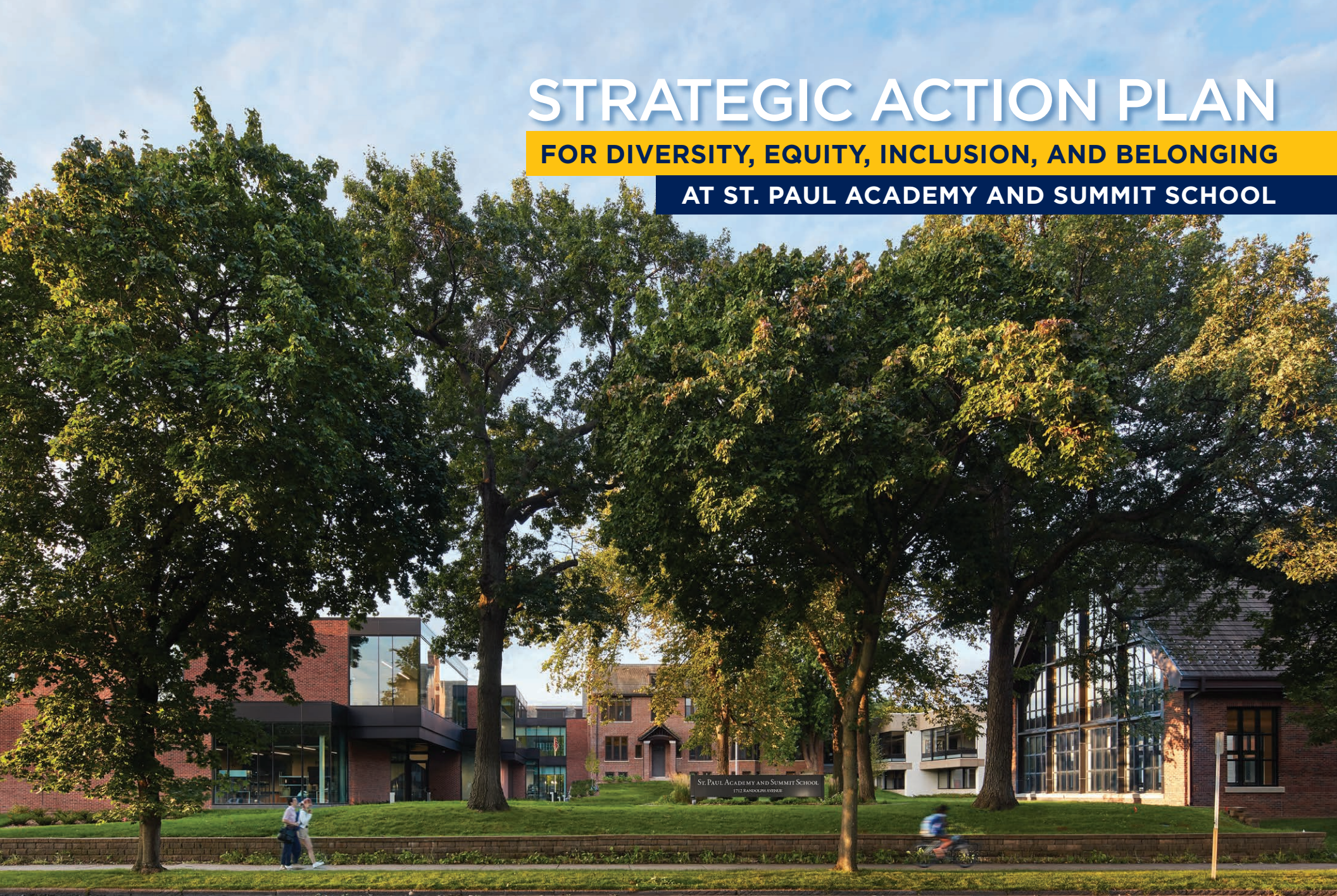


STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

AT ST. PAUL ACADEMY AND SUMMIT SCHOOL



ST. PAUL ACADEMY
AND SUMMIT SCHOOL



DEIB Strategic Action Plan: Introduction

In the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, SPA began a series of difficult but necessary conversations about race, equity, and our school community. These discussions were not new to SPA, but the events of late May 2020 gave our ongoing diversity efforts a fresh and deserving sense of urgency.

Over the last fifteen years we have worked to create and nurture a more pluralistic version of ourselves. Karen Dye, who spearheaded our diversity efforts for more than ten years as Director of Intercultural Life, established the foundations of our program; Dr. Naomi Taylor, Karen's successor, has been instrumental in continuing to develop our programs and facilitate dialogue on race, racism, and diversity among faculty, staff, parents, and students at SPA.

Despite our progress over the last decade, work remains to be done—work that will have a profound effect on shaping our school culture, community, and curriculum. The *Defining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at SPA* initiative, launched in the fall of 2020, was an important step forward in that work. We invited our community to examine the intersection between our ideals and life at SPA as a lived experience. The task force that guided this project began with two deceptively simple questions: Does every student at SPA have an equal chance to thrive? Are there habits and practices that inhibit our quest to create an inclusive community? As we have pursued this work over the last two years, we have recognized another fundamental guiding concern: does everyone in the SPA

community feel that our school is a true home for them, a place to which they belong in an authentic and genuine way?

Chaired by Naomi Taylor, Director of Intercultural Life, and co-chaired by Bryn Roberts, Head of School, and Dr. Jill Romans, Assistant Head of School for Student Development and Community Engagement, the task force oversaw the launch of a climate survey, which generated a voluminous response from students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni/ae, and inspired a series of focus groups for current students and families to gather for additional conversation about specific areas of school life. We partnered with Independent School Management (ISM), the largest independent school consulting firm in North America, to develop, administer, and report our findings, and we were also guided by a team from NP Strategies, a strategic planning consultancy in San Diego, in collating and analyzing the data.

This Strategic Action Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) is the result of this work. The plan's initiatives—some of which have already begun—are the direct outgrowth of the learning of the last two years. The plan's six areas of focus were created to support all aspects of the SPA community as we look to deepen our commitment to this work.

Our work will be judged a success if we can respond to our guiding questions in the affirmative in the years ahead. If we as a community and as individuals work strenuously towards that goal, then we can become a more fully perfect version of ourselves.

Living our Mission: Guiding principles for our DEIB Action plan

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are central to SPA's mission of shaping the minds and the hearts of the people who will change the world. As an institution and as a community, we are committed to ensuring that all students, staff, and families feel empowered to thrive and that all races, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, and gender identities are respected and valued.

SPA's commitment to shaping the minds and hearts of all who walk through our doors through our DEIB work is key to developing critical thinkers and compassionate citizens. Our work is a lifelong commitment to fostering a supportive, inclusive, anti-racist community in which current and future generations of students are celebrated, valued, and affirmed, and where all community members can bring their authentic selves to school. We know this work is ongoing and that we must be open to change in our focus areas, our definitions, and our approaches. We are committed to the process of continually evaluating and evolving the way we do this work.

A shared language around DEIB work is fundamental to our success. Below are definitions for terms used throughout this plan:

- **Diversity:** A diverse community is made up of individuals with a wide range of identities, backgrounds, and perspectives.
- **Equity:** An equitable community is one in which members receive the support and opportunities they need to thrive and to develop their full academic, professional, and social potential.
- **Inclusion and Belonging:** An inclusive community is one in which members feel a sense of belonging and connectedness, and where they feel authentically valued and appreciated.
- **BIPOC:** An umbrella term used to identify Black, Indigenous, and people of color in a person-first context.
- **LGBTQIA+:** An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual/aromantic, and plus for other identities that are not straight and/or not cisgender.

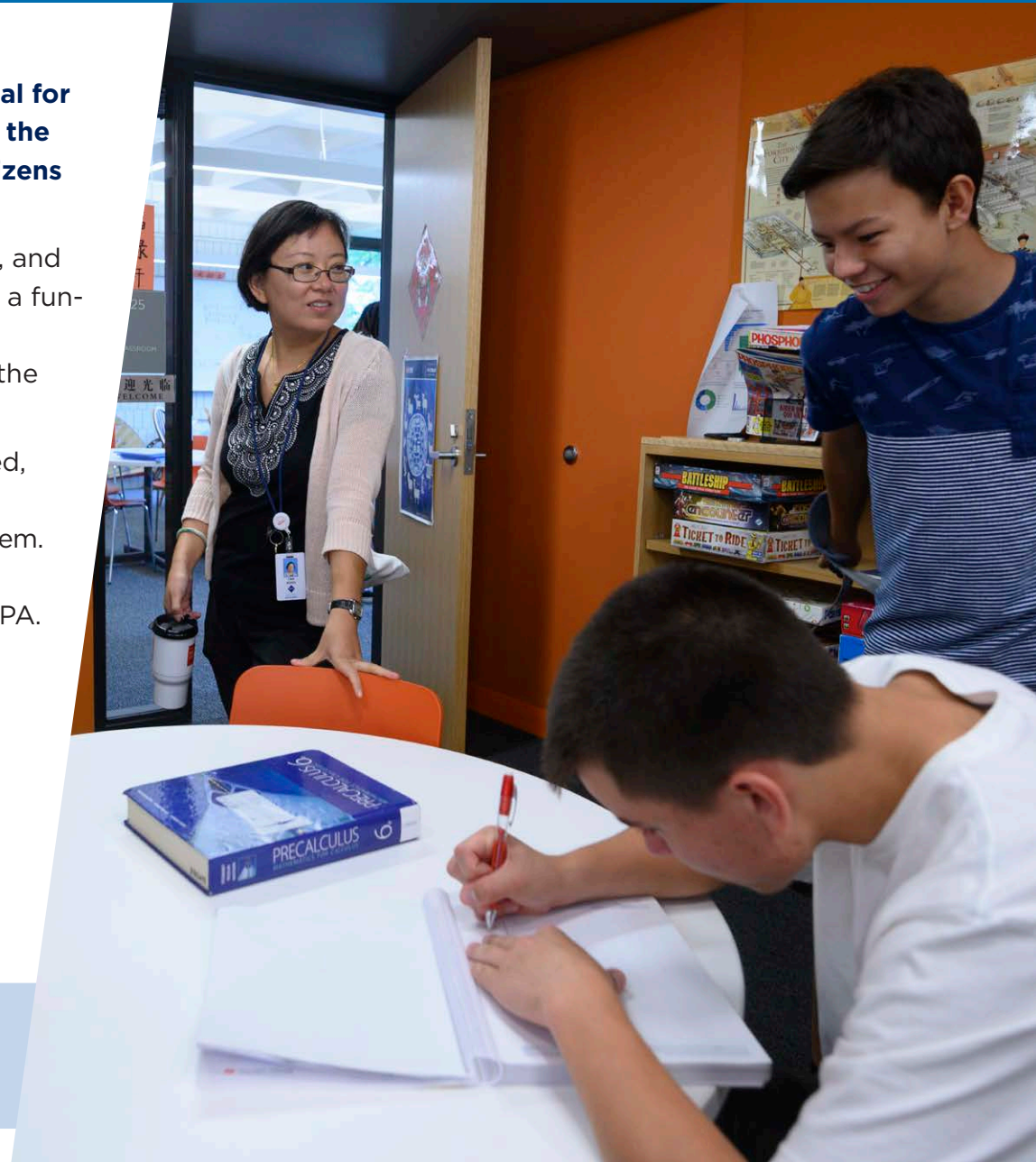
Why is a DEIB Strategic Action Plan important for our school?

Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work is critical for a thriving school climate. It helps our students develop the understanding, respect, and skills to be responsible citizens and leaders.

Our vision is a school in which diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are core to the identity of the community and a fundamental part of the experience at SPA. We will know we have made progress towards achieving this vision in the following ways:

- When all members of the SPA community feel supported, secure, and welcome, and have access to opportunities that help them to achieve their dreams as they define them. A primary goal is to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity to thrive in all aspects of life at SPA.
- When the student, faculty, and staff community reflect the ethnic, racial, and gender diversity of the Twin Cities.
- When BIPOC graduates report that they felt, seen, heard, and valued as students. They would recommend the school to prospective BIPOC students and they express a desire to be engaged as alumni/ae because they are proud to represent the school.

OUR DEIB STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN WILL HELP US COORDINATE OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES.



Context for the DEIB Strategic Action Plan

SPA began our DEIB work many years ago with the development of our first Diversity Action Plan in the early 2000s. Stemming from that initial plan, we hired our first Dean of Diversity in 2005; in 2017, the title of the role was changed to K-12 Director of Intercultural Life. Key milestones in our DEIB work include:

2016-2018

- In 2016, all K-12 employees underwent a 2-day training called *Beyond Diversity: Courageous Conversations About Race*. SPA adopted the CCAR protocol for navigating cultural commonalities and differences.
- We added Intercultural Life Working Groups and Intercultural Life Liaisons in each division.
- In 2017-2018 we created and adopted *Guidelines In Support of Gender Diversity*.
- In 2018-19, we expanded affinity groups to include Common Ground Jr. for students in grades K-5.

K-12 BIPOC STUDENTS:

2016-17 = 29% BIPOC
2017-18 = 31% BIPOC
2018-19 = 32% BIPOC

2019-2021

- In 2019, Dr. Naomi Taylor joined SPA as Director of Intercultural Life.
- We concluded a five-year Penumbra Theater partnership focused on the experience of BIPOC students in the Upper School.
- We expanded our MS affinity groups (2019) and added adult affinity groups (2020).
- In 2021, we initiated a Climate Survey to hear from constituents and have data to drive our continued efforts.

K-12 BIPOC STUDENTS:

2019-20 = 33% BIPOC
2020-21 = 34% BIPOC

TODAY: 2021-2022

- We expanded the Office of International Life with a new Intercultural Life Program Specialist for Grades 6-12.
- We have more than 25 DEIB affinity and special interest groups across all divisions for students, and have added 3 adult affinity and special interest groups.
- We created the Intercultural Life Faculty Fellowship program to provide DEIB professional development as part of an effort to build the internal capacity of peer coaches.
- We hired a full-time BIPOC Recruiting Specialist.

K-12 BIPOC STUDENTS:

2021-22 = 38% BIPOC
50% of students new to SPA in fall 2021 identified as BIPOC

WE NOW HAVE THE INFORMATION AND GREATER CAPACITY TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN INSTITUTION-WIDE PLAN.

Climate survey and listening efforts: key findings that drive our work

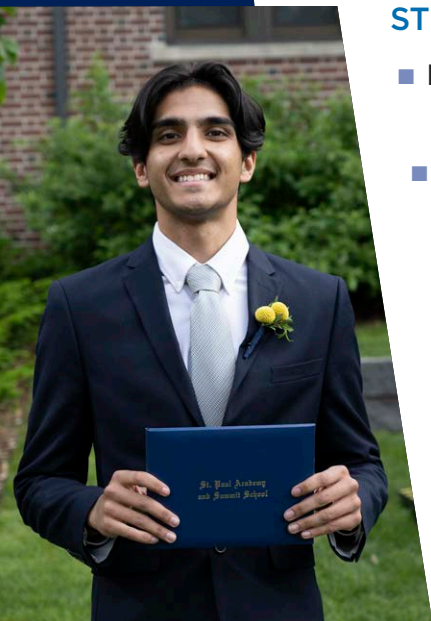
SPA conducted a DEIB climate survey and a series of listening sessions that included student focus groups and one-on-one interviews with employees, parents and alumni/ae. Our learning from their work informed the major focus areas for this DEIB Strategic Action Plan. Key findings from our climate survey and listening process included:

OVERARCHING THEMES

- In the survey, comments related to student, parent and employee sense of belonging, inclusion, and community at SPA were overwhelmingly positive.
- There are opportunities to deepen DEIB work at SPA. These include the ways in which we hire and retain BIPOC faculty/staff, embed diverse histories and perspectives into curricula, and provide additional education/development opportunities to strengthen understanding of DEIB issues for employees and students.
- Across all groups, SPA faculty were highlighted as a key factor in the sense of community and belonging at SPA, though recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color was identified as a key area for improvement.
- Overall, SPA students reported high levels of satisfaction with their experience at SPA. However, students of color, students who reported their gender as something other than male or female, students who identified with the LGBTQIA+ community, and students who reported they receive financial aid all rated their experiences lower than other groups.
- Jokes and microaggressions made towards and about marginalized communities were also identified as a key area for improvement based on student observations.



Climate survey and listening efforts: key findings that drive our work, continued



STUDENTS

- In the survey, BIPOC students who identified as Black/African American, Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian-American, and Hispanic/Latino rated their experiences lower than other groups.
- This was supported by the student focus groups: BIPOC students reported that the lack of diversity at SPA is an issue. They feel less welcome, especially when they often find themselves the only or one of very few BIPOC students in a class or group; they also reported feeling that some faculty treat them differently and hold them to different standards and expectations than their White peers.
- Jokes, comments, and microaggressions among students, most of which occur in unstructured/social spaces were raised as a concern in the survey and focus groups.
- BIPOC students and students who identified as LGBTQIA+ cited a lack of accountability and transparency regarding how the administration responds to instances of racist and homophobic behavior and comments, particularly in the Upper School.
- Some expressed concern that those from historically dominant groups (white, cis, male, Christian) are silenced at SPA, and that only progressive voices can participate in discourse.



EMPLOYEES

- Recruitment and retention of BIPOC faculty and staff was one of the key areas for improvement identified in the climate survey.
- Employees reported that a students' socioeconomic status, race, and political views (in that order) impact their experience at the school; they also reported that an employee's race, socioeconomic status, and gender (in that order) impact their experience.
- In open-ended comments, employees identified a need to deepen DEIB work at SPA, including hiring and retaining staff of color, embedding DEIB work into all areas of curriculum and school policy, providing additional DEI learning opportunities, and addressing microaggressions.

Focus Areas

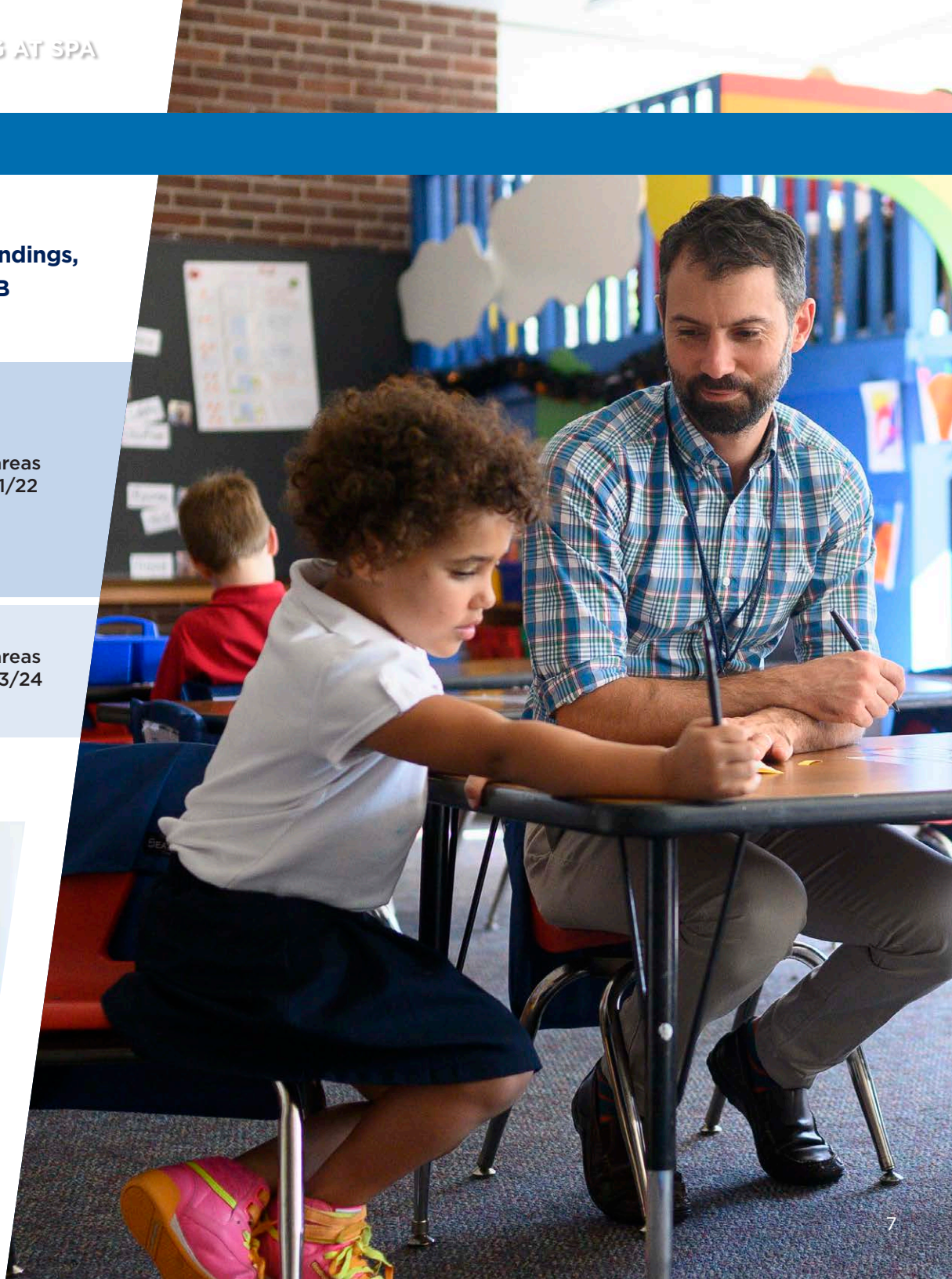
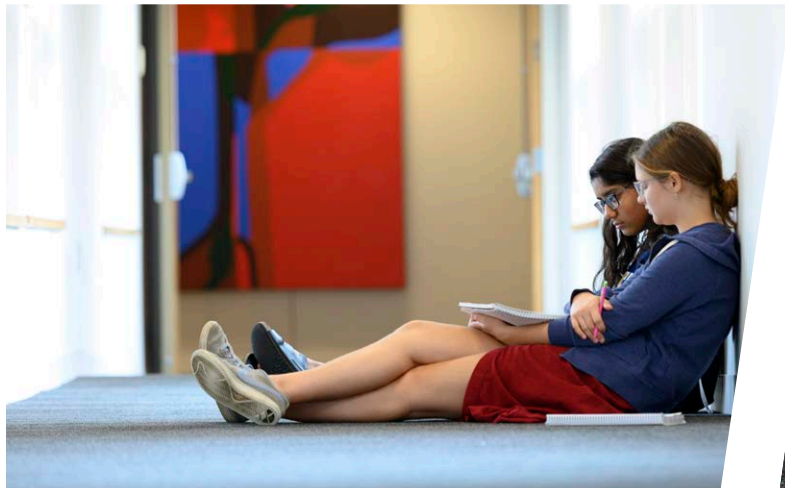
Based on our climate survey and listening data and findings, we have identified 6 major focus areas for our DEIB Strategic Action Plan:

Student Experience and Programming
Recruiting, Retaining, and Supporting
BIPOC Faculty and Staff
Curriculum and Academic Programming
Board of Trustee Leadership, Vision,
and Accountability

Focus areas
for 2021/22

Training and DEIB Professional
Development
Community Engagement

Focus areas
for 2023/24



Focus Area 1: Student Experience and Programming

Leads: Divisional Principals

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
1A) Identify and implement ways to welcome and include new students and families into the school community	Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and implement improved processes for recruiting and onboarding new BIPOC students and families
1B) Increase sense of belonging for Black and Brown and Latinx students, LGBTQIA+ and students with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds	Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and implement improvements and/or enhancements to programs for Black and Brown, Latinx, LGBTQIA+ students and students with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g. affinity groups, past programming, etc.)
1C) Improve school culture and programs across divisions to include cultural responsiveness and eliminate microaggressions	Ongoing: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LS: Make improvements to Toolbox to enhance cultural responsiveness and positive identity development• MS: Make improvements to Developmental Designs to enhance cultural responsiveness and positive identity development• US: Identify and implement a program for US• ALL: (1) Identify and implement opportunities for faculty professional development and divisional programming. (2) Develop a process for addressing any reported microaggressions or experiences

Focus Area 2: Recruiting and Supporting BIPOC Faculty and Staff

Lead: Director of Human Resources

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
2A) Improve recruitment processes and support to increase BIPOC faculty and staff at SPA	<p>Year 1 (2021-2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, compile recommendations, and prioritize strategies to improve how we recruit, hire and support BIPOC faculty • Determine outside resources needed and budget implications • Hire a full-time BIPOC Recruitment and Hiring Specialist <p>Year 2 (2022-2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and implement strategies for recruiting, hiring, and supporting BIPOC teachers • Update website for employment hiring to attract BIPOC faculty and staff • Develop a process to collect and track data on recruitment and retention of BIPOC faculty and staff
2B) Identify and implement ways to welcome and include BIPOC faculty and staff into the school community	<p>Year 1 (2021-2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, evaluate and prioritize recommendations for improving current processes for onboarding new faculty and staff <p>Years 2 and 3 (2022-2024)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement opportunities for improvement in onboarding processes
2C) Eliminate incidents of microaggressions to build a positive culture for all faculty and staff	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure faculty and staff have a channel to report microaggressions and experiences • Develop a process for following up on any reported microaggressions or experiences (repeat this in student)

Focus Area 3: Curriculum and Academic Programming

Lead: Assistant Head of School for Academic Programs

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
3A) Map DEIB in the curriculum across divisions to determine where we are now and identify gaps in content/materials and pedagogy	Year 1 (2021-2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop DEIB curriculum mapping tool• Implement DEIB curriculum mapping and complete mapping exercise Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate data gathered to identify patterns, gaps, redundancies, opportunities• Propose curricula/pedagogical modifications
3B) Based on DEIB curriculum mapping, implement modifications around pluralism and cultural responsiveness in the curriculum (content, materials, and pedagogy)	Year 2 (2023-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize recommendations for curricular modifications Years 2 and 3 (2023-2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implement modifications to academic program• Determine outside resources needed and budget implications



Focus Area 4: Board of Trustee Leadership, Vision, and Accountability

Leads: Head of School and Board President

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
4A) Develop a statement of the school's vision for DEIB	2022-2023 school year in consultation with the new Head of School
4B) Define expectations for the Board of Trustees' ongoing education in DEIB	2022-2023 school year in consultation with the new Head of School
4C) Determine how DEIB will inform the operation and structure of the Board of Trustees	2022-2023 school year in consultation with the new Head of School
4D) Conduct periodic organization assessment	Ongoing



Focus Area 5: DEIB Professional Development, and Capacity

Lead: Director of Intercultural Life

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
5A) Identify and implement program and foundation for DEIB Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and integrate core competencies for all staff, including positive identity development and racial literacy	Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify an external program to build foundational skills and core competencies• Develop a plan to determine resources needed
5B) Assess priorities and capacity of the Office of Intercultural Life to carry out DEIB Strategic Plan	Year 1 (2021-2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate capacity of the Office of Intercultural Life Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on institutional priorities, assess resources needed to execute DEIB Strategic Action Plan
5C) Develop and share a library of resources and tools	Years 2 and 3 (2022-2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a digital resource for faculty and staff• Develop a digital resource for families• Update DEIB website

Focus Area 6: Community Engagement

Lead: Assistant Head of School for Student Development and Community Engagement

WHAT (GOALS)	HOW (ACTION STEPS)/TIMELINE
6A) Parent engagement	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement opportunities for improvement in how we welcome and partner with our families
6B) Review SPA messaging and communications materials given DEIB goals	Year 2 (2022-2023) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine internal/external messaging from DEIB perspective Identify and implement opportunities for improvement with a DEIB lens
6C) Connect and engage alumni/ae of color	Years 2 and 3 (2022-2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to connect alumni/ae of color with current students of color Foster relationship of alumni/ae of color with the school Implement a systematic way to reach out to alumni of color when jobs are posted Identify local cultural communities and organizations to broaden our community (e.g. alternative classroom space and learning in the community, win-win partnerships with other orgs)

A photograph of four young students, two girls and two boys, climbing a green spiral playground structure. They are all smiling and appear to be enjoying the activity. The students are wearing school uniforms: red shirts and dark blue skirts for the girls, and white shirts and dark blue skirts for the boys. They are also wearing lanyards with ID cards. The background shows a chain-link fence and some greenery.

Metrics: Tracking our progress

To track our DEIB Strategic Action Plan progress and impact we will monitor the following areas:

STUDENTS:

- Enrollment and retention rate of BIPOC students and reasons for attrition
- Self-reported lived experience of students through periodic assessment (inclusion survey at the end of year 3)

FACULTY AND STAFF:

- Hiring and retention rate of BIPOC faculty and staff and reasons for attrition
- Self-reported lived experience of faculty and staff through periodic assessment (inclusion survey at the end of year 3)

PROCESS:

- Annual review of our DEIB Strategic Action Plan goals and progress
- Periodic organizational assessment /climate survey
- Identification and allocation of resources where appropriate to execute our plan



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