

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Report**

*Striving to make Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women safe for all students.*



**OUR LADY OF MERCY**  
SCHOOL FOR YOUNG WOMEN

Grades 6-12

## **Introduction**

In May 2020, Mercy wrote a response about the death of George Floyd that triggered many alumnae and current students who began to discuss the negative and positive experiences students of color have had at Mercy throughout the years. As a result, Mercy conducted three Listening Sessions over the summer for alumnae, students, and parents titled, “Racism – Working to Make Mercy an Agent of Change” and hosted by Linda Dickey, Chair of the Cheryl Speranza Leadership. During the Listening Sessions, we continued the discussion regarding the experiences students of color have had at Mercy. Each Listening Session led to recommendations and suggestions including:

- A need for a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) consultant and DEI Committee representing the many constituencies at Mercy.
- A desire for Mercy to take a more consciously anti-racist stance.
- Taking a more active role in ensuring diversity and equity among the Mercy community.

At the end of the summer of 2020, Linda Dickey was hired as the Program Director/Consultant for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The following fall, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee was formed with Sharon Murrell Dilbert ‘84 appointed Chair. The Committee has representation from students, parents, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees, the Sisters of Mercy, and the community.

In alignment with the Sisters of Mercy’s Critical Concern of combating racism, the Committee will focus its energies on providing ongoing strategic direction and operational guidance to support development of a comprehensive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan for the school. The Committee will specifically:

- Promote greater diversity within Mercy by recommending strategic initiatives to recruit and support students and staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Suggest and implement research-based strategies for Mercy staff and students to learn how to recognize racism and celebrate diversity.
- Recommend and/or provide training for Mercy staff and students on Unconscious Bias and Racism.
- Support Mercy leadership with the implementation of recommended strategic initiatives.
- Promote participation in activities supporting diversity in our school community.
- Communicate diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, actions, and results to key constituencies inside and outside Mercy.

### **The Committee is composed of the following members:**

- *Parent Subcommittee:* Ted Jordan P '21, Chris Garnish P'24, Silvia Caraballo P'22, and Karima Miller P'24
- *Academic Subcommittee:* Sonya Sampson, Sherylanne Diodato '93, Katy Miller, Sarah DeMulder, and Sr. Karlien Bach '75
- *Alumnae Subcommittee:* Matasha Murrell Jones '94, Tae'lor Jackson '16, Caitlyn O'Toole '10
- *Student Subcommittee:* Emma Phelps '22, Molly Kantz '22, Janaa Smith '22, MariArelis Flores '23, Grace Reese '23, Lola DeSantis '22
- *Cheryl Speranza Leadership Institute Subcommittee:* Paul Speranza P'92, '94, MariArelis Flores '23, and Grace Reese '23
- *Program Support:* Mike Waters GP'25, Teri Edom, Elizabeth Ciaccio '79, Donna Horn, Dana Whipple, and Lori Purcell P'20
- *Sponsors:* Pamela Fennell Baker '74 P'12, Martin Kilbridge
- *Community Advisors:* Ed Doherty P'05, Caroline Whelan Tolbert '02, and Megan Bell '99 (Mercy Board of Trustees Member)

The following Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Report includes data from the June 2020 Listening Sessions, faculty and staff surveys, as well as interviews with staff, parents, alumnae, and students. The DEI Report should help us, as a school and community, generate and answer questions including, how to more effectively recruit, hire, retain, and promote a diverse workforce; how to integrate and offer diversity, equity and inclusion professional learning for everyone in the Circle of Mercy; how to defeat racism and classism; and how to ensure that Mercy is a fully inclusive safe place for all girls.

### **Key Points from Listening Sessions**

#### *Alumnae*

- Develop a mentorship program to connect students with alumnae.
- Diversity within the faculty and the curriculum and having DEI more intertwined within the curriculum.
- Educate the student body on what DEI is.
- Lack of connection/support to HBCUs college path.
- Career Day - which alumnae pulling from - diversify panels and pulling from a cross section of alumnae.
- What is Mercy doing to maintain relationships with alumnae - how do we engage with alumnae in different ways - being able to engage with a larger pool.
- More education needed in matters of diversity, inclusion, equity, history, current challenges for people of color to deepen understanding for staff, faculty, students, and coaches.
- More support and understanding for girls of color.

### *Alumnae (Continued)*

- More mentors, speakers (career day), faculty, and staff of color.
- More diversification of the student body.
- More assimilation of black history into all aspects of curriculum.
- Alumnae are looking for action from Mercy.
- More alumnae are self-examining their own biases in recent years.

### *Students*

- Concerns about marketing - not having the same girls in every picture - more diversity in pictures.
- Do not touch hair!
- A safe place and person are needed in school to go to when dealing with situations.
- More opportunities to have identities showcased - showing different parts of Mercy's culture.
- Girls are suffering from microaggressions (ex: touching hair and racist remarks in the form of "jokes").
- Desire for faculty/staff members of color.
- Desire for a Black Student Union
- Need for more education and support (Black History Month, cultural awareness).
- Girls of color feel tokenized.

### *Parents*

- Safe place and a go to person in school are needed.
- Faculty and staff- more diversity.
- Training for everyone: all parents, students, staff.
- Assumptions about students (ex: not having money for field trips or lunch.)
- How to integrate the programming of CSLI with all students. More publicity for programming.
- Daughters have suffered overt racism, microaggressions at Mercy.
- Mercy experience has been better than some other schools.
- Need for diversification and education of faculty, staff, students, coaches, parents.
- Girls feel like they don't belong.
- Feelings that assumptions are made at Mercy by faculty and students (ex: Black = poor, City = "ghetto").

### *Parents (Continued)*

- Seek resources other than singularly leaning on black community members.
- Need to educate and integrate parents, too – root out systemic racism, microaggressions.

### **Recommended Key Strategic Plan Actions**

*This summary is based on input from the alumnae, student and parent Listening Sessions as well as the DEI subcommittees.*

1. Create a safe place for all girls.
2. Develop a Professional Learning Plan for Faculty/Staff, Students, Parents, and the Board of Trustees.
3. Diversify Mercy in the areas of faculty, staff and academic offerings.

### **Key Area #1: Safe Place**

*Promote a diverse, equitable and inclusive school experience for all students by creating structures and capacity so that all girls feel safe.*

Rationale: It is essential all members of the Circle of Mercy feel safe and that their faces, voices, and experiences are heard, reflected and valued.

#### **Strategic Areas of Focus:**

- 1.1 Support Systems
- 1.2 Enrichment opportunities

Strategies	Action Plan, Steps, Recommendations	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed	Indicators of Progress and Success
<p><b>1.1a</b> Hire a Director of Diversity that will work with everyone in the Circle of Mercy to ensure Mercy is a safe place for all girls regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Write a job description.</li> <li>● Confer with the Mercy Education DEI Cohort for job description.</li> </ul>	<p>President</p> <p>Director of Human Resources</p>	<p>August 2021</p>	<p>\$ TBD to cover: Salary Compensation Office Space Supplies, etc.</p>	<p>A Director of Diversity will be hired by the start of the 2021-2022 school year.</p>
<p><b>1.1b</b> Create support systems for students as well as faculty and staff members regarding diversity, equity &amp; inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Get feedback from students, faculty and staff on support systems they need.</li> <li>● Create affinity groups so that girls as well as faculty and staff members have a safe place to discuss issues.</li> <li>● Have a mechanism by which students can report issues of microaggressions, racism etc.</li> <li>● Develop a program that includes a variety of mentoring and training opportunities for newly hired staff that reflects diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p>	<p>Planning Stage: Fall 2021.</p> <p>Implementation Stage: Winter 2022.</p>	<p>\$ TBD to cover Student and family surveys</p>	<p>A survey will be conducted by the Winter of 2022 to establish baseline data.</p> <p>Students and staff will have a support system regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.</p> <p>New staff will be trained in diversity, equity, and inclusion.</p>

<p><b>1.2a</b> Provide diverse enrichment opportunities for all students and alumnae</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Survey the students on interests.</li> <li>● Create a calendar of important ethnic and diverse celebrations.</li> <li>● Celebrate events such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Black Catholic History Month, etc.</li> <li>● Include diverse speakers for events such as Career Day, Alumnae Workshops and Senior Breakfast.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity  DEI Committee</p>	<p>Currently in place and ongoing.</p>	<p>Speakers Calendar</p>	<p>All girls will experience various enrichment opportunities</p> <p>Students will participate in the planning of school-wide cultural celebrations.</p>
<p><b>1.2b</b> Create a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion report each year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish diversity equity &amp; inclusion goals for each year that are measurable.</li> <li>● Compile the report.</li> <li>● Share the report with the Circle of Mercy.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p>	<p>At the end of each school year.</p>	<p>Data</p>	<p>In May or June of each school year, the Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion report will be shared with the Circle of Mercy.</p>

## Key Area #2: Professional Learning

*Provide professional development on diversity, equity and inclusion for all members of the Circle of Mercy including staff, faculty, students, parents, alumnae and the Board of Trustees.*

Rationale: All members of the Circle of Mercy are essential partners in creating and sustaining actions that are vital to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion as the work of diversity, equity and inclusion is a responsibility of all.

### Strategic Areas of Focus:

2.1 Faculty and Staff

2.2 Students

2.3 Parents

2.4 Alumnae

2.5 Board of Trustees

Targeted Area	Action Plan, Steps, Recommendations	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed	Indicators of Progress and Success
2.1 Professional development for faculty/staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create a professional learning team.</li> <li>● Survey the faculty &amp; staff to obtain needs.</li> <li>● Develop a plan for faculty/staff.</li> <li>● Implement the plan starting with the 2021-2022 school year.</li> <li>● Provide professional learning on culturally</li> </ul>	Director of Diversity, in conjunction with Curriculum Leaders DEI Academic Subcommittee, and Administrators	Planning: Fall of the 2021-2022 school year. Implementation : Winter of the 2021-2022 school year.	\$ TBD to support Consultants, Trainers, and Speakers	There will be a professional learning plan established for faculty and staff for the 2021-2022 school year.  Faculty/Staff will learn about various practices regarding diversity, equity and inclusion.

	<p>responsive teaching practices; microaggressions; unconscious bias; white fragility; poverty simulation; etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create professional learning communities for small group discussions about diversity, equity and inclusion.</li> <li>● Assess the effectiveness of professional learning implementation, to include establishing a logic model that contains specific improvement goals and student outcomes.</li> </ul>				Students in the Mosaic Club will facilitate professional learning for faculty and staff.
<b>2.2 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Learning for students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use the listening session data and the diversity, equity &amp; inclusion report to establish topics.</li> <li>● Train student leaders in the areas of facilitation and restorative practices.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p> <p>DEI Student Subcommittee</p>	<p>Planning: Fall of the 2021-2022 school year.</p> <p>Implementation : Winter of the 2021-2022 school year.</p>	<p>\$ TBD to support Trainers/Speakers</p> <p>Calendar</p>	<p>Survey data will demonstrate fewer incidents of microaggressions.</p> <p>A program for student training in restorative practices and a program of events to foster</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students conduct student-led discussions on diversity, equity &amp; inclusion topics.</li> <li>• Design and implement additional programs for developing cultural competence in students.</li> </ul>				<p>discussion and cultural competence will be approved by the Mercy administration for implementation by the Fall of 2022.</p> <p>Current events, social justice issues and other topics on diversity, equity and inclusion will be discussed several times a year at Mercy led by the Student DEI subcommittee.</p>
2.3 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Learning for parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a plan for parents.</li> <li>• Find speakers that are trained in the areas of diversity, equity &amp; inclusion.</li> <li>• Implement the learning plan starting with the 2021-2022 school year.</li> <li>• Conduct a speaker series on DEI topics.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p> <p>Members of the DEI parent subcommittee</p> <p>Mercy Parent Association</p>	<p>Planning: Fall of the 2021-2022 school year.</p> <p>Implementation : Winter of the 2021-2022 school year.</p>	Speakers Calendar	<p>By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, there have been at least 3 sessions held in the speaker's series.</p>
2.4 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Learning for alumnae	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a plan for alumnae.</li> <li>• Find speakers that are trained in the areas of</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p> <p>Alumnae members of the</p>	<p>Planning: Fall of the 2021-2022 school year.</p>	Speakers Calendar	<p>By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, there have been at least 3 sessions held in the speaker's series.</p>

	<p>diversity, equity &amp; inclusion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement the learning plan starting with the 2021-2022 school year.</li> <li>● Conduct a speaker series on DEI topics.</li> </ul>	<p>DEI alumnae subcommittee</p> <p>Director of Alumnae Relations</p>	<p>Implementation : Winter of the 2021-2022 school year.</p>		
<p><b>2.5 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training for the Board of Trustees</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Familiarize the Board with the diversity, equity &amp; inclusion training that the students, parents, faculty and staff are doing.</li> <li>● Conduct a customized version of the DEI training for the Board.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Diversity</p> <p>Board of Trustees DEI Committee Representative</p>	<p>Planning: Fall of the 2021-2022 school year.</p> <p>Implementation : Winter of the 2021-2022 school year</p>	<p>\$ TBD to support Qualified DEI experts</p>	<p>The Board of Trustees will begin to receive training in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion.</p>

### Key Area #3 Diversity

*Diversifying all components, programs and people within Circle of Mercy affirms student cultural identities, enhances the learning environment and prepares Mercy girls to be global citizens.*

Rationale: It is essential that all areas of Mercy reflect diversity, equity and inclusion.

#### Strategic Areas of Focus:

3.1 Diverse Faculty and Staff

3.2 Diverse Board of Trustees

3.3 Diverse Student Body

3.4 Diverse Curriculum

Targeted Area	Action Plan, Steps, Recommendations	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed	Indicators of Progress and Success
3.1 Diversify faculty and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contact Mercy alumnae.</li> <li>● Reach out to diverse candidates using social media and advertising.</li> <li>● Contact Rodney Allen Young from United Way: AALDP.</li> <li>● Contact historically black sorority alumnae (AKA, Delta's, Alpha's, Zeta's)</li> <li>● Add a DEI questions to the</li> </ul>	Director of Human Resources  Director of Diversity  Marketing and Communications Department	Ongoing implementation, starting in the Fall of 2021-2022 school year	\$ TBD	The number of faculty and staff of color should increase.  The number of students of color should increase due to the increase in staff of color.

	<p>application/interview; e.g.: OLM has a diverse student population representing a variety of races, learning needs, languages, national origins, etc. Describe your teaching strategies and/or experiences for effectively educating students from diverse backgrounds. Please give specific examples of how you respond effectively to students who have a variety of identities, and/or respond effectively to students who are different from your own identity. How do you ensure success for every student? Tell us about any personal and professional experiences you have had that would help you help us to fulfill our district equity goals.</p>				
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact community organizations such as: Urban League of Rochester, Ibero; LINKS; Jack and Jill of America.</li> </ul>				
<b>3.2</b> Diversify the Board of Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Mercy alumnae and parents.</li> <li>Add members that reflect the mission and the vision of Mercy.</li> </ul>	Board of Trustees  President  Alumnae Relations	Ongoing implementation, starting in the Fall of 2021-2022 school year	TBD	The diversity on the Board of Trustees should increase.
<b>3.3</b> Diversify the Student Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go to faith-based institutions to do presentations about Mercy and the Cheryl Speranza Leadership Institute.</li> <li>Meet with suburban &amp; urban middle school counselors and administration Mercy.</li> <li>Highlight and utilize the Cheryl Speranza Leadership Institute.</li> <li>Advertise in diverse groups on social media.</li> </ul>	Director of Diversity  Director of Enrollment  Chair of the Cheryl Speranza Leadership Institute	Ongoing implementation, starting in the Fall of 2021-2022 school year	\$ TBD	The number of students of color should increase.
<b>3.4</b> Diversify the Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DEI academic subcommittee and</li> </ul>	Director of Diversity	Ongoing implementation,	\$ TBD	The 2022-2023 Curriculum will begin to incorporate

	<p>curriculum leaders will review OLM curriculum during the 2021-22 school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee &amp; curriculum leaders will make suggestions to diversify the curriculum.</li> <li>• A robust curriculum plan will be created that encompasses diversity, equity, and inclusion.</li> </ul>	<p>DEI Academic Subcommittee</p> <p>Curriculum Leaders</p> <p>Dean of Academics</p>	<p>starting in the Fall of 2021-2022 school year</p>		<p>appropriate representation of students of color i.e. the introduction and study of ancient, classical Africa prior to the study of enslaved Africans; factual information on Indigenous Americans; Poetry and Literature will better reflect a variety of authors of varying ethnicities and races.</p>
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