



David J. Beare

Head of School

June 11, 2020

Dear Middlesex Community,

Last week, I wrote to you with dismay about the most recent violence against Black and Brown persons in American society and to acknowledge the structural racism that supports injustice. I want to thank you for your many responses to that letter and update you on some of the positive work that has already begun for next year.

Mainly, I want you to know that – both as an individual and as head of school – I am listening carefully to what you have to say, as are the trustees, faculty, and administration of Middlesex.

The range of responses was broad. The common threads, though, were the deep care and support for present and future Middlesex students and the firm belief that in this moment, we have both a profound opportunity and a profound responsibility to grow as a school community. I share this view. Becoming an anti-racist and inclusive environment, one where all students feel valued and included, is a core value of our school and an urgent moral imperative.

As an institution, our mission calls us to develop empathetic and ethical young people, rigorous of mind and courageous of spirit, who can contribute to the process of dismantling systemic racism in the communities where they live and work. We assert with so many people of goodwill that Black Lives Matter.

To learn and grow as a community, we must first listen to those who have had the courage to share their experiences and their honest critique, acknowledge where we have fallen short, and commit to making substantive, lasting change. We will create that change together – with successes and setbacks along the way – because none of us has all the answers, and the process of listening, considering, planning, and acting is a social and deeply ethical one.

It is very clear that words are not enough. There are many things we can do right now. To be certain, it will take careful consultation, planning, and execution to move forward in areas such as faculty hiring, curriculum review, enhanced community programming, and faculty training, but we must not lose the urgency of this moment.

To this end, here are some immediate steps we are taking to address these important issues:

- Each academic department will continue an ongoing, full curricular review that uses the following standard from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges: *“The program offers a variety of cultural experiences to reflect (a) the diversity of students enrolled and (b) the multicultural nature of the region, country, and world.”* This review will help us identify and address gaps in the curriculum.
- Our English Department is holding a series of professional development workshops with educator Erin Corbett, looking at ways we can continue to deepen our English curriculum by diminishing Eurocentrism and bringing forward stories and voices of persons of color. This will complement work already begun in the English Department, which has recently restructured their required

reading in all four class years; [here is an overview of the ways the department has incorporated a wider range of voices into their curriculum.](#)

- Members of our faculty and staff have organized a summer reading initiative centered on nine anti-racist texts. They will meet in small groups to discuss how these texts will inform and improve teaching and learning at Middlesex.
- Members of the faculty will invite students to join in educating ourselves more during the summer months about the legacy of slavery and systemic racism in our country. The School will suggest and supply texts, and students and faculty will have the opportunity to meet in small groups in the fall to discuss these texts in the context of Middlesex and the broader world.
- Our administrative team is revising the school schedule to create space for enhanced community programming and academic work on social justice and citizenship topics.
- The board of trustees is working to form a special Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that will work closely with Middlesex administrators, faculty, students, and alumni towards a strategic plan to fundamentally improve issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at the School.
- The Middlesex Alumni Association is launching a Black Alumni Affinity Group and working to establish ties to current Middlesex affinity groups like MX Fam. The MxAA will increase the diversity on its board and will look to involve more Black and Brown alumni in all its activities and initiatives.
- The Alumni Office will host receptions for alumni of color to gather, reconnect, and share feedback with Middlesex administrators.

This moment is a real opportunity for us to be better. There are important things we will do now and much more we can do as the next year unfolds. With careful consultation, further listening, and energetic planning, we will continue to find our promise as a school by deepening our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. I have never seen a community more ready to embrace this work with rigor, candor and optimism.

I look forward to sharing further developments with you over time.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David". The letter "D" is large and stylized, with the "a", "v", and "i" following in a cursive-like script.

David J. Beare
Head of School