

THE MEADOWS SCHOOL



Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion
2023-2024


Purpose of Our DEI Document

This document serves as a compass, guiding us through The Meadows School's inspiring journey in nurturing academic excellence and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is a testament to our unwavering commitment to fostering a vibrant and inclusive community where every individual has a voice, every perspective is respected, and every student thrives.

With a foundation rooted in decades of educational achievement, The Meadows School seeks to provide a beacon of inspiration for students, parents, educators, alumni, and the wider community. We aim to celebrate our rich history and progress while setting our sights on an even more promising future. In the spirit of schools that serve as national exemplars, we intend to provide a comprehensive view of our current initiatives and triumphs.

We recognize the vital role each of you plays in shaping The Meadows School's future and invite you to engage with us—to partner in our journey of crafting an environment that stands as a testament to the transformative power of education. We welcome your insights, support, and commitment to this shared purpose, as we collectively create the best environment for the entire Meadows community.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey.



Dr. Jay Berckley
Head of School



Mr. Matthew Chilton
Board of Trustees Chair

The Meadows School is committed to
fostering a community of inclusivity and kindness.



DEI Mission & Definitions

In a welcoming environment, students are encouraged to share different experiences, thoughts, and opinions founded on the belief that a life-defining educational experience benefits everyone—all students, their families, and the community, on a local, national, and global scale. Our vibrant student body reflects the diversity of Las Vegas, Nevada, and the country at large.



Mission

The Meadows School is committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion as fundamental elements of our culture, ensuring a premier learning environment that fosters student success.



Diversity

Diversity is the representation of our community's varied identities through race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, abilities, learning differences, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It allows our community to draw on our varied perspectives and collectively access more knowledge than we could alone as individuals. It is a commitment to understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity within each individual.

Equity

Equity is ensuring each community member has access to what they need to succeed. This requires understanding the unique challenges and barriers faced by individuals or by groups and directing time, attention, and resources to provide supports to help them overcome those barriers. It requires actively working to challenge and respond to bias, harassment, and discrimination to create an environment built on respect and dignity. By combining diversity and equity, we can make meaningful progress towards inclusivity.

Inclusion

Inclusion is when all community members—students, alumni, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees—regardless of background, are welcome and encouraged to engage in all aspects of school life. An inclusive school promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members where the inherent worth of all people is recognized.



Key Milestones in Our DEI Journey

Early Initiatives & Programs

Officially founded in 1984 by Mayor Carolyn G. Goodman, The Meadows School embarked on its journey with a bold vision of transforming education. As written in the school's charter, The Meadows embraced a commitment to admit students from diverse backgrounds, and the school quickly gained momentum by combining academic excellence with a profound belief in the potential of its teachers and students. Today, The Meadows' financial aid program creates opportunities for all by awarding over \$2 million to the student body annually.

In the vibrant days of the 80s and 90s, The Meadows pioneered initiatives and programs that celebrated diversity, like the Chinese New Year Parade, the Spanish Club, trips to Spain and Japan, visits to culturally significant institutions like the Holocaust Museum, and musical theatre and arts programming selections to share diverse narratives. Many of these initiatives continue today, along with the establishment and growth of new affinity groups each year.

In the 2000s, the Board of Trustees approved the addition of counseling resources, demonstrating a commitment to the academic, physical, behavioral, and social-emotional well-being of our students. Over the past few years, counseling has expanded into a thriving Student Support Services program that champions inclusive educational approaches, alongside the implementation of ADA-compliant practices.

Reflecting on our journey, these initiatives and programs form a robust foundation of community and belonging at The Meadows School, aligning with the founders' vision.

Current Initiatives & Successes

As we delve into The Meadows School's journey of fostering a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, we find a tapestry of impactful initiatives that define our commitment to excellence. These endeavors align with our unwavering mission and dedication to shaping a brighter future for our entire school community.

- **Character Education:** As an extension of our long-standing citizenship program, we've implemented the Character Strong advisory initiative focused on empathy, respect, and kindness. We've also integrated the No Place for Hate program, ensuring that we continue to promote a campus culture characterized by inclusion and respect for all.
- **Collaborative Learning:** This year, we expanded our collaboration with the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) to deepen our faculty and staff's understanding of the significance of belonging in relation to emotional well-being and academic success.
- **Community Engagement:** We are actively engaged with a POC Community Group that includes faculty and staff at The Dawson and Adelson Schools. We also continue to engage with community organizations such as the Special Olympics, Miracle League, Opportunity Village, and Shine a Light to provide support, volunteers, and educational opportunities to strengthen our commitment to making a positive impact in the wider community.
- **Diverse Hiring:** We remain firm in prioritizing diverse hiring practices to welcome a wide-range of talented faculty and staff into our community, ensuring our team reflects the rich diversity of our student body and city.



- **Financial Aid:** The Meadows School continues to prioritize diversity in the classroom by awarding around \$2.4 million in tuition assistance annually. This allows us to bring in academically ambitious and able students from around Las Vegas who might not otherwise be able to afford a Meadows education.
- **Impactful Speakers:** To enrich our understanding of history, belonging, and kindness, we've welcomed influential speakers such as authors Anindya Kundu to speak on student agency, Michelle Borba to highlight the traits children need to thrive, and Adena Bernstein to discuss the Holocaust. In 2023, our commencement speaker, US Olympian Ashleigh Johnson, shared her experiences dealing with adversity as she attended Princeton and pursued the Olympics.
- **Meaningful Partnerships:** We've established partnerships with organizations like the Anti-Defamation League and the American Israeli Council to address and mitigate issues of slurs, offensive language, and identity-based bullying through comprehensive educational initiatives. These partnerships facilitate training, cultural exchange, and enrichment programs, fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Current Initiatives & Successes Continued

- **Professional Development:** We are unwavering in our ongoing investment in professional development. Our participation in conferences like the People of Color Conference, the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, and the NWAIS Diversity Conference keeps us at the forefront of educational best practices. Our Middle and Upper School faculty and staff also participated in anti-bias training earlier this school year, and our Beginning and Lower School faculty and staff will receive this training in the near future.
- **Student-Led Groups:** We passionately support new and established student groups like Allianza, the Black Student Union, the Asian Culture Club, the Multicultural Club, and the Gender Sexuality Alliance, fostering an inclusive community that celebrates our diverse backgrounds and interests.
- **Supporting Neurodiversity:** Our commitment to supporting neurodivergent students has grown. We've expanded our Student Support Services team to include an Academic Learning Specialist, an Intervention Specialist, a School Nurse, School Counselors, and Academic Coaches to ensure every student has the resources needed to excel academically.
- **The Windsong Scholarship:** Our long-standing Windsong Program, a scholarship to support disadvantaged students from K-12th grade, has fundamentally shaped the future of The Meadows by enhancing the community with cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity and strengthening the connection between the school and the broader community. The program has allowed us to increase underrepresented groups by 7% in each grade impacted by the program.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Reports Students of Color

28%

at Independent Day Schools
Nationwide

37%

at The Meadows School
as self-reported by 66% of TMS community

Future Initiatives to Consider & Develop Further

While we've made significant strides in our journey, we're excited to explore new horizons. Our objectives, both short and long-term, reflect our commitment to advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion within our institution:

- **Academic Objectives:** We're committed to fostering a culturally competent and inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity and equity. We'll utilize data analysis to inform instructional strategies, identify areas for improvement, and enhance educational outcomes for every student.
- **Community Collaborations:** Beyond the ADL, we plan to expand our partnerships with local community organizations to create a broader network of support and inclusion.
- **Parent Engagement:** We're committed to hosting more events like parent nights, conferences, and coffee gatherings to encourage open discussions about growth and opportunities, strengthen support systems, and enrich educational experiences.





Critical
Thinking



Social
Awareness



Global
Citizenship

Our Ongoing Commitment to DEI

Guided by Dr. Jay Berckley's visionary leadership and the resounding support of the Board of Trustees, The Meadows School is excited to journey further into a future filled with an unwavering commitment to academic excellence and social growth.

In this quest, we take inspiration from remarkable schools that exemplify the power of thoughtful DEI work. The Meadows School's vision for the future is deeply intertwined with a culture that encourages critical thinking, social awareness, and global citizenship. We aim to strengthen DEI within our community, where learning experiences are enriched by a tapestry of diverse perspectives, ensuring that our students are not only academically adept but also equipped to navigate a complex world with empathy and understanding. In our pursuit of a more inclusive school, we stand in solidarity with educational leaders who recognize that inclusivity is not just a buzzword but a way of life. By actively fostering a culture of belonging, respect, and collaboration, we hope to cement ourselves as an environment where students, faculty, and families find a second home, embodying the essence of our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

We invite all community members to participate in this important work by embracing our shared values and principles, attending informative sessions and workshops, and actively engaging with DEI initiatives. We believe that a strong commitment to this shared mission will result in a future where every student at The Meadows School not only achieves academic excellence but also benefits from the invaluable lessons of diversity, equity, and inclusion, empowering them to make a difference in the world.

We look forward to the continued support, involvement, and contributions of our Meadows family as we strive to shape a future that epitomizes the very best in education.



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www.themeadowsschool.org