



DEPARTMENT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2027

Prepared by:

Armen Karamanian, Ph.D.

Director of Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Approved by:

Carlos Castillo, Ed.D.

Chief of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Division

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## Strategic Plan: 2024-2027

### Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

#### Welcome to the DEI Strategic Plan

The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is situated within the Division of DEI, under the leadership of Dr. Carlos Castillo - Chief of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Department was created in early 2023 to highlight the district’s position on strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion practices and programs with the goal of making the district a more inclusive space for all our students, staff, and families. The Department’s work is focused on four elements of the DEI Action Framework (image below), namely building knowledge of *Cultural Proficiency*, strengthening *Culturally Responsive Practices*, increasing *Multicultural Experiences*, and empowering *Social Action*. The Department believes that the successful delivery of DEI work through the four Action Framework elements will help get us closer to our district’s overarching goals of improving student outcomes and achieving operational excellence.



## Department Mission

To eradicate institutional bias of any kind, including implicit or unintentional biases and prejudices that affect student achievement and their overall well-being, and to create an inclusive and equity-driven district that allows our students to excel academically and achieve their greatest potential. The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will recommend actions, implement processes, and lead trainings that empower our staff, families, and students, with addressing and eliminating biases and institutional barriers that negatively influence student learning, perpetuate achievement gaps, and impede equal access and inclusion to opportunities for all students.



Image: New FUSD staff participating in the department's 8-hour Cultural Proficiency training

## Department Value Statement

The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion values the partnerships fostered with staff throughout our district that lead to more equitable and inclusive practices that increase staff wellbeing and student success. The department values the connections built with our families through trainings and workshops that allow our families greater access to our system and the ability to advocate for their students through a more nuanced understanding of their student's identity and their required support. Finally, the department values the need to create inclusive spaces for all our students with the aim of ensuring our schools are safe spaces in which our students can focus on their continued academic success and achieve their greatest potential.

## Department Vision

The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will be recognized as a support-driven team ready to assist all staff with practices, policies, workshops, and trainings that relate to any element of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Department will be known for its *frequent* and *fixed* delivery of Cultural Proficiency trainings and related programs and workshops, available to staff, students, and families, and the delivery of presentations and meetings with students to address Culturally Unhealthy Behavior. The Department will be the central point of contact for support, services, and awareness of the American Indian Education Program, the Latino Students Union, and the Latinx Affinity Group – *La Voz*. We will strive to be the Department that works to uplift our historically marginalized student groups, our majority student group, and all FUSD students. All work performed by the Department will be supported by comprehensive data collection and analysis that will be used to highlight successes and changes.

## Overarching Action Framework Strategies

The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has set out its general goals for 2024-2027 relating to each of the four Action Framework elements. Specific program-level strategies are found on page 9:

### 1. Cultural Proficiency

The Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will deliver a consistent set of trainings to school site staff, students, families, and community partners including School Resource Officers and members of the FUSD expulsion panel, relating to Cultural Proficiency<sup>1</sup>. This set of trainings will include intensive and short trainings on cultural proficiency developed for all our staff, workshops that assist our families to better advocate for their students that will be available in the three most spoken languages in Fresno Unified, and tailored trainings for students on inclusivity and identity that create more culturally proficiency school sites.



Image: An intensive cultural proficiency training attended by school site and district staff in 2024.

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<sup>1</sup> Cultural Proficiency is about educating through knowing, valuing, and using as assets our and others' cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles within the context of our teaching.

## 2. Culturally Responsive Practices

The Department will develop and lead programs that are culturally responsive to the communities of our district, and partner with other departments to address the need for culturally responsive decision making and practices. Projects will focus on creating a space for staff to share ideas and solutions, so as to proactively address future concerns or issues. These shared spaces will also include affinity groups, including *La Voz*, the districts Hispanic/Latinx Affinity Group and other proposed groups, that bring together staff of common cultures with the aim of fostering inclusion, professional development, and aid in understanding and appreciating student identity. Partnerships with other departments will also be a priority and will ensure culturally responsive decision making and practices that benefit our students and their families. The department will strive to be a visible partner throughout our district when student, staff, or family concerns arise that relate to culturally unhealthy behavior and policies.

Image: School Choice Expo 2023. Hosted by the department, the event provides an equitable opportunity for all families and students to explore programs offered by our speciality schools, available virtually and in-person.





Image: Kids taking part in cultural activities at the Department’s Hispanic affinity group kick-off event, “La Voz”.

### 3. Multicultural Experiences

The Department will create and implement numerous programs related to the promotion of multiculturalism and increased participation in multicultural activities by students and staff with the aim of growing our staff and student understanding of the cultures around them.



Image: Students attending the district’s inaugural American Indian Senior Recognition Ceremony



The department's programs will include the strengthening of connections between our various Latino/a/x Students Unions and the creation of Native American Student Clubs at each of our comprehensive high schools. In addition, the department will be the contact point for school site staff and parent/family associations that are looking to explore multiculturalism in the district and at their school site.



Image: The district's first Native American Student Club, started at Fresno High School and supervised by the Department's American Indian Education Program.

#### 4. Social Action

The Department will implement effective programs that address social injustice and issues that affect our students' lives, both in society and at the school site. In partnership with existing resources and programs in the district, the department will work to develop new content and programs that allow our students to broaden their understanding of the world around them, actively participate in their community, and pursue a journey of better self-understanding through an inside-out approach that influences how they relate to other students, their school community, and the world at large. Additionally, the department will develop training that supports our staffs'

understanding of social and educational injustice for staff to proactively address concerns at school sites and share knowledge of societal injustices with students.



Image: High School students from the district's 7 comprehensive high schools take part in the department's pilot Multicultural Summit aimed at promoting greater understanding of each other's cultures and becoming more culturally proficiency.

#### Department's Strategies (Specific): 2024-2027

The development of our Departmental Strategies are based on our Department's SWOT Analysis and our district's two overarching goals of Improving Student Outcomes and Achieving Operational Excellence:

1. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will have delivered 12 **Intensive Cultural Proficiency trainings** (32-hr/4-Day course) that includes a staff member from each of our 106~ school sites, resulting in approximately 360 graduates from the Intensive Cultural Proficiency training. This strategy aligns with the district's goal of improving student outcomes by creating more inclusive and welcoming school sites for our students to learn and grow.

2. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will have participated in every **New Employee Orientation** organized by Human Resources, delivering an 8-Hr Cultural Proficiency training at each session attended by all new employees to the district. This strategy aligns with the district's two goals of improving student outcomes by training new staff on the importance of Cultural Proficiency during their interactions with our students, but also achieving greater operational excellence by demonstrating the importance of our community and families within the FUSD setting.
3. By June 2027, the Department will have grown a **Communities of Practice** for staff who have completed the Cultural Proficiency intensive training. This Communities of Practice will include regional workshops or district-wide training. Training workshops will be developed in addition to a formal regional-based working group of Cultural Proficiency champions. The aim of the Communities of Practice is in line with the district's goal of improving student outcomes by empowering our staff to create more equitable school sites that reflect our students and align with the strengths and assets of each student.
4. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, will have organized and delivered the **School Choice** event both virtually and in person in November of each year. The department will aim to have an increase in 10% attendance each year. The School Choice event is aligned with both improving student outcomes and achieving operational excellence by increasing student and family access to the wide range of programs available in our district.
5. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will have partnered as a permanent thought-partner with **Parent University** (Family Outreach) delivering a yearly workshop/training in support of our families. The aim of this strategy is to strengthen family access to our district and empower our families to advocate for their students.
6. By June 2027, the Department will have partnered with the **Department of Prevention and Intervention** to provide a workshop/training for elementary school students on the importance of Cultural Proficiency to their learning and at the school site. The purpose of this strategy is

to strengthen student outcomes by allowing students to better understand themselves and society around them in order to focus on their academic journey.

7. By June 2027, the Department will have developed a program in support of our African-American Middle School students highlighting the importance of Cultural Proficiency at the school site and to prepare them for their journey into High School. This strategy is in line with improving student outcomes as students' understanding of the environment around them is strengthened, thereby allowing students to focus on academic outcomes.
8. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will have created and rolled out a permanent **working affinity group** for our Hispanic staff. The purpose of which is to encourage professional learning, mentoring, and networking for our largest demographic in staffing, with the purpose of developing programs and initiatives to support our largest student group.
9. By June 2027, the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's American Indian Education Program will have created a Native American Student Club in at least 4 Comprehensive High Schools, with each student group delivering at least one culturally-relevant initiative/project at their school site.
10. By June 2027, the Department will have **expanded the Native American** (American Indian) Program to include at least 2 staff members so as to increase academic services and school site support to our Native American student population and educational initiatives for our staff. This strategy aligns with our district's goal of operational excellence in the development of relationships and bond with our Native communities and tribes, as well as improving student outcomes through the provision of tutoring and other academic services to our Native students.
11. The American Indian Education Program will hold an annual Senior Recognition ceremony to celebrate and honor our Native American (Senior) students for achieving this special milestone. This strategy aligns with the district's goal of achieving operational excellence through the strengthening of ties between our district and the Central Valley's Native communities and tribes.

12. All projects, trainings, and workshops led by the Department from 2024-2025 to 2026-2027 will be supported by **data** that has been collected by attending participants (students, staff, families, community). The data will be reported at the end of each year and submitted to the Chief of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion division. Data will be used to provide evidence of staff, student, and family satisfaction with the service being provided, with unsatisfactory data leading to the redevelopment or cancellation of the service.

Thank you for taking the time to better understand the work and intended plan of the Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. For questions relating to this internal strategic planning document, please contact Dr. Armen Karamanian at (559) 457 3811 or

[armen.karamanian@fresnounified.org](mailto:armen.karamanian@fresnounified.org)

**ACHIEVING**  
our **GREATEST**  
*Potential!*