

Alma Partners DEIJB Audit Report Executive Summary - Prepared by Alma Partners

Over the course of the 2023-24 school year, The Waldorf School of San Diego engaged Alma Partners to conduct an audit that assessed our practices related to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Belonging across three areas: Curriculum, Community Life, and Policies and Procedures. The following is the Executive Summary of that report.

“It has been our pleasure to work with the Waldorf School of San Diego community on a diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and belonging (DEIJB) audit over the past several months. Your community shared a wealth of important information through this process, and we deeply appreciate everyone’s input.

Our feedback aims to help you bridge divides, develop leaders, align school policies with established best practices, reach out more broadly into the City Heights community, continue to deepen your roots, and better serve all in your school community.

Through this process, we were able to identify several key themes:

- 1) Communication, follow-through, trust in leadership, policy improvements, and outreach on the part of the school are key areas for attention.*
- 2) Important work is being done in the DEIJB realm. Representation of diverse groups (on faculty, staff, Board, in the student/family community, and in curriculum and festivals) is important to most people who spoke with us or responded to our surveys.*
- 3) Data indicated some painful, acrimonious polarization between those in the school who are committed to DEIJB work and those who struggle to understand why it matters or disagree that it’s important.*

We want to emphasize that the recommendations in the audit require ongoing work and will take time and resources to implement. The team we recommend identifying, as an immediate priority, will be responsible for ensuring integration of our recommendations into your strategic planning for the coming months and years. We have sketched out a map for you; the school may need three to five years or more to clarify and reach your destination. We encourage you to take time in the coming weeks to read this report completely and review and discuss all recommendations and supporting data as you plan next steps.”

Following the Presentation of the full report, an Audit Working Group was created to shepherd this process across each of the three pillars of our school: Pedagogical, Administration and Board. Each of these groups have reviewed the commendations and recommendations and have identified the goals (based on the recommendations and commendations in the Audit) that will be our school’s focus for the current school year (2024-25).

CURRICULUM

1. Dedicate time to developing an inclusive curriculum. Faculty has been reviewing the curriculum grade by grade and continues to work toward developing an inclusive curriculum guided through anthroposophy.
2. Refreshing festival life. Faculty continues to broaden the scope of its festivals to stretch beyond a euro-centric focus and include cultural sharing from our community and land-based regional festivals.
3. Updating the classroom libraries. This work has begun and will continue as a priority.
4. Increasing our understanding of the needs of neurodiverse students and exploring support options.
5. Strengthening support for English Language Learners
6. Explore additional opportunities for students to connect with the City Heights community, building on existing work and taking inspiration from the High School.

COMMUNITY LIFE

1. Continue our efforts to create a school culture of belonging, inclusion, safety, and accountability, prioritizing the well-being of all students, families, and colleagues over the comfort of any individual or small group.
2. Update our Statement of Inclusion & Equity to include on the WSSD website
3. Clarify governance structure and improve communication.
4. Improve the retention of community members (faculty, staff, and families), especially those from marginalized or non-dominant backgrounds.
5. Provide more support for LGBTQ+ students.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

1. Identify and empower the team responsible for implementing the recommendations in this report - (This work began at the end of the 2023-24 school year with the creation of the Audit Working Group).
2. Develop a plan to ensure that disciplinary policies are administered equitably.
3. Provide support and structure for the rollout of the Community Concern Form and response procedure.
4. Clarify and communicate the mandate, role, and membership process of the EID Committee.
5. Develop a plan to increase recruitment and retention of Board members from diverse backgrounds.
6. Develop a more equitable salary structure.
7. Ensure required annual anti-bias and other DEIJB training for all employees and bring clarity to our school's stance on DEIJB, aligned with our school mission.

8. Develop policies to increase diversity of non-Board school leadership and faculty/staff, and improve retention of employees from non-dominant groups.