



Advancing Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Fact Sheet

As the guiding philosophy for our therapeutic school, Serendipity embraces the principles of Re-Education. These focus on the strength inherent in each child, employing a variety of perspectives and experiential approaches to thoughtfully move students towards independence.

The commitment to be an environment in which differences are not only accepted, but viewed as sources of strength, is core to Serendipity's identity. Without compassionate acceptance, our mission to offer a place where students can heal and learn will not be realized. By being advocates for inclusion and equal access to opportunities, we work towards the lessening of the external barriers of racism, classism, sexism, and intolerance that pose threats to all children, but particularly those from historically marginalized groups, developing their full potential. Serendipity's work in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion exists in two arenas.

For Our Students

Facing inwardly, the environment in which our students learn and grow must support the development of skills and attitudes that are critically needed in an equitable world.

- The Equity Committee at Serendipity supports the instruction, training, and practices that seek to foster the environment of kindness a Therapeutic School needs for its students to feel safe. Their stated purpose is to provide a safe atmosphere to openly express, discuss and make positive changes toward diversity.
- Serendipity students are greeted each morning with our visual message of welcome to all who enter. The conceptual ideas embedded in this poster serve as curriculum for morning meetings and for Social/Emotional Learning lessons throughout the first semester of every year. The Equity Committee has calendared the weekly focus for lessons, so as a school community we grow our depth of understanding for the many ways individuals identity themselves.
- The Equity committee led the development of the procedures that staff employ to respond to derogatory language, images, or gestures. It is a progressive response, grounded in our belief that



inappropriate behaviors reveal a deficit of knowledge or understanding. Reteaching and reframing such behaviors and the ideologies behind them is our first approach.

- Serendipity supports a GSA Club for middle and high school students who are interested in learning and talking about topics and issues related to Gender and Sexuality, and being an ally to individuals that identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. The club collaboratively set its charter to read that in this group, they believe each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or expression. They believe that creating an atmosphere and school culture that welcomes everyone allows for a positive sense of self, which is the foundation of educational achievement and personal growth. Since homophobia, transphobia, and derogatory language related to gender and sexuality identity undermine a healthy school climate, this group will work to educate teachers and students about the damaging effects these forces have on students and staff alike.

We believe the experience of participating in a culture of justice, fairness, and inclusion prepares our students and our world for the best possible futures.

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Serendipity Center Welcomes



Serendipity's Core Beliefs, drawn from the Principles of RE-Education:

- Trust is essential.
- Feelings should be nurtured.
- Groups are major sources of instruction.
- Community must be experienced to be learned.
- Intelligence can be enhanced.
- Competence makes a difference, especially with schoolwork.
- Self-control can be taught.
- Physical experiences help us define ourselves.
- Now is when life is to be lived.
- Time is an ally in support of positive changes
- Ceremony and ritual give order, stability, and confidence.
- Joy should be built into each day.

For Our Community

Facing externally, Serendipity has committed to creating and implementing policies and business practices that combat systemic racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of bias.

- We provide trainings that are focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion that are topical and ongoing.
- We have designated staff members to lead our Equity committee.
- We have increased our number of Bi-lingual and multi-cultural staff.
- We are making improvements to remove barriers for non-English speaking parents and families.
- We are proactively seeking to increase our workforce diversity and are making gains in having a diverse staff.
- We are committed to reviewing (at times of contract renewal) our vendor list and researching companies that are owned and operated by women or minorities.
- We have become more intentional in our recruitment efforts to our Board of Directors, recognizing that we need a board that

embraces our commitment to being an inclusive and diverse agency. For our board to reflect this, we seek individuals that understand and represent paradigms, backgrounds, and experiences as diverse as our students and their families. These include individuals representing all ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, genders, gender identities, ages, and abilities, to name a few.

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