs and implementing policies that acknowledge people's unique experiences and improve life experiences. She strives to build community with those around her and sees the importance of learning and embracing unique characteristics to build genuine relationships. In her spare time, Ms. Mercado enjoys trying out new recipes in the kitchen, reading, and conquering the toddler stage of parenting with her fiancé.



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## RPCS DEI Action Plan Update: Stronger Together Will be Released in February

Through research, review, questions, and listening sessions, Dr. Owens has created Roland Park Country School's 1st DEI action plan. We are pleased to have this plan to help focus our efforts and attention on DEI across the campus. The DEI action plan aims to help identify strengths and areas of opportunity to grow within. This plan will lay the foundation for RPCS DEI initiatives to advance DEI as an institutional fabric.

This year and beyond, the DEI Office will center developments on what Dr. Owens calls the **ABCs of DEI – Awareness, Belonging, and Community**. As we move through the year, we will take a close look through the lens of Awareness in all that we do. We will examine our Awareness of self, others, and our community and welcome you to join us. Stay tuned for more information about the DEI action plan.