

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
2020 - 2021

The mission of Turnaround Arts: California (TACA) is to harness the power of the arts to engage, empower, and transform historically marginalized schools and communities throughout the state. To that end, we commit to practices that prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our work.

We acknowledge that we are embedded in the American systems of public education¹, social services, and philanthropy, none of which are immune to our country's generational and systemic racism. The current moment has only underscored the urgency of devoting resources to our most underserved communities in order to ensure equitable access to an engaging, supportive, and culturally responsive education.

Our programming relies on a community-driven, culturally responsive approach: We believe that school challenges are best met by supporting leadership and creativity and by actively listening to the communities experiencing those challenges themselves. Our model's structure allows for customization based on unique community needs and assets, demographics, and interests.

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)² is the foundation of our partnerships with schools and community organizations. These partners are experts in their communities' unique needs and assets and provide pathways for us to support the schools with respect for their varied lived experiences and specific cultural wealth and knowledge. Our program design of inclusive professional learning experiences allows participants to have agency over their own learning and to maximize its utility. We support the leadership development of principals and teachers to advocate for their communities and share their success stories.

We also firmly believe that the arts have particular potential to help students thrive, and to challenge biases and systems that oppress students of color. We have seen the arts support learning across differences, reflect and sustain culture, and develop vibrant school environments where students feel welcomed and safe.

During a 2019/20 strategic planning process, our stakeholders identified TACA's responsive program model and DEI practices as both a key strength and as a key growth opportunity. In view of this, our Equity Plan for the 2020-21 fiscal year outlines goals and action steps we are taking over the next year (July 2020 - June 2021) to further our commitment to equity as an

¹ Kohli, R., Pizarro, M., Nevarez, A. (2017). The "New Racism" of K-12 Schools: Centering Critical Research on Racism. *Review of Research in Education*. 41(1), 182-202.

<https://www.sjsu.edu/people/marcos.pizarro/publications/KohliPizarroNevarez2017.pdf>

² See Appendix for definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness we are currently using

organization. This work will span our board, staff, programming, community arts partners, and school partners. This policy and plan will be updated annually and as we gain new understandings of what it means to be a racially just and equitable organization.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals and Assessment Plan **2020-21**

Programming

1. **Program Trainings and Resources** - In partnership with coaches and community arts partners, apply an equity and culturally responsive lens to all program offerings. Offer workshops that create an ongoing network dialogue to explore culturally responsive teaching and learning in and through the arts. Complete surveys following each network-wide convening to understand key takeaways and how learnings will be implemented at individual school sites.
2. **Arts for Equity** - Pilot network-wide socially impactful art projects to support creative expression, community healing, exchange and visibility. Gather feedback from schools across the network via survey at year-end to understand value and impact.
3. **Communicating Impact** - Assess and communicate how we are narrowing inequitable access to arts education for historically marginalized students.
4. **Evaluating Impact** - Launch focused Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to explore collection of student impact data beyond standardized measurements. Assess success at year-end and revise strategies for future years.
5. **Program Expansion** - Assess our demographic data and endeavor to identify school partners in line with low income demographics state-wide. Create a comparative assessment document.

Board and Staff

1. **DEI Trainings** - Identify potential consultants to provide anti-racism and DEI focused trainings to board and staff. Discuss key learnings and takeaways as a team and how they can be integrated into our day-to-day areas of work.
2. **Board Recruitment** - Review and revise Board of Directors recruitment priorities, and identify prospects within our networks that share our commitment and are reflective of the diverse communities across California. Onboard 2-3 new board members by June 30, 2021.
3. **Hiring Practices** - Formalize policy regarding current process aimed at diversification of recruitment tools to ensure equitable knowledge and access for potential staff members and consultants.

Assessment

Biannually, TACA board and staff will revisit this plan and assess our progress toward achieving these goals. Prior to our next fiscal year, we will revise this plan based on new understandings and priorities.

Appendix

Glossary for key terms:

- A. **Diversity** - Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles³.
- B. **Equity** - The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups⁷.
- C. **Inclusion** - The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate and bring their full, authentic selves to work. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in the words/actions/ thoughts of all people⁷.
- D. **Cultural responsiveness** - An approach which prioritizes understanding the cultural context, such as the perspectives, beliefs, values and norms, of the people with which we work, and establish collaborative and equal partnerships. Cultural responsiveness requires cultural humility and a commitment to life-long reflexivity, self-evaluation, and learning that aims at redressing the power imbalances inherent in our work⁴.

³ Equity in the Center. *Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture*. (2019).

<https://www.equityinthecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Equity-in-Center-Awake-Woke-Work-2019-final-1.pdf>

⁴ Tulane University. *Our Dedication to Diversity and Inclusion*. (2020).

<https://tssw.tulane.edu/about/diversity-and-inclusion>