



March 19, 2021

Dear Parents and Staff,

The Valley Stream 24 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee was created by the Valley Stream 24 Board of Education. It has been charged with making recommendations to the Valley Stream 24 Board of Education in June 2021. The committee is supported by nationally recognized DEI consultant Tracy L. Gray.

The committee consists of 3 Board of Education trustees, 3 District Administrators, 3 District Staff representing each building, 3 PTA representatives representing each building, and 3 community members, two of whom are parents and one who is a college student who graduated from VS24. The group is diverse regarding race, ethnicity, gender and age. All volunteer and meet on their own time as well as dedicating their own time to completing tasks in between meetings.

The DEI Committee began meeting on January 20, 2021 and has met twice monthly for a total of 5 meetings at this point. This group is engaging in the challenging work and having the difficult conversations around race and equity that will help forge our path forward. Thus far:

- A mission statement, vision statement, and statement of core beliefs and values have been drafted and continue to evolve.
- An intensive review of data regarding students, staff and the community has been undertaken.
- Surveys and interviews are being created to elicit input from and engage students, staff and parents in this process.

As has been noted and shared at multiple Valley Stream 24 Board of Education meetings, PTA meetings, and Superintendent Coffee Hours, increasing diversity amongst staff through recruitment is a focus and a goal for the Valley Stream 24 Board of Education. Recruitment actions thus far are:

- We have reached out and created partnerships with nearly two dozen colleges and universities in the metropolitan New York area. Through direct monthly outreach, these partnerships aim to encourage diverse teaching program students to consider Valley

Stream 24 when seeking student teaching placements and observation practicums and when applying for substitute teaching positions and leave replacement positions. This creates a natural pipeline for future positions in the district.

- We have participated in the Nassau BOCES Diversity Initiative through speaking at virtual meetings and workshops attended by diverse teaching candidates and presenting an introduction video to familiarize them with our district.
- Anticipated position openings are posted on multiple education job search sites and sent directly to the colleges and universities with which we have partnered. We have also outreached to and sent postings to organizations serving diverse teachers such as the Long Island Latino Teachers Association, the Long Island Black Educators Association, and the NAACP.
- We will participate in the upcoming Nassau BOCES Diversity Fair where diverse teacher candidates will engage in virtual interview screenings with school districts.

The Valley Stream 24 School District is making strides with regard to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion in our schools. In addition to increasing diversity amongst teachers, what we do to identify and address equity gaps, engage our diverse communities, and create culturally responsive learning experiences that enrich all students are also important aspects of our initiative. We have the futures of our children in our hands and we have a responsibility to assure that all those futures are as bright as they can be by working together as a community.

Stay safe and be well,  
Dr. Don Sturz