



# DEI Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year

## Overview:

Woodside School District has a thriving and vibrant community that expresses great faith in the teaching faculty and administration. The faculty demonstrates high levels of engagement in their work and belief that the district can and should be effective in the realm of diversity, equity and inclusion. After several years of making attempts to slowly address factors related to student and family engagement in the school, WESD hired a consultant, Clarke Weatherspoon, for the 2020-2021 school year. The goal was to spend the 2020-2021 school year meeting with the school's administration, staff, School Board, Woodside Inclusion and Diversity Committee, and the PTA to assess the needs of the students, staff, and families in the school. This culminated with a DEI survey that was shared with parents and students to complete in the spring of 2021. While the numbers of parents who completed the survey were quite small compared to the total number of parents within the school, there was enough data to help identify several areas that can be easily addressed during the 2021-2022 school year.

One major element of this consultation has been to clarify what we mean by DEI. We acknowledge three main facts:

1. **Diversity** means difference. The district is already diverse. Diversity is measured in a wide range of ways. Race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, first language, nationality are all examples of diversity. Many other components of diversity exist.
2. **Equity** attends to the ability of the district to identify and meet the community members needs. How well the school listens to students and families, trains teachers and designs programs impacts the outcomes and opportunities for all students.

3. **Inclusion** is fundamentally about how people feel at school. Inclusion matters. Schools have changed in the last 30 years to a point where inclusion must be attended to at school. In 2021 It is unacceptable for any educational institution to knowingly create programs that don't seek to include all students and families.

There is also a clear need to make sure that all families understand what Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work actually means. It does not mean political activism or blaming any group of people. DEI work is about creating and meeting the best possible outcomes for all students. Our main work has focused on understanding how the district attends to these elements and trains community members to create the best outcomes for all. DEI work is very different from political activism.

Faculty and administration at WESD are in need of DEI training that aligns with the mission and values of the district. The school has high levels of buy-in and commitment at all levels. Senior administration demonstrates leadership acumen, curiosity, engagement and flexibility in this domain. They need time and support to learn and train. It is important for administrative training to happen in advance of faculty training so they can lead and help nurture faculty while remaining mindful of the need to give direction and maintain boundaries. Administration will need support to develop a clear set of objectives regarding the difference between effective DEI work and political activism while meeting the goal of supporting all students, families and the faculty.

Major recommendations and questions from the work conducted during the 2020-2021 school year:

**1. Create separate entities for DEI work in the district:**

- **Faculty/Staff** show high levels of interest in DEI work from faculty members. Spending time assessing the faculty in these areas will be particularly important for the work to be done. Faculty members will need training and administrative help in order to deepen support for families. In addition, a small number of faculty members should join a DEI committee to steer the partnership with administrators and other DEI professionals to help guide the DEI work for WESD.

- **Administration** needs a separate space to train, discuss, debate, align with state standards, partner with parents, consult other districts regarding best practices, and get a chance to share their concerns independent of other groups.
- **Parents** need education about the need for DEI work in the district and to voice any concerns they have. Parent goals, hopes and expectations should be separated from those of the faculty and the administration. WIDC is a really important group, though it is not a decision-making entity. On-going opportunities for parents to learn and ask questions are essential for a thriving DEI program in WESD.
- **School Board Members** also need a place to meet and discuss their leadership role in the process of supporting and guiding DEI work in the district. As leaders in the district, it will be important for the board members to discern between the regular concerns of a parent and the stewardship demands of the board members.
- Each of these groups should meet on a periodic basis and be provided with at least two opportunities per year to interface with the other groups. This should be conducted in accordance with the rules and by-laws of the district.

**2. Educate and partner with parents in the district.** Parents are rightfully nervous and anxious about what DEI means. Allow space for parents to doubt and continue to remind them of the requirements of the school with regard to support for all students and how curriculum changes actually happen. Inviting parents to partner with the district will be critical for successful DEI programming to take place.

**3. Don't rush the work.** Institutions often get themselves into trouble by rushing the work. Be attentive to what training is required, what lies outside the purview of the school and help teachers speak from discipline-specific and relevant areas of expertise. Rushing to make a difference can easily lead to chaos.

**4. Empower teachers through strong administrative and board leadership.** Strategic guidance from administration can help teachers understand what the DEI goals are and how to implement them. A lack of

understanding around what is needed or where the boundaries lie can be disorienting for teachers and can lead to fear on the part of parents. Leadership can create a sense of security and mission-alignment for all participants.

**5. See co-curricular spaces as critical to the success of DEI programming.** Some of the main work that will need to be done in the district is in the co-curricular spaces and how to make them feel more inclusive. Carpool, sports, festivities/events, recess are all places where students can experience exclusion and attending to them is critical for the overall experience of students in the district. Part of why this is a challenge is because many of these spaces are unsupervised and/or under-supervised, but students are required to be present. This can create more chances for students and families to feel excluded.

**Important Questions to consider:**

1. What is the role of education around race in the district?
2. What is the role of education around gender in the district?
3. What is the role of education around learning differences and ability in the district?
4. What is the role of education around socio-economic status and wealth in the district?
5. What types of faculty professional development and training are required to give teachers the ability to teach a broader range of subjects while also engaging in empathic practices to teach a diverse range of students?
6. How can the district best serve students and families who feel they are outliers?
7. What particular and meaningful changes can the district make to support families who may experience a lack of inclusion because of racial, language, and/or geographic issues and access?



## DEI Plan for the 2021-2022 School Year

*The Woodside Elementary School District recognizes and celebrates diversity in the academic environment to foster cultural awareness, promote mutual understanding and respect, and provide role models for all students. We value the many cultures, ethnicities, national origins, socio-economic backgrounds, family structure, genders, sexual orientations, ages, religions, abilities, political views, and other perspectives that are represented in our staff and student body. Learning and work environments are enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives and presence of diverse participants and views.*

	Admin	Teachers	Students	Parents
Specific	<p>Review and update school policies related to diversity, equity and inclusion (Student handbook, after school activities, safety plan, etc)</p> <p>Create a DEI calendar for the school year</p> <p>Revise and post an updated DEI statement for the school community</p>	<p>Create opportunities for teachers to learn more about approaching diversity, equity, and inclusivity in the classroom</p> <p>Create a committee platform for teachers to discuss pertinent issues and plan accordingly (<i>DEI Steering Committee</i>).</p>	<p>Create opportunities for students to advocate personal stories to school/home as a way to enhance the school's approach towards diversity, equity, and inclusivity.</p> <p>Create opportunities for ALL students to engage in school events.</p> <p>Create opportunities for students to learn from each other about personal stories.</p>	<p>Create opportunities for parents to learn more about approaching diversity, equity, and inclusivity at home/with child/supporting school.</p> <p>Establish the new structure of WIDC work in partnership with PTA president and PTA members.</p>

<p><b>Measureable</b></p>	<p>Collect feedback and notes on proposed revisions in each document (above)</p> <p>Analyze data from family information collected from registration and anecdotal conversations to inform the creation of the DEI calendar</p>	<p>Collect feedback from staff via survey, meeting notes during Steering Committee meetings regarding experience.</p>	<p>Collect feedback from students (<i>focusing on those who identified themselves on last year's survey</i>) during interviews/idea feedback/final products in the Design Process - each person conducting student interviews will collect the same information (uniform interview questions will be used)</p> <p>Collect feedback from students after each school event to gain insight into student experiences and make necessary changes.</p> <p>Collect feedback via surveys about student experiences at school - done at the end of the school year.</p>	<p>Collect parent feedback on educational opportunities via interviews/surveys - done after each Parent Ed opportunity.</p>
<p><b>Achievable</b></p>	<p>Review information in PowerSchool</p> <p>Schedule time to meet with families, students, and staff and learn more about the diversity among our school community</p> <p>Create calendar</p>	<p>Contact Clarke and Molly and set up dates.</p> <p>Reach out to staff regarding the DEI Steering Committee.</p> <p>Provide uniform expectations.</p>	<p>Send out consent forms to parents and only interview students who we have access to. Set up a schedule for interviews. Plan interviews during the last week of Oct/first week in Nov.</p> <p>Create surveys to collect adequate data after school</p>	<p>Work with the PTA President in WIDC work - focusing on school events.</p> <p>Set up meetings to review school events and plan for more inclusion - School Principals to attend to act as liaison from PTA/WIDC and Steering Committee.</p>

	<p>options to present and receive feedback on</p> <p>Explore and review other districts' DEI calendars and approaches to learn and apply to ours</p>	<p>Create opportunities for Clarke to meet with the Steering Committee, led by the Director of Student Services.</p> <p>School Principals (with support from EL Teacher/Coordinator) lead school event planning meetings with WIDC/PTA and act as liaison between PTA and Steering Committee.</p>	<p>events to plan for future events and next year's events.</p>	<p>Work with the PTA Parent Ed representative to plan out two nights around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Consider inviting speakers-experts in the field of DEI work.</p>
<p><b>Relevant</b></p>	<p>Each goal and metric aligns with the overarching goal because we are trying to facilitate a community of inclusivity for our students and parents. With the aforementioned approaches, we are able to provide a platform for students to speak, a venue for us to learn, and opportunities for parents to partner with us.</p>	<p>Each goal and metric aligns with the overarching goal because we are trying to facilitate a community of inclusivity for our students and parents. With the aforementioned approaches, we are able to provide a platform for students to speak, a venue for us to learn, and opportunities for parents to partner with us.</p>	<p>Each goal and metric aligns with the overarching goal because we are trying to facilitate a community of inclusivity for our students and parents. With the aforementioned approaches, we are able to provide a platform for students to speak, a venue for us to learn, and opportunities for parents to partner with us.</p>	<p>Each goal and metric aligns with the overarching goal because we are trying to facilitate a community of inclusivity for our students and parents. With the aforementioned approaches, we are able to provide a platform for students to speak, a venue for us to learn, and opportunities for parents to partner with us.</p>

<p><b>Time Bound</b></p>	<p>By June 2022, the Leadership will review the DEI statement to align it with outcomes of the Strategic Planning Committee work as it pertains to DEI.</p> <p>By June 2022, the Leadership team will meet with DEI Consultant at least 4 times a year</p> <p>By March 2022, the leadership team will report progress to the Board.</p> <p>By June 2022, the leadership team will report progress to the Board.</p>	<p>By June 2022, up to 8 professional development session with Clarke and Molly</p> <p>By June 2022, monthly DEI Steering Committee meetings (aiming to have the first meeting by the end of October).</p> <p>By January 2022, the DEI Steering Committee would have developed a teachers survey.</p> <p>By February 2022, the DEI Steering Committee would have gathered the teacher survey data.</p>	<p>After each school event, reach out to students to gain insight into their experience.</p> <p>By the end of November 2022, use the Design Thinking process to deep dive into student needs.</p> <p>By the end of February 2022, use the Design Thinking process to create/present ideas to students/alumni.</p> <p>By the end of April 2022, use Design Thinking to iterate ideas.</p> <p>By June 2022, present Design Thinking Outcomes and ideas to move forward into the coming school year.</p>	<p>By end of October 2021, meet with PTA President to discuss PTA/WIDC collaboration</p> <p>By the end of November 2021, meet with WIDC to begin discussions on school events/create parent surveys.</p> <p>By December 2021, review the DEI parent survey with PTA and revise as needed</p> <p>By June 2022, schedule two Parent Education opportunities with support for PTA Parent Ed Lead</p> <p>By June 2022, collect feedback from parents regarding Parent Ed experience, and to provide feedback on family experiences at Woodside, focusing on DEI.</p>
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