

# A CARE FOR PEOPLE

## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION AT MOSES BROWN (2021-24)

### Introduction

As a Friends school, Moses Brown's mission is "to inspire the inner promise of each student and instill the utmost care for learning, people and place." We believe in the dignity, worth and potential of each child. And our goal is to equip each rising generation to seek truth, care for others and protect the planet we call home.

This powerful purpose has motivated the school for 236 years, and in each successive era the school has tried to live up to the demands of this vision through constant self-assessment and growth. In this spirit, we ask: *how should Moses Brown, a Friends school, respond to the legacy of bias, prejudice and discrimination in America? What role will we play in the national movement for equity and justice?*

This is not an abstract concept for us. Every year, despite Moses Brown's best efforts, students report incidents of racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and other forms of bias and insensitivity that mar their sense of belonging in our community. As a Friends school, we promise to honor each child's Inner Light, celebrate differences, and provide an environment where all feel valued, respected and supported. And yet for some, these values seem aspirational at best.

Over the past year, the Board, Administrative Council, and I have met with many constituency groups at the school to talk about concrete steps we might take to make MB a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community for all. From these conversations, bolstered by abundant research, we have developed this strategic action plan — a guide to the most immediate steps our community will take to help make MB a place where every person finds belonging and has equitable access to learn and thrive.

In 2021, our school community finds itself at a critical moment as we assess our past, present and future through a lens of inclusion and equity. I look forward to working with the entire community to ensure that caring for people remains absolutely integral to our Quaker model of educational excellence.

*Matt Glendinning*  
*April 2021*

## **Executive Summary**

The full plan, with more detail and nuance, is available below, but at a top-level, here are the goals we are setting for ourselves.

1. **Ensure that we have the necessary leadership and resources.**  
Hire a new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and establish an Office of Community and Equity to guide our progress. For existing leadership, including the Board of Trustees, implement regular DEI training and evaluate how we make decisions and how we hire and promote.
2. **Uphold the health, safety, and dignity of each person in the community.**  
Adopt a school-wide Community Code and communicate our values and policies regularly and publicly. Establish processes for reporting and responding to incidents of identity-based bias, discrimination, and racism, and develop policies governing the teaching of texts that include the N-word or other offensive slurs.
3. **Ensure that our community includes a vital diversity of identities, voices, and perspectives.**  
Establish appropriate systems for monitoring the demographic makeup of our community, ensuring that the school reflects the diversity of its surrounding area in terms of race, gender and socio-economic status. Implement anti-bias measures in our hiring and admissions/financial aid processes, including training for staff participants.
4. **Grow the cultural competency of our community.**  
Require all faculty, staff, and coaches to undertake formal DEI training every two years, and audit curriculum and pedagogy for DEI and multicultural content. Bolster programming for students and parents focused on identity, power, privilege, bias, and social inequality.
5. **Ensure all members of our community have equitable opportunity to contribute and thrive.**  
Address barriers to belonging in all areas of campus life, including the physical environment, admissions, HR practices, and clubs and extra-curriculars. Audit the real (total) costs of attending MB and help families in need defray ancillary costs.
6. **Build systems for evaluating programs, communicating progress, and enhancing decision making.**  
Develop new ways to measure diversity, equity, and inclusion at Moses Brown, create tools to help leadership track these DEI metrics, and communicate progress regularly to the broader community.

## **Full Report**

In June of 2020, Moses Brown launched a strategic planning process focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). In order to tap our community's wisdom and galvanize collective action, we enlisted input through a series of workshops with different constituency groups, where individual experiences and suggestions for change were shared. This iterative process helped identify needs and clarify priorities, and it led to the action steps identified below.

This plan will guide DEI work at Moses Brown over the next three years (2021–24). The plan lays out measurable objectives to which we will assign responsibilities, timeframes, and accountability measures. It is intended to be a living, working document that will continue to evolve — particularly as we hire a new Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the 2021–22 school year.

Ultimately, our goal is to use this strategic framework to bring about transformational change and ensure that the school is authentically living its mission and supporting all community members in becoming and being their best, true selves.

### **I. Leadership and Resources**

**Goal: The school has the necessary resources and leadership to create an inclusive and equitable community.**

1. Clearly articulate and publicize the school's commitment to DEI
2. Enhance engagement by the Board of Trustees:
  - a. Increase involvement with the All-School Diversity Committee or other DEI-focused groups, or form a Board-level committee focused on DEI
  - b. Undertake formal DEI training at least every two years
  - c. Evaluate nominating processes and board/committee composition
  - d. Assess Board decision-making processes, ensuring the inclusion of DEI perspectives
3. Hire a full-time Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, who reports to the Head of School and is a member of the senior administrative team
4. Establish an Office of Community and Equity, co-led by the DEI Director and the Director of Friends Education, focused on helping all members of the MB community feel a sense of belonging and, in collaboration with key partners (e.g., ombuds, HR coordinator, Health practitioners), caring for individuals' wellbeing
5. Strengthen the practice of decision-making across the school, e.g., using Quaker process ('sense of the meeting') and Design Thinking protocols to ensure that all voices are heard, and all perspectives considered
6. Ensure that the manner in which people are named to leadership positions is equitable and consistent

7. Ensure that every person in a named/compensated leadership position has completed foundational training in cultural competency, implicit bias and giving/getting feedback; require senior administrators to undertake advanced DEI training (e.g., NAIS Diversity Leadership Institute, SEED program)
8. Enhance the Human Resources function at MB, ensuring that all employees understand their rights and responsibilities and the resources available to them
9. Ensure that DEI activities are supported primarily by operational or endowed funding (i.e., a specific, non-discretionary amount annually). Increase existing funding by:
  - a. Establishing the Russ Carpenter '59 Endowed Fund for Attending the NAIS People of Color Conference (\$20,000 annually)
  - b. Using summer professional development stipends, including the Miller Summer Travel/Study Award, to incentivize and support DEI work and curriculum development

## **II. Health, Safety and Dignity**

**Goal: Through its policies and practices, the school upholds the health, safety and dignity of each person in the community.**

1. Adopt a school-wide Community Code (a concise declaration of values governing our relationship to each other, to our work and to the mission of the school, to be positively affirmed by all community members annually)
2. Ensure that MB's Safe School policies (e.g., anti-harassment and discrimination statements) are complete, and the process for reporting and consequences for violation clear. Communicate these protocols to all faculty, staff, students and parents annually
3. Establish a clear, effective and transparent process for reporting and responding to incidents of identity-based bias, discrimination and racism (e.g., Learning for Justice's [\*Responding to Hate and Bias at School\*](#), or [\*StopIt Solutions\*](#))
4. Establish school-wide policy and practices governing the teaching of primary textual material that includes the N-word or other offensive slurs
5. Ensure that transgender and gender nonbinary community members are fully supported and feel a sense of safety, belonging and dignity
6. Augment Social-Emotional and mental/physical Health curriculum and align with development of cultural competency skills to help students build self-awareness, knowledge of their own identities, empathy, trusting relationships, self-confidence, decision-making and communication skills

## **III. Diversity**

**Goal: The MB community includes a vital diversity of identities, voices and perspectives.**

1. Collect self-identification data from MB community more regularly and reliably as a means for increasing and monitoring vital diversity in the community

2. Ensure that the MB community---board and board committees, administration, Parents and Alumni Association boards, faculty, staff, coaches and students -- reflects the diversity of our surrounding area in terms of race, gender and socio-economic status. Engage the community in determining the level of diversity that is both sustainable and appropriate for fulfilling the school's mission (e.g., attain 33% people of color by 2026)
3. Audit MB's hiring, evaluation and promotion practices and outcomes from a DEI perspective; provide anti-bias training for all search committees and implement anti-bias measures
4. Audit MB's Admissions and Financial Aid practices to ensure effective enrollment of students who add to the diversity of the community; clarify and share the criteria for any possible deviations from standardized aid calculations
5. Assess attrition trends of both students and employees from a DEI perspective
6. Ensure that MB's promotional materials accurately and appropriately reflect the visible diversity of the MB community. Seek permission annually from students of color before using their image in promotional materials

#### **IV. Cultural Competency**

**Goal: All members of the MB community have the skills to understand, appreciate and interact effectively with people of different cultures, backgrounds and identities.**

1. Refine and implement our current shared definition and understanding of "cultural competency" and its value to fulfilling MB's mission
2. Update orientation of new employees, with stronger emphasis on DEI; continue DEI training throughout first year at MB
3. Require all faculty, staff and coaches to undertake formal DEI training every two years (especially in cultural competency, culturally responsive pedagogy, anti-racism and implicit bias)
4. Require all employees to adopt an annual goal focused on DEI and build accountability for progress into the evaluation process
5. Audit MB's curriculum and pedagogy for DEI and multicultural content:
  - a. Ensure that a diversity of experiences and viewpoints and the perspective of traditionally underrepresented groups are amply represented and regularly explored
  - b. Consider adopting the Learning for Justice [Framework for Anti-Bias Education](#) across the curriculum and advisory program, especially the call for allyship and action in the face of phobias and hate
  - c. Create and publish a specific DEI/Social Justice scope and sequence for each division
6. Enhance special programming---affinity groups, clubs, activities, conferences, workshops--to ensure that students engage in meaningful learning focused on identity, power and social inequality. Create opportunities for students to uncover their own biases and privileges

7. Expand parent/public programming (e.g., speaker series, assemblies, films, heritage celebrations) and explore ways to foster DEI dialogue at home

## **V. Equity and Inclusion**

**Goal: All members of the MB community feel valued and have equitable opportunity to contribute and thrive.**

1. Audit the physical environment and practices of MB (signage, symbols, publications, rituals, holidays, meetings, classrooms, physical accessibility) to identify and address barriers to inclusion and belonging
2. Review MB's Admissions practices to ensure that families representing different identities -- e.g., race, language, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic level -- feel a sense of welcome and belonging
3. Provide effective and inclusive ways to orient, mentor, support and retain new students and families, especially those from underrepresented groups
4. Review existing co-curriculars, clubs and activities to ensure they are accessible and equitable; review identity-based affinity and ally groups (e.g., racial affinity groups, SPEAKS, GSA, Equal Voice) to ensure there are sufficient programs to support all student identities
5. Assess the equity of pay and benefits for faculty and staff; ensure the use of benchmarking for staff and administrative positions; provide transparency for stipend positions; clarify and share the criteria for any possible deviations from published pay scales
6. Conduct an Equity Audit, including follow up to identity-related issues (especially gender) identified in the 2020 Workplace Climate Survey
7. Audit the real (total) costs of attending MB, and create a more proactive, transparent means of helping families in need defray ancillary costs (e.g., books, laptop, tickets, trips, tutoring, lunch, team snacks, special attire, athletic gear, gifts, college applications)
8. Ensure that there are multiple, low- or no-cost ways for parents to engage in the life of the school

## **VI. Assessment and Communication**

**Goal: As a part of ongoing institutional improvement, the school systematically collects data, evaluates programs and communicates with the school community.**

1. Create a dashboard tool that tracks critical DEI metrics longitudinally on an annual basis and supports strategic planning and decision making:
  - a. Gender and racial composition of decision-making groups (board, administration, department chairs, MBAA and PA boards, US student senate)

- b. Gender and racial composition of leadership positions (team leaders, committee clerks etc.)
  - c. Gender and racial diversity of faculty, staff and students, and socio-economic diversity of students (% supported with financial aid)
  - d. Financial Aid (discount rate, distribution of aid to groups prioritized for admission)
  - e. Employee professional development (annual hours devoted to DEI)
  - f. Experience of students, segmented by race and gender:
    - i. Enrollment in advanced courses
    - ii. Grade point average
    - iii. Involvement in disciplinary process
    - iv. Admission and retention
    - v. Reports of bias or discrimination
    - vi. Leadership representation (e.g., US Senate, DC pool, captainships)
2. Explore ongoing ways to assess equity and inclusivity within the MB community (e.g., NAIS AIM instrument, Pollyanna or similar community culture survey, focus groups, regular roundtable discussions, exit surveys and interviews, and personal narratives to follow up on trends in data)
3. Ensure that MB's commitment and ongoing work around DEI are accurately and effectively communicated at both the institutional and divisional level (e.g., family communications, bi-annual newsletter, website, social media).

## **Appendix**

### **Current State of DEI Work at MB (2020-21)**

#### **DEI Leadership and Structure**

As of 2020, MB's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work is led by three All-School Diversity clerks in partnership with six divisional clerks (two in each division). This team of nine meets monthly to address school issues and plan committee work. DEI clerking responsibilities are assigned in addition to other full-time duties and compensated by a stipend.

The All-School Diversity Committee (ASDC) meets monthly and includes representatives from all constituencies except students, including the Head, Assistant Heads, other members of the administration, faculty, staff, parents and, in some years, alumni or trustees. The group works to understand and address DEI issues across the school and participate in cultural competency training (recent topics have included intersectionality, being an upstander, cultural appropriation and building a culture of feedback). The Lower and Upper School Diversity Committees focus on programming, curriculum and professional development. In the Middle School, the Diversity clerks lead similar work during regular faculty meetings.

MB's DEI efforts are also advanced by a very active Parent Diversity Committee, formed in 2014 as a means of supporting families from under-represented demographics. They focus on three areas: supporting admissions and communication; providing family educational programming; and organizing social events.

#### **Recent Strategic Initiatives**

Before 2012, much of the DEI work at Moses Brown focused on intellectual conversations about human identity (race, gender, religion, language, sexuality, etc.). Throughout the school, isolated pockets of in-class and pull-out programming helped students understand these identifiers as being part of everyone's experience.

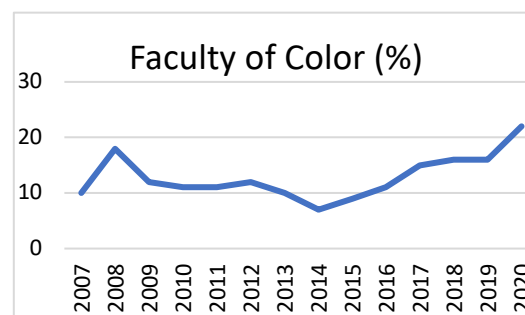
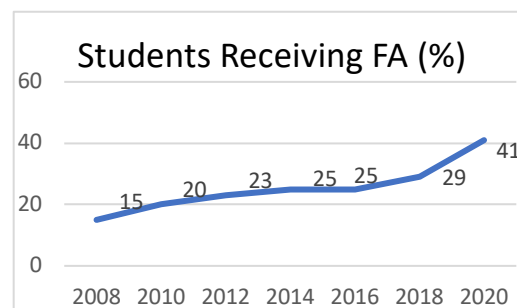
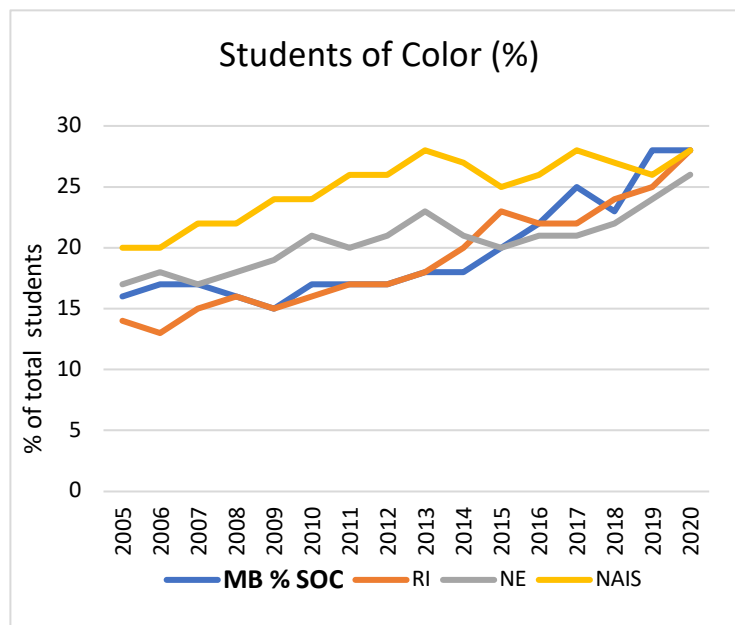
Sensing the limited impact of these efforts, the ASDC clerks led the school to embrace a deeper understanding of identity---naming the importance of living and working in a diverse environment, understanding the experiences of others and making sure that those with different identifiers feel the same sense of belonging as those who have always enjoyed that privilege.

Recognizing the benefit of further diversifying MB's student and faculty bodies, the ASDC played a lead role in recommending that the school adopt targets for enrollment and hiring---specifically, a 50% increase in the percentage of students of color (from 17% to 25%) and a 100% increase in faculty of color (from 9% to 18%) over the course of 10 years, a recommendation endorsed by the Head and Board of Trustees. Extensive efforts by the



Admissions team and the Administrative Council have allowed MB to achieve and surpass these goals.

Progress on student diversity has been attributable to a focus on access and affordability: the Admissions team increased outreach to feeder schools with diverse populations, and the school increased financial aid substantially. Providing scholarships for families who could not otherwise afford a Moses Brown education has been a priority of the school since its founding in 1784, and an absolute necessity since the economic downturn of 2008. MB is now substantially more diverse both racially and socio-economically than it was before that time.



Progress on faculty diversity is attributable to the school's focus on implicit bias in the hiring process. In 2017, the ASDC clerks arranged for Dr. Arin Reeves to offer a workshop on implicit bias at MB, and created an in-house workshop highlighting ways to mitigate bias in each step of the hiring process (now offered to hiring supervisors and committees, department heads, and faculty in all three divisions). With input from DEI leaders, the Head of School also established written protocols governing and standardizing the hiring process at MB.

The clerks have also worked to raise awareness of DEI issues more broadly within the MB community. They brought other consultants to the school, including Rosetta Lee (2013), Jennifer Bryan (2014), and Alison Park (2015-present), who provided training to employees, students, parents and school leaders. The clerks also partnered with the Head of School and others to organize mandatory summer reading and discussion for all employees focused on gender (2019) and race (2020). A common theme of these efforts has been to help dominant groups understand the value of having different voices at the table and the need to expand narrow definitions of "normal" in order to become a more inclusive community.

Over the past eight years, much of the DEI work at MB has focused on increasing employee and student understanding of gender, gender identity and patterns of gender bias in the community. A number of initiatives and clubs, e.g., the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, Equal Voice Club, Girls on the Run, and the Girls Leadership Collaborative, have supported this work. In 2018, the school designated 15 single-stall bathrooms on campus with All-Gender signage. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the manner in which the school has engaged with and supported transgender students has been largely successful and that some candidates apply because they have heard that MB is a place where trans students can feel a sense of belonging.

In June 2019, a female and non-binary employee group crafted a minute for the Head of School's consideration, describing examples and patterns of gender bias that individuals have experienced at MB. Following one of its recommendations, in 2020 the school launched a survey to assess employees' perceptions of workplace culture in terms of diversity, equity and inclusion. The survey was designed in collaboration with and administered by DEI consultant Alison Park from Blink Consulting. The findings, reflecting input from almost every MB employee, identified areas of strength (e.g., a strong sense of inclusivity among employees, and feelings of being treated with dignity and respect) as well as areas needing attention (e.g., different experiences based on gender, creating a workplace free from discrimination, and a need for increased cultural competency among administrators, faculty and staff).

Following one of Alison Park's recommendations, a task force has been created for 2020-21 to carry out an equity audit, which will probe and quantify specific conditions, structures and outcomes relative to DEI, rather than people's perceptions of them. The task force will also assist with implementation of DEI professional development.

Lastly, in recent years, MB's DEI leadership has also been involved in managing and responding publicly to the rise in discriminatory behavior and hate speech, both in our country as a whole and also within our own student body. Despite a strong value system and professed

commitment to diversity, the MB community suffers from micro-aggressions and incidents of racism, sexism, homophobia and hate speech. Such events inflict dignitary harm on members of our community who share the targeted identities, preventing them from feeling welcome and undermining their ability to fully participate and thrive at Moses Brown.

In order to address concerns about student awareness and behavior, the ASDC clerks teach three DEI-focused classes for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This work is designed to ensure that all students entering the Upper School have a baseline understanding about identity, privilege, race and gender as well as the school's expectations for treating everyone with respect. The clerks have helped to organize student (and adult) discussions about texts such as *Between the World and Me*, *So You Want to Talk About Race* and *The Hate U Give*. They have facilitated explicit discussions about the historical and modern-day impact of using the n-word. And they helped to devise a Care and Communication protocol to guide administrators' management of incidents of bias and hate.

Examples of DEI work and support also exist elsewhere within MB's structure and curriculum, as indicated in the following dashboard.

## DEI Snapshot, 2020: Programs, Policies and Structures

As we look to advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work at MB, the school has a solid, if also haphazard, foundation to build upon. While not comprehensive, the following dashboard highlights a sampling of programs, policies and structures that have supported DEI work at MB in recent years.

### 1. Curriculum

#### a. Lower School

- i. New N-5 Social Justice curriculum (2020)
- ii. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Family Unit
- iii. 3<sup>rd</sup>: Debunking the Thanksgiving Day story
- iv. 4<sup>th</sup>: World Religions
- v. 5<sup>th</sup>: Civil Rights
- vi. Annual grade-level diversity workshops (topics include self-identity, race, gender, ability, class and power, oppression, privilege, code switching)

#### b. Middle School

- i. 6<sup>th</sup>: reading of *Refugees*; reading circle choices include books focused on abilities and disabilities
- ii. 7<sup>th</sup>: Racial Justice curriculum; Dangers of a Single Story (history); reading circle choices include *Stars Beneath Our Feet*, *All We Have Left*, *Nyxia*, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*
- iii. 8<sup>th</sup>: Global History curriculum; reading circle choices include *The Hate U Give*, *The 57 Bus*, *Poet X*, *Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe*

#### c. Upper School

- i. Freshmen Studies course involves introductory DEI lessons; 9<sup>th</sup> graders formerly worked with DEI specialist Liza Talusan (2015-19)
- ii. Semester-long electives in Literature of Race, Literature of Gender, Psychology of Race, and the Mathematics of Inequality
- iii. All students read *The Hate U Give* (summer 2020) and are participating in a discussion-based DEI curriculum during Advisory and Community Block

### 2. Student Experience

- a. Lower School: Affinity Groups (2020); SPARK; Quaker Life student group; Girls on the Run (after-school program)
- b. Middle School: Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA); SPEAKS Club; Diversity 101 training for all students; strong attendance at AISNE diversity and students of color conferences
- c. Upper School: gender- and race-based affinity groups; attendance at annual NAIS Student Diversity Leadership Institute and AISNE Students of Color conference; Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA); Equal Voice Club; Girls Leadership Collaborative; Night of Advocacy

3. Employee and Trustee Experience
  - a. All-employee summer reading on gender (2019), race (2020)
  - b. Administrative Council attended 5-day Diversity Leadership Institute (2020)
  - c. Attendance at NAIS People of Color Conference and AISNE Diversity conferences (annual)
  - d. Gender, Sex, Sexuality and Identity workshops (2016-18)
  - e. Gender-based affinity groups (since 2019)
  - f. Gender Bias workshop (2019)
  - g. Implicit Bias workshops (2017, 2018, 2019)
  - h. Board of Trustees DEI workshops (2015, 2016, 2019, 2020)
4. Policies, Practices and Leadership Structure
  - a. Robust non-discrimination and reporting policies
  - b. Affirmative action in admissions and hiring
  - c. Anti-bias hiring protocols
  - d. Workplace culture survey and resulting DEI Task Force and Equity Audit (2020)
  - e. All-School Diversity Committee (three clerks), six divisional DEI clerks (two per division), Lower and Upper School Diversity committees, Parent Diversity Committee
  - f. Transgender support structures and policies (since 2016)
  - g. Care and Communication protocol for instances of bias and hate (2020).
5. Public Education & Engagement
  - a. DEI speakers: Rosetta Lee (2013), Jennifer Bryan (2014), Alison Park (2015, 2016), Arin Reeves (2017), Alex Myers (2019)
  - b. Film screenings: *I'm not racist...am I?* (2015); *I Am Not Your Negro* (2017); *Landfill Harmonic* (2017); *A Night of Jewish Film* (2018); *Quakers: The Quiet Revolutionaries* (2018); *The Existence of Homophobia* (student documentary, 2019); *Mental Health Awareness at Moses Brown: Real People; Real Stories* (student documentary, 2019)
  - c. Parent-sponsored book discussions: *Between the World and Me* (2016), *Black Ice* (2017), *The Hate U Give* (2018), *So You Want to Talk About Race* (2019), *Eloquent Rage* (2020), *Stamped: Race, Anti-racism and You* (2021).
  - d. Live performances: Prism of Praise Gospel Choir (2016); Mixed Magic Theater's *Letter from Birmingham City Jail* (2018); Rise Up Singing Again: Hope and Strength (2018); visiting poets Yosef Komunyakaa (2017), Tracy K. Smith (2018), Tyehimba Jess (2019); FirstWorks presents *Ajijaak on Turtle Island* (2019).
6. 2020-21 Moses Brown Demographics and Decision-Making Groups
  - a. Students: 28% SOC (NAIS avg.: 28%); 41% scholarship (NAIS avg.: 26%); 50% female, 50% male
  - b. Faculty: 22% POC (NAIS avg.: 18%); 60% female; 40% male
  - c. Administrative Council: 27% POC (NAIS avg.: 18%); 40% female, 60% male
  - d. Trustees: 22% POC (NAIS avg.: 15%); 44% female, 56% male

- e. Parents Association Board: 7% POC; 87% female, 13% male
- f. Alumni Association Board: 10% POC; 32% female, 68% male