

EQUITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



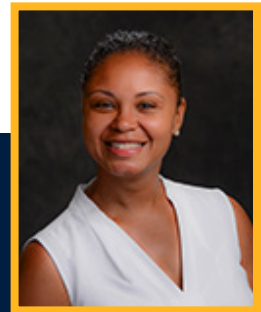
July 2021 Progress Report



Shady Side Academy Equity and Inclusion Action Plan

At Shady Side Academy, we recognize our responsibility to ensure all of our community members feel welcomed, supported and appreciated. In the summer of 2020, we listened intently to more than 450 community members as they shared their stories, concerns and hurt. From those listening sessions and with much reflection, we created our Equity and Inclusion Action Plan as a framework to address systemic bias and to affect positive cultural change at SSA. The plan was announced to the community on July 15, 2020.

Twelve months later, we are encouraged by our progress, recognizing that sustainable change takes time and is ongoing with a multi-year and multi-generational approach. With the support of parents, students, faculty, alumni and community members, we have made great strides to establish foundational support and structures that improve our ability to make our community more equitable and inclusive. Our Equity and Inclusion Action Plan will continue to evolve, as we acknowledge that we still have much to learn and do. First, however, we are pleased to share the progress we have made during the 2020-2021 school year.



Ms. Lillian Grate

Director of Equity, Inclusion
and Community Relations

P: 412-447-2213

E: lgrate@shadysideacademy.org

TO ADVANCE OUR VISION AND LEADERSHIP, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Dedicate the work of the Board of Trustees' Community Life Committee, led by alumnus parent and trustee Jeff McDaniel '88, to the oversight and evaluation of the administration's ongoing equity and inclusion work, and the initiatives identified below.
- Enlist the support of an outside consultant to direct a thorough, objective review of Shady Side's climate and policies in order to identify key areas of improvement for our equity and inclusion practice.
 - In 2020-2021, SSA enlisted the support of Storbeck Search and Associates, under the direction of Nishant Mehta and Sherry Coleman, Ed.D., to direct a thorough and objective review of Shady Side's climate and policies to provide insight and identify key areas of improvement in relation to creating a more diverse and inclusive community. As a result, we were provided with key recommendations to help inform our current practices and increase our accountability in the community. These recommendations will be used internally to inform our professional development programming, outreach and hiring practices.
- Expand the Office of Equity and Inclusion through the appointment of an assistant program coordinator and the launch of an early career fellowship program.
- Support the continued development of our new Black Alumni Council and establish a range of other affinity groups for alumni of color with an emphasis on engagement, support and student connections.
 - The African American Alumni Advisory Council serves as an advisory council to SSA through the Office of Equity and Inclusion to help address matters pertaining to African American students and African American alumni community life. The council hosted several events to support our African American students in 2020-2021, including a discussion series with the Senior School Black Student Union (BSU).
 - The Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness (IDEA) Alumni Committee was established in 2020-2021, with selected members representing a diversity of backgrounds, experiences and class years. The committee's mission is to enhance the Academy's alumni engagement, programming and outreach to be more inclusive and equitable, with a focus on promoting awareness and programming that benefits current and future alumni of color. The committee will provide feedback to both the Alumni Council and the Community Life Committee of the Board of Trustees to make an impact on several institutional levels. On March 9, 2021, the IDEA Committee held a Zoom meet and greet for alumni to learn more about its work and to share perspectives on how to improve our community's cohesiveness.



TO CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Review expectations for student conduct and make more explicit our intolerance of behaviors that compromise the experience of our community members.
- Review both the language and implementation of disciplinary policies on each campus to make certain that acts of prejudice, discrimination, and racial insensitivity are not tolerated and that the disciplinary process is clear and transparent.
 - In 2020-2021, SSA began collaborating with the Piedmont Dispute Resolution Center on the pilot and launch of a restorative practice disciplinary model at the Senior School. Restorative practice is a framework that provides transparency and is used to build community through relationship building, respect, responsibility, repair, and reintegration when responding to challenging behavior. The Senior School deans and Residential Life faculty began training on restorative practices in June 2020 and will have ongoing coaching.
- Conduct a rigorous review and revision of the PK-12 curriculum to ensure it affords a strong representation of the voices, stories, and positive contributions of Black and historically underrepresented individuals and groups.
- Partner with organizations that empower students to navigate social media and technology positively in support of healthy relationships, character development and wellness.
 - In September 2020, SSA announced a three-year partnership with The Social Institute (TSI) in support of a curriculum dedicated to positive social media and technology use and social-emotional health and wellness. The TSI #WinAtSocial curriculum will be used in grades 5-12 and amplify students' ability to make smart, positive decisions on social media platforms by reinforcing positive character attributes. In 2020-2021, SSA established TSI coaches on each campus and held #WinAtSocial curriculum training for Middle and Senior School faculty. An informational webinar for PK-12 parents and an assembly presentation for Senior School students were also held. The #WinAtSocial curriculum will be implemented in grades 5-12 beginning in the 2021-2022 school year via the advisory program.
- Augment cultural competency, inclusion, and racial equity education for faculty, staff, and administration; establish a professional development and evaluation program that integrates these components as permanent measures of professional learning.



TO ENSURE OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROMOTES OPEN AND CIVIL DISCOURSE, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Establish community norms for civil discourse and the expression and tolerance of different perspectives.
 - In September 2020, a Community Collaboration Committee composed of Senior School student leaders was formed to develop Community Norms to promote civil discourse and the tolerance of different perspectives at SSA. The new Community Norms for Civil Discourse were launched at the Senior School in late September 2020 and shortly afterward at the Middle School. The norms were used throughout the year as a guide to practice civil discourse and to have difficult conversations. The norms were featured in EAB's Toolkit for Civil Campus Discourse.
 - Senior School student leaders from the Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA), Black Student Union (BSU), Asian Student Union (ASU), Federalist Society and Diversity Leadership Council (DLC) joined together to hold meetings throughout the year to discuss current issues.
 - In partnership with the Diversity Leadership Council, the Office of Equity and Inclusion hosted six civil discourse conversation spaces on various issues and current events to practice our Community Norms while exploring perspectives and listening to one another.
- Clarify expectations for the faculty and administration regarding the sharing of personal views in classroom and educational settings.
 - In October 2020, the President's Office issued a guidance statement to faculty on political expression and speech in the classroom.
- Provide faculty and administration in-depth professional development that includes opportunities to engage and practice in civil discourse about difficult and challenging topics.
 - In fall 2020, the Office of Equity and Inclusion provided training to faculty on civil discourse in the classroom and met with teachers to discuss and clarify expectations.



TO MAKE CERTAIN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY BETTER REPRESENTS OUR DIVERSE CITY AND WORLD, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Create a new position on our executive leadership team reporting to the President and dedicated to the recruitment, retention, and development of a racially diverse and culturally competent faculty across all divisions.
 - In partnership with Storbeck and Associates, SSA created the new position of Chief Talent Recruitment and Development Officer (CTRDO), a role dedicated to the recruitment and professional growth of faculty and staff at SSA. A national search was launched in January 2021, and on April 27, Dr. Armani Davis was announced as Shady Side's inaugural CTRDO, effective July 1, 2021.
- Institute objectives, key metrics, and support for the recruitment and retention of Black and historically underrepresented administrators, faculty, and staff at all divisions.
- Broaden our outreach, engagement, and access efforts in order to enroll a more diverse student population across all divisions, with a particular focus on the increased enrollment of Black and Latinx students.
 - Meredith Colicchie, who joined Shady Side Academy in 2018 as the Senior School's Director of Admission for Boarding Students, will be expanding her role to Associate Director of Enrollment effective July 1, 2021. In her new role, she will partner with the Equity and Inclusion Office to examine the admissions process and develop strategies to increase enrollment of Black and Latinx students.
- Augment cultural competency, inclusion, and racial equity education for faculty, staff, and administration; establish a professional development and evaluation program that integrates these components as permanent measures of professional learning.

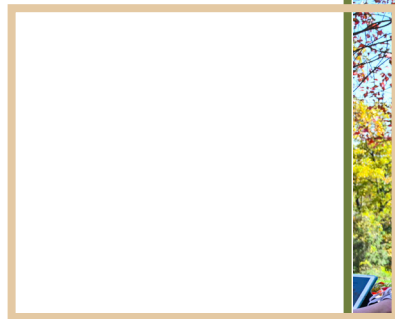


TO SUSTAIN AND PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THESE EFFORTS, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Establish an endowed equity and inclusion fund to provide both immediate and permanent financial support for these mission-critical initiatives. This fund will provide support above and beyond the annual operating budget.
 - SSA received an initial \$25,000 seed gift from Roland Criswell '95 in 2020.
 - As of January 13, 2021, a total of \$75,000 had been raised in gifts and pledges.
 - On June 1, 2021, SSA announced an anonymous \$2 million donation dedicated to academic and social support for talented students whose enrollment at Shady Side presents a uniquely challenging educational or cultural transition. The gift also helped to establish a permanent endowment for SSA's Equity and Inclusion Fund.

TO ASSESS OUR PROGRESS AND ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WILL:

- Publish annual progress reports for each of these action steps.
 - First annual progress report published in July 2021.
- Host open periodic Zoom meetings with community and alumni groups dedicated to discussing and collecting feedback about the school's ongoing equity and inclusion efforts.
 - On Nov. 11 2020, the Academy President and Director of Equity and Inclusion hosted a community Zoom meeting to provide an update on the Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.





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