



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan 2023-2024

Our Mission, Values, and Commitment to Equity establish the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion that guide our community. Our bilingual and international school includes many kinds of diversity, all of which we value. We are committed to working toward an equitable and inclusive experience for all members of our community. In light of ongoing anti-Black and anti-AAPI violence and in the context of systemic racism in this country and the world, we are continuing to create space for the voices and experiences of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and historically marginalized identities in our school community. This year's focus in our equity learning is to educate about and interrupt identity-based bias and harm around gender. To affirm and support identity is a part of our values-based commitment to create a community of belonging and inclusion at French American + International.

In this plan, we outline continuing and new work for this year in each of the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is more to do in each, we know; here we share our current areas of effort, building on the work of prior years. We will continue to share quarterly updates on our work in letters from Head of School Melinda Bihn, and we will update this plan as we move forward.

Increasing Diversity:

- **DEI Leadership:** In addition to supporting the leadership of our Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the members of the DEI Committee, we will continue to broaden the attention to equity practices among faculty, staff and administrative roles and section leaders throughout the school.
- **DEI Committee:** Our school-wide Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee comprises stipended faculty representatives from across the school. Committee members work with the Director of DEI and Maternelle DEI Coordinator to shape and lead professional learning and DEI programming in the sections.
- **Faculty Recruitment:** Research indicates that socially diverse organizations tend to be more successful and innovative. Our innovative international programs depend on this. To increase the number of BIPOC faculty and staff in our professional community, we will continue to interview at least two BIPOC candidates for every position. In addition, we will continue to broaden the scope of where and how we recruit candidates. We will continue to train our Leadership Team and other hiring leaders in interviewing all candidates for cultural competency.
- **Student Recruitment:** We will continue to build on existing relationships and, in collaboration with targeted daycare centers, preschools, middle schools and organizations, will build diverse applicant pools and support BIPOC families' transition to our programs.



- **Board Recruitment:** We will continue to develop the diversity of our Board, growing BIPOC and female representation in particular, and we will continue to cultivate more BIPOC representation in parent leadership opportunities as well.

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 community prizes. Ensuring full access to all aspects of our program is critical to an equitable experience of school. We will ensure that families receiving financial support are aware of our SUCCEED Program, which provides comprehensive support for the entire educational experience at French American and International.
- **Access to Success:** To support the academic and social-emotional success of all students, we will support Middle and High School faculty members in using culturally responsive teaching approaches and support Maternelle and Lower school faculty in using Responsive Classroom and Positive Discipline. Through ongoing monitoring, we will ensure that our BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ students have the appropriate support to be academically successful in our school.
- **Course Materials Review:** Our curriculum reflects a world-view that privileges the dominant culture. At every level of the school we will continue the systematic review of our materials with an anti-bias, anti-racist lens. Our Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning and section principals will lead us in evaluating and selecting course materials to increase representation.
- **Restorative Justice:** We will continue to implement Restorative Justice, a trauma-informed practice that uses mediated dialogue and community activities to help repair harm among community members during times of conflict, across the Middle and High Schools, training all section faculty and staff in this practice. Dialogue Circles, a fundamental component of this practice, will create a structure by which teachers and students communicate regularly in a facilitated dialogue to support relationship-building and manage community cohesion.

Ensuring Inclusion:

- **Building Connections and Communities of Belonging:** We will leverage key data about the experiences of our students, families, faculty, and staff from the NAIS *Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism* by connecting this information to inform our ongoing DEI planning and this year's current strategic plan. This work will focus on:
 - Strengthening relationships and connections between adults and students;
 - Addressing bullying, microaggressions and other breaches of school values to ensure accountability, repair harm, and encourage prevention;



- Building improved communication pathways to foster voice and agency among students, parents and faculty.
- **Understanding Identity and Belonging:** Guided by recommended texts and resources from leading practitioners in the field of equity work , we will continue to deepen faculty and staff learning about anti-bias practices. Faculty and staff will further their examination of personal identity with a focus on gender diversity to support culturally responsive teaching and social-emotional learning.
- **Parent Education:** In Principals' Coffees, schoolwide programming, and communications, we will provide parent education in our DEI work this year, especially in gender diversity, identity, and belonging.
- **Board Learning:** Our Board DEI Task Force develops the Board's inclusive practices and fosters our commitment to equity in policy. We will continue to build trustees' understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices through additional Board training. This year trustees' focus on identity work will develop their shared knowledge around gender diversity. This learning will again be extended to our Parent Association leaders.
- **Teaching Inclusion and Equity in our Curriculum:** Our Mission, Values, and Commitment to Equity call us to respond to events in the world around us and to address the needs of our students in response to them. At the onset of the academic year, our grade retreats reinforce school values and behaviors, encourage positive relationship building, and teach strategies for conflict resolution. During the year, counselors and deans conduct lessons in being an upstander in the Maternelle and Lower School, and advisors will conduct these in the Middle and High Schools.
- **Affinity Groups:** These groups provide students, parents, and faculty with supportive, safe space to explore and affirm their identities and experiences. While continuing to develop new spaces as needed, we will work to distinguish the visibility between student clubs (interest, activity-based) and affinity groups (identity-based) to continue providing these important opportunities for community building. Our Director of DEI will provide resources to faculty and staff advisors of affinity groups and will foster the development of student leaders of affinity groups.