

THE PARK SCHOOL *of* BALTIMORE

# ANTI-RACIST ACTION PLAN

**A Message from the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**  
*An Update on the Park School Anti-Racist Action Plan*

Families —

*What an exciting time to be alive!* Our nation prepares for a historic transition in government, including the election of the first Black and Southeast Asian woman as Vice President. This moment is not lost on us as we move forward with our transformative work as a school. As we continue to grow as an institution, it is important that our anti-racist work remains front and center, and is integrated into all aspects of school life. In this effort, the school is providing regular updates regarding the status of our [Anti-Racist Action Plan](#) and our broader diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. These updates reflect our responsibility to engage the community, to communicate, and to hold ourselves accountable. I also acknowledge that complex change requires ongoing, consistent, and intentional collective effort. We move forward when we work together.

The Anti-Racist Action Plan includes commitments to our students, families, employees, and greater community. I wanted to take this opportunity in this first update to highlight several priorities and efforts that are underway. I also want to share with you some resources that we are referencing in our work — and that you might find helpful as you engage as a member of this anti-racist community.

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***Highlights***

- **Bias Incident Response Protocol**
- **Anti-Racist Curriculum Development in Each Division**
- **Anti-Racist Professional Development**
- **Parent Programming**

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*Elements of the Anti-Racist Action plan in blue.*

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*In service to our students we will...*

*Publish protocols for students to report race and other bias-related incidents, to be implemented and tracked across all areas of school life in order to address issues and to identify patterns.*

***Bias Incident Response Protocol and Bias Tracking***

We have prioritized the creation of a student bias incident response protocol. The protocol serves as a means for our students to have their concerns and issues documented and appropriately addressed should they experience bias on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, ancestry, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. While our first priority in creating this protocol is to resolve the student's concern, we also intend to use this protocol to gather important data over time, data that will identify opportunities for proactive planning and growth. Park's leadership team, including the Head of School, Associate Head of School, principals, deans and assistant principal, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and the Human Resources office have created a draft of the process. The next step is to share the draft with a representative group of students for feedback and further revisions. We will provide detailed updates in my next report, with the expectation that the response protocol will be in place early in the new calendar year.

In addition to creating this protocol, we have begun the work of collecting and analyzing behavioral data for all students. (For example, our Lower School team is considering these questions: *Who is sent to the office? Why? With what consequences?*) Tracking this data is essential as we work to uncover hidden biases and address significant blind spots in supporting our children of color at Park.

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*In service to our students we will...*

*Prioritize the auditing and mapping of Pre-K through Grade 12 anti-racist teaching and learning.*

*Implement foundational curricula (to be part of what ALL students will experience and engage in) that center the diverse experiences of the BIPOC (Black, indigenous, and people of color) community.*

*Identify and track objectives and outcomes of curricula utilizing the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards and Anti-Bias Framework.*

### ***Anti-Racist Curriculum***

The Lower School implemented “Getting To Know You” conferences at the beginning of the year. The conferences included intentional conversations about race and other aspects of family and teacher identities. This practice helps establish a trusting learning partnership between families and teachers.

The Lower School has also begun developing a Lower School Anti-Racist course for all 4th and 5th Grade students. Jointly led by the Lower School Counseling Office and the Office of DEI, the course will be introduced in partnership with grade level teachers in the spring semester.

Building on the work that has taken place in the past three years, the Middle School Social Emotional Affective Learning (SEAL) course is incorporating a race-focused anti-bias curriculum rooted in the [Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards](#) into the required 7th and 8th Grade courses. With our students, we explore four main domains: identity, diversity, justice, and action.

The Upper School Anti-Racist Curriculum was launched in September for Grades 9 and 10. The sessions take place each Wednesday and are led by Upper School faculty members. The curriculum is rooted in the [Teaching Tolerance Anti-Bias framework](#) as well as the [Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice](#) curriculum. We are launching the program for Grades 11 and 12 this coming week. Again, this foundational work is intended to reach all Upper School students across grade levels.

The work described above represents the first phase of a school-wide anti-racist curriculum stipulated in our Anti-Racist Action Plan. We recognize the work we are doing is a multi-dimensional, multi-divisional, and multi-year effort, and I look forward to sharing initiatives at other grade levels as they are developed and introduced.

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*In service to our employees we will...*

*Provide consistent, ongoing, scaffolded anti-racist professional development and training for all employees, to include:*

*Culturally responsive teaching training for all faculty — to equip faculty members with the tools needed to create authentic, thriving learning communities.*

### ***Anti-Racist Professional Development***

Employees began the year by engaging with Dr. Bettina Love's work in [abolitionist teaching](#) practices. Dr. Love is concerned with how educators, working with parents and communities, can build communal, civically engaged schools with the goal of intersectional social justice for equitable classrooms that love and affirm Black and brown children. We were fortunate to welcome Dr. Love for a presentation and discussion at our all-employee meeting to begin our new school year. Her work continues to resonate with us as we move forward through the challenges of this year.

School-wide, we have embraced the [Teaching Tolerance K-12 Anti-Bias Standards](#) and [Culturally Responsive Teaching practices](#) as foundational professional development resources guiding our curriculum development and our work making Park School more just, equitable, and safe. We continue to use the instrumental work of [Zaretta Hammond's](#)

*Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, a text we have purchased for all of our faculty members. Each of our three divisions are meeting over multiple sessions to review the [Teaching Tolerance K-12 Anti-Bias Standards](#) and to consider how these standards are reflected across all areas of the curriculum, and faculty are committing to incorporating at least one standard into their programming each quarter.

In addition to our division-wide work, faculty members continue to engage in individual and small group opportunities vetted through the Director of DEI and

Associate Head (e.g., For Black Women in White Workspaces, white affinity group training sessions, and approaches to racialized trauma in children).

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*In service to our community we will...*

*Create further opportunities for our community members to share personal experiences, to support one another, and to help shape the school's future work.*

*Continue to engage outside resources and experts to inform our work and facilitate communication and education in the larger community.*

### ***Parent Programming***

Our Parents' Association (PA) began the year by welcoming Dr. Allison Briscoe-Smith as guest speaker at the 2020-21 Opening Meeting. Over 160 households participated in a thoughtful presentation and Q&A — *Talking to Children About Race and Racism*. Dr. Briscoe-Smith brought an invaluable perspective into our parent community and has set the tone for how our PA leadership intends to support our larger parent body in engaging with anti-racist work throughout the year and beyond. I hope this initial event not only contributed to the ongoing conversations occurring in our homes, at school, and across the community, but also served to focus the parent community on our responsibility to actively engage in our Anti-Racist Action Plan. Here are the resources that Dr. Briscoe-Smith shared with our community at the September 23 event, which we invite you to explore:

[www.embracerace.org](http://www.embracerace.org)

[www.commonsemmedia.org/lists/dr-allison-briscoe-smith-picks-positive-books-about-kids-of-color](http://www.commonsemmedia.org/lists/dr-allison-briscoe-smith-picks-positive-books-about-kids-of-color)

[www.drbriscoesmith.com/](http://www.drbriscoesmith.com/)

[www.drbriscoesmith.com/resource-gallery](http://www.drbriscoesmith.com/resource-gallery)

The PA has also launched the **Parents' Association Book Club** with a compelling anti-racist inaugural selection: *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by award-winning and best-selling authors Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi, Ph.D., who collaborated to create this Young Adult (YA) version of Kendi's *Stamped From The Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. Either book may be read for the discussion. Please join us for the Stamped discussion Monday, November 16, 8-9:30

p.m. Register [here](#).

The Office of DEI is hosting a **Parent Affinity Groups OPEN HOUSE** next Thursday, November 19 at 7 p.m. Park Parent Affinity groups include a diverse range of identities, including groups exploring race, gender, and family structure. The Open House will provide an overview of our affinity group program and will serve as an opportunity for participants to review and reflect on their community's role in the Anti-Racist Action Plan. We hope to support our families in gathering around areas of identity that are important to them. Please reach out to the Office of DEI to discuss further group opportunities. Register [here](#).

***Elevating Voices***, Park School's families-of-color Affinity Group, gathered in late October. The group will be meeting again Monday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m. with Head of School Dan Paradis to engage, specifically, with the work outlined in the Anti-Racist Action Plan.

The full range of **Parent Affinity Groups** will meet again on Tuesday, December 8 at 6:30 p.m. A sign-up announcement will be coming from my office following the Open House.

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In today's update, I have highlighted some of our efforts that speak to the **urgency** of the work we are doing at Park in order to address past and current failings and to create a safe, loving environment for Black students; the **magnitude** of that work; the **capacity** for our community to make change happen; and the understanding that this is a **community-wide** commitment that requires the focused and direct engagement of Park School employees, our parents, and our students.

Our community's ability to adjust and adapt in service of our students and families is remarkable. I look forward to our continued work together and I welcome your comments, questions, and, of course, your support in creating an anti-racist Park School. And look for more updates throughout the year.

Thank you for all you do to make Park School a safe, vibrant community, ready to change and grow.

Sincerely,

*Courtney Rollins*

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion