

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools: How Silence and Privilege Hinder the Work

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2vj1652h>

Author

Perez del Toro, Jessica

Publication Date

2017

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools:

How Silence and Privilege Hinder the Work

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

by

Jessica Pérez del Toro

2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools:
How Silence and Privilege Hinder the Work

by

Jessica Pérez del Toro

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles

Professor Diane Durkin, Co-Chair

Professor Tyrone C. Howard, Co-Chair

Most private or independent schools originated as schools of privilege, serving the offspring of a culturally and socially elite group of white American families (Cookson, 2013; Flewelling, 2013; Slaughter-Defoe & Johnson, 1988). Since the 1960s these institutions have worked to change their predominantly White, elitist image by broadening their access and striving to become diverse and inclusive institutions that prepare all students to “thrive in a global, multicultural community” (Quanti, 2013, p. 13).

Although independent schools have made some progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, more work remains (Bisgaard, 2005). Independent schools continue to serve low numbers of historically underrepresented groups, such as African American and Latino students. These students often feel disconnected from their school community (Arrington, Hall, & Stevenson, 2003; National Association of Independent Schools [NAIS], 2015; White & Boyd, 2015). Despite increases in numerical diversity, some schools continue to lack the appropriate systems to support students of color, particularly through faculty professional development, curricula, and school programming (Stevenson, 2014). Research stresses the importance of schools engaging in strategic planning for diversity and inclusion along with continual monitoring and assessment to identify any “gaps between [a] school’s vision and its current reality and direction” (Arrington et al., 2003; Harris, 2013, p. 44).

This qualitative multi-site case study investigated how three Southern California member schools of the National Association of Independent Schools and the California Association of Independent Schools take their espoused commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and make them the lived experience of the school. The study examined how these institutions carry out, monitor, and measure their stated goals related to these topics, particularly through recruitment practices, curricula, and professional development. Finally, this study investigated the barriers schools face in this work.

The findings from this study demonstrated that independent schools continue to need programs and policies that support diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as tools to evaluate the outcomes of such initiatives. Across the three schools the barriers of silence, discomfort, and a lack of engagement around diversity, equity, and inclusion hindered further progress in this work.

These reactions to diversity, equity, and inclusion relate to White privilege and White fragility and result in slow cultural and organizational change within historically White independent schools (DiAngelo, 2011; Hossain, 2015).

The dissertation of Jessica Pérez del Toro is approved.

Rashmita Mistry

Jaana Juvonen

Diane Durkin, Co-Chair

Tyrone C. Howard, Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2017

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to some very special people in my family. First, to my mate, life-long companion, husband, and best friend, who has been patient with me and who believed in me during this entire process. I love you, Ceasar. Thank you for taking care of me physically, spiritually, and emotionally during this journey and for always supporting me throughout my education. I look forward to spending eternity together.

To my parents who came to this country as refugees and did not have access to the same educational opportunities as I have had. Mami y Papi, gracias por todo tu amor y apoyo constantes. Thank you for instilling in me core values, a strong work ethic, and a love of learning. I would have never made it this far had it not been for your love, support, and guidance.

I dedicate this work to all the students, families, and educators who have touched my life and inspired me. To all my students, past, present, and future, this is for you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION	ii
DEDICATION	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	x
VITA	xi
CHAPTER ONE: Statement of the Problem	1
Defining Independent Schools.....	3
The Need to Increase Diversity in Independent Schools.....	4
Inclusion in Independent Schools: The Experience of Students of Color	6
The Need for Strategic Planning for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	7
The Project.....	8
Research Questions.....	8
Research Design.....	9
Data Collection and Analysis.....	10
Site Selection.....	11
Participants.....	11
Public Engagement and Significance.....	12
CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review	13
Why Diversity Matters in Schools	15
The Benefits of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Education	16
Diversity Challenged in the Courts.....	16
Theoretical Foundations for the Effects of Diversity	17
Empirical Research on the Benefits of Diversity.....	19
The Increasing Need for Diversity Experiences in Education.....	23
A History of Privilege	24
Diversity in Independent Schools	26
The Changing Definitions of Diversity.....	26
Mission Statements and Commitments to Diversity.....	28
Efforts to Diversify the Student Population: What the Numbers Show	30
Changing Demographics: 1960-1999	31
Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the 21st Century.....	32
The Demographics of Independent Schools in Southern California	33
The Experiences of Students of Color in Independent Schools.....	35
The Challenges and Barriers Surrounding Diversity	40
Race, Class, and White Privilege.....	40
Strategic Planning: Financial Aid, Recruitment, and Retention	41

Financial Aid	42
Recruitment and Retention	43
A Better Chance	44
Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs	45
The Need for Research on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools	47
Conclusion	50
 CHAPTER THREE: Methodology	 52
Purpose of Study	52
Research Questions	53
Research Design	53
Sites and Participants	54
Site Selection	54
Participant Selection	56
Research Methods	58
Data Collection	58
Data Analysis	60
Ethical Considerations	61
Credibility and Trustworthiness	62
Summary	63
 CHAPTER FOUR: Findings	 64
Case 1: Oak Academy	65
Summary of Key Findings from Oak Academy	65
Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	66
Aligning Goals with Practice	69
Barriers	80
Case 2: Cypress Academy	85
Summary of Key Findings from Cypress Academy	86
Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	87
Aligning Goals with Practice	88
Barriers	97
Case 3: Pine Academy	102
Summary of Key Findings from Pine Academy	103
Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	104
Aligning Goals with Practice	106
Barriers	116
Silence and Privilege as a Barrier to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	118
 CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion	 122
Challenges to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools	124
Murky Definitions and Lack of Goals Threaten the School Climate	124
Recognizing Privilege and White Fragility	133

Altering the Organizational Culture of Independent Schools.....	136
Limitations	139
Recommendations for Future Research	140
Conclusion	144
Appendix A	
Interview Protocol: Administrators & Faculty	147
Appendix B	
Protocol for Student Focus Groups.....	150
Appendix C	
Guided Observation Protocol.....	152
Appendix D	
Research Information Form for Administrators and Faculty Members.....	153
Appendix E	
Teen Assent Form	156
Appendix F	
Parent Permission Form.....	159
References.....	163

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my deepest gratitude to my co-chair Dr. Diane Durkin. Dr. Durkin, you were with me from the start, from the moment I selected my topic and wrote the first lines of Chapter 1 until the end of Chapter 5. Thank you for your time, feedback, care, patience, guidance, and support. Thank you for pushing me to give my best and for believing in me when I doubted myself.

To my dissertation committee, Dr. Tyrone Howard, Dr. Rashmita Mistry, and Dr. Jaana Juvonen. Thank you for your time, guidance, support, and ideas as I completed the dissertation process.

To the fabulous administration at Westridge: Elizabeth McGregor, Jemma Kennedy, Gary Baldwin, Mary Tuck, Bonnie Martínez, and Carol van Zalingen. Thank you for all of your care, support, and understanding, particularly throughout the final stages of the dissertation process. You made the final months easier to bear.

Dr. Eichelberger, thank you for giving me words of wisdom when I most needed motivation to keep going. Dr. Shoemaker, thank you for reading parts of my beginning chapters and giving me ideas and guidance along the way. Dr. Holland, thank you for your words of wisdom and for the questions that pushed my thinking.

VITA

2004	Bachelor of Arts, History and Minor in Education Studies University of California, Los Angeles, California
2004-2008	K-12 Substitute Teacher Pasadena Unified School District Pasadena, California Soledad Enrichment Action Charter Schools Los Angeles, California
2008	Multiple Subject Teacher Credential California State University, Los Angeles, California
2008-2009	First Grade Teacher Field Elementary School Pasadena, California
2010-2012	Sixth/Seventh Grade English, History, and Spanish Teacher Vista Charter Middle School Los Angeles, California
2012-2015	Third/Fourth Grade Spanish/English Dual Language Immersion Teacher San Rafael Elementary Pasadena, California
2012-2013	Master of Arts in Teaching, TESOL University of Southern California, California
2015-Present	Dean of Student Voices & Middle and upper school Spanish Teacher Westridge School for Girls Pasadena, California
2015-16	Master's in Spanish Language and Culture Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, Spain
2014-2017	Doctoral Candidate-Educational Leadership Program University of California, Los Angeles

CHAPTER ONE: Statement of the Problem

Most private or independent schools originated as schools of privilege, serving the offspring of a culturally and socially elite group of White American families (Cookson, 2013; Flewelling, 2013; Slaughter-Defoe & Johnson, 1988). Many of these institutions originated as White flight schools for families wanting to avoid the desegregation of public schools. When the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, record numbers of White students fled the public school system to attend traditional and newly formed private and independent schools (Southern Education Foundation, 2016).

More than 60 years have passed since the ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* and private schools continue to be predominantly White, although the U.S. public school population is now majority-minority across many schools (E. Brown, 2016; Maxwell, 2014; Southern Education Foundation, 2016). In 2012, approximately 72% of the more than 4.3 million students who attended private schools across the U.S. were White, whereas Latino and African American students remained largely underrepresented at 10% or less for each group. During that same year, almost 50 million students in the U.S. were enrolled in public schools. Fifty-one percent of those students were White; 48.3% were students of color, primarily of African American and Latino descent (Southern Education Foundation, 2016). The National Center for Education Statistics projected that by 2014, the overall number of Latino, African American, and Asian students would surpass the number of White students in U.S. public schools (Maxwell, 2014). By 2017, it was projected that 52% of public school enrollment would be non-White, with Latino (27.6%) and African American (15.1%) students making up the largest groups of students of color (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). These numbers highlight how private schools

continue to be segregated and predominantly White, failing to represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the U.S. school-age population.

Despite the continued overrepresentation of White students in private schools, during the last 50 years these institutions have worked to change their predominantly White, elitist image by broadening their access and striving to become diverse and inclusive institutions that prepare all students to “thrive in a global, multicultural community” (Quanti, 2013, p. 13). As these schools seek to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of their student body, they also strive to make the private school experience more positive, equitable, and inclusive for students of color (Blackburn & Wise, 2009; Coleman, 2010; White & Boyd, 2015). Because “inequalities and inequities [are] ingrained in the history of independent school education” (Witte, 2013, p. 4), diversity work in these institutions requires consistent monitoring, assessment, and improvement of the school’s climate and diversity and equity initiatives (Denevi & Richards, 2009). Independent school leaders stress that to become educational leaders and achieve excellence, schools must engage in deliberate and strategic planning for diversity to ensure that all students are served equitably (Arrington, Hall, & Stevenson, 2003; Bradberry, 2013; Braverman & Looney, 1999; Brosnan, 2010; Denevi & Richards, 2009; Harris, 2013; Kaufman, 2003; Quanti, 2013).

Although independent schools have made some progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, more work remains (Bisgaard, 2005). Independent schools continue to serve low numbers of historically underrepresented students of color, such as African American and Latino students. These students often feel disconnected from their school community (Arrington et al., 2003; National Association of Independent Schools [NAIS], 2015b; White & Boyd, 2015). Furthermore, although some schools espouse a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion,

they oftentimes lack a strategic plan related to these or a system of accountability to monitor and assess their progress.

Few studies have investigated how independent schools plan for recruiting and supporting underrepresented students of color and how they create accountability systems to monitor, measure, and assess their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (French, 2013; Milliman, 2004). This qualitative multi-site case study investigated how member schools of the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) and the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) take their espoused mission and goals related diversity, equity, and inclusion and make them their lived mission. This study sought to fill the gap in the research by analyzing how these institutions fulfill their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through recruitment practices, curricula, and professional development. It also analyzed the barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion independent schools face (Brosnan, 2010; French, 2013; Harris, 2013).

Defining Independent Schools

Unlike public schools that are sustained and supported with public funds and operate under the oversight of local or state educational agencies, independent schools are non-profit, private schools that are independent in philosophy and in the way they are managed, financed, and governed (California Department of Education, 2016; NAIS, 2015a). They include boarding schools and day schools, both of which are funded by tuition and charitable contributions.

Competitive and elite independent schools across California are accredited members of national and statewide independent school organizations such NAIS and CAIS. Both organizations require schools to demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and

justice. NAIS charges its member schools with “creating and sustaining an inclusive, equitable, and just independent school community” and acknowledges that such an endeavor requires “commitment, reflection, conscious, and deliberate action, as well as constant vigilance” (NAIS, 2012, p. 15). This multi-site case study analyzed how three NAIS and CAIS member schools in Southern California align their commitments to diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice with the lived experience of the school.

The Need to Increase Diversity in Independent Schools

In the 1970s, students of color made up less than 4% of the student population in independent schools (Speede-Franklin, 1988). Historically, outreach efforts and diversity goals were focused on increasing the African American student population within these schools (Cavanagh & López, 2004; Powell, 1996). Across the nation today, students of color account for 29% of enrollment in independent schools (NAIS, 2016a). Like White students, Asian students are considered to be overrepresented in independent schools, whereas African American and Latino students remain underrepresented (Southern Education Foundation, 2016).

In states that are now *majority minority*, such as California (with 60.6% minority groups in 2012), and particularly Southern California, where large numbers of Latino students reside, independent school enrollment for this population remains low (Cavanagh & López, 2004; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). In July of 2012, California had the largest Latino population (14.5 million) of any state, and Los Angeles County had the largest Latino population of any county (4.8 million). In 2012, California also had the largest non-Hispanic White population of any state (15.0 million), and Los Angeles had the largest non-Hispanic White population of any county (2.7 million; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). For the 2015-2016 academic year, California’s

independent schools enrolled 54.3% students who identify as White, but only 6.1% Latino students (NAIS, 2016b). Thus, compared to California's demographic data for Latino families, the Latino student enrollment in independent schools remains low.

In acknowledgement of these statistics, in June 2016 CAIS published its Strategic Plan for 2016-2021. Underrepresented students topped the list of six strategic priorities articulated by CAIS. According to the CAIS Strategic Plan, since the 1980s, California has "become a global center of racial and ethnic diversity" with school populations changing at a faster rate than adult populations (CAIS, 2016a, pp. 1, 2). As of 2016, California's collective K-12 body was more than 50% Latino. However, independent school enrollment for this demographic group remains under 10%. CAIS acknowledged the need to work with community leaders and researchers who have deep knowledge of and influence with California's Latino families to help attract these families to California independent schools. Part of the goal outlined in the CAIS Strategic Plan is to help schools better serve underrepresented students, particularly Latino students, so that CAIS member schools better reflect local, regional, and state populations (CAIS, 2016a).

The number of African American students enrolled in independent schools also remains low compared to the overall African American school age population in the U.S. In 2011, 15.8% of students enrolled in U.S. public schools were African American. In that same year, only 6% of students enrolled in independent schools were African American. African American students were underrepresented in private schools in 43 states in 2012 (Southern Education Foundation, 2016). Nationally, African American student enrollment accounted for 6.5% of independent school enrollment in 2016 (NAIS, 2016a).

Research attributes Latino and African American underrepresentation in independent schools to socioeconomic factors, distance from the school, a lack of awareness about independent schools as an option, and a fear among parents of color that their child may experience a lack of connectedness at the school (Cavanagh & López, 2004; White & Boyd, 2015). Increasing the visibility of students and faculty of color can improve the experiences of students of color and increase their school connectedness. However, without a strategic plan for increasing diversity and inclusion, targeted outreach efforts, and constant monitoring and assessment, little will be achieved with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion (Brosnan, 2003; Harris, 2013; White & Boyd, 2015).

Inclusion in Independent Schools: The Experience of Students of Color

In addition to increasing a diverse population, independent schools also work toward making their schools more inclusive communities. Data show that despite the efforts to become more diverse and inclusive, students of color continue to attend racially dissonant schools: school environments where a student's racial group makes up 20% or less of the student body (Arrington et al., 2003). Studies show that these students report significant differences in the quality of their experience, facing challenges that can affect their sense of belonging, academic success, racial identity, and psychological well-being (Arrington et al., 2003; Bisgaard, 2005; Blackburn & Wise, 2009; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

Arrington et al.'s (2003) research on the experiences of African American students in independent schools found that 75% of students said they had to make special efforts to fit in with their school communities, 82% reported having had negative experiences at their schools, and 40% did not believe that their school treated all students the same. Thompson and Schultz

(2003) claimed that being a minority student in a majority-White school can be a psychologically challenging experience. Most students are likely to face challenges such as social loneliness, racial visibility and social invisibility, and class and cultural discomfort among White parents and administrators. In light of these data, schools need a strategic plan to create a support system to make the school community more welcoming for students of color (Harris, 2013).

The Need for Strategic Planning for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The data available on the low representation of African American and Latino students in independent schools and the information on their experiences in these institutions highlight the need for schools to be more strategic about diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly in relation to historically underrepresented groups. Research stresses the importance for schools to engage in strategic planning for diversity and inclusion (Arrington et al., 2003) along with continual monitoring and assessment to identify any “gaps between [a] school’s vision and its current reality and direction” (Harris, 2013, p. 44). Research on diversity and inclusion initiatives in independent schools consistently point to the need to have a designated group of school members who can work with the board, the head of school, and other administrators to design and implement a strategic plan for diversity (Blackburn & Wise, 2009; Brosnan, 2010; Kaufman, 2003). A strategic plan for diversity should include a robust recruitment and outreach initiative for students of color and a program to support these students once they are accepted (Blackburn & Wise, 2009). To address this problem of low representation, schools traditionally contract services with organizations such as A Better Chance (ABC) to match students of color with schools and help increase diversity among their student body. A challenge faced by some schools working with these organizations is a low number of student matches each year or matches with

students who live far from the school, prompting schools to seek other ways to diversify their student body.

The Project

This qualitative multi-site case study collected and analyzed data across three NAIS and CAIS member independent day schools in Southern California. The purpose of this study was to investigate how the schools take their espoused commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and make them the lived experience of the school. The study examined how these institutions carry out their stated goals related to these topics through recruitment practices, curricula, and professional development. The study also analyzed how schools monitor and measure their progress related to these goals and commitments. Finally, this study investigated the barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion independent schools face.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. According to administrators, faculty, and students, how do NAIS and CAIS member schools achieve their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - a. How do they recruit and support historically underrepresented minorities such as African American and Latino students?
 - b. How do schools monitor and measure their progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - c. What barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion do schools face?

Research Design

This was a qualitative, multi-site case study. A qualitative, multi-site case study was able to capture “a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon,” as gathered by the descriptions and perspectives of administrators, faculty, and students at each site (Merriam, 2009, p. 51). Such descriptions and perspectives could not be captured in depth with quantitative methods such as surveys. A multi-site case study was deemed the best qualitative approach to answering the research questions because it allowed for a deep investigation and a rich description of what selected NAIS and CAIS member schools in a region do to take their espoused mission regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion and make it the living mission of their school. To gather a rich description of each site and deeply investigate the practices and perspectives of different site constituents, this multi-site case study involved the use of the following qualitative methods: document analysis, observation of lunch time interactions, interviews with administrators and faculty, and focus groups with upper school students. These data collection methods generated data that permitted an in depth analysis of each institution’s mission and practice.

NAIS member independent day schools in Southern California serve similar populations of students; are managed, financed, and structured in similar ways; and have similar goals regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. The findings from this multi-site case study may be used as a guide for NAIS independent schools that seek to bolster their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as what is learned from a particular case can be transferred to similar situations (Merriam, 2009). Analyzing and contrasting a range of multiple cases, as this study did, can help us understand how NAIS member schools fulfill their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and gain a better understanding of the barriers schools face in this work.

Furthermore, a multi-site qualitative case study “can strengthen the precision, the validity, and the stability of the findings” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 29) and enhances their generalizability (Merriam, 2009).

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection methods included a document analysis, observations, interviews, and focus groups. The document analysis involved a review of each school’s website, mission statement or statement of philosophy, strategic plan, demographic data, tuition, financial aid, and statements and support systems related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as student clubs, parent groups, guest speakers, or multicultural education and global initiatives. The document analysis provided additional data points to triangulate and compare data from documents with what administrators, faculty members, and students expressed in the interviews and focus groups.

Interviews were conducted with administrators and faculty members at each site. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were conducted with a total of 36 adult participants. Three focus groups were conducted with five to six upper school students from each school site. The focus groups ranged from 45-120 minutes. A total of 17 students participated in the focus groups. A semi-structured protocol was used for the interviews and focus groups. Each interview and focus group session was recorded with two devices and transcribed within 24 hours by Rev.com transcription services. Dedoose, a web-based qualitative research program, was used to code all interview and focus group transcripts. In the initial phase of analysis, transcript data were placed into categories that naturally emerged from the research and interview questions. Once placed into categories, responses were analyzed further and coded into

emerging themes and patterns that were traced within and across schools. Data analysis took place as data continued to be collected within and across sites.

Site Selection

Because this study analyzed how NAIS and CAIS schools align their commitments and mission regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion with their practice, this study involved NAIS and CAIS member schools in California. California independent day schools were selected for this study because these schools have a higher percentage of students of color (39%) than the national percentage across all day schools (29%). The three participating sites were selected among Southern California independent schools because this region is racially and ethnically diverse and has the greatest number of CAIS accredited independent schools in the state. The selection of sites was narrowed even further to independent day schools in Los Angeles County because this region has the most CAIS members in the entire state. Because Los Angeles County represents a vast region with both urban and suburban areas and varied concentrations of racial and ethnic groups across different sectors, the selected sites needed to represent different areas within the county. Thus, school sites representing various regions of Los Angeles County were selected.

Participants

The participants in this study included administrators, faculty members, and upper school students from each of the three participating sites. Each school site varied its the number of participants. Between four and six administrators and between five and nine faculty members from each school site participated in interviews. Five to six upper school students involved in leadership at each campus participated in focus groups.

Participating administrators from each site included heads of school and assistant heads, admissions directors, deans, division directors, diversity practitioners, athletic directors, and college counselors. Participating faculty included a balance of White faculty and faculty of color. Student participants included upper school students who held leadership positions on campus. Selected students had a role in either culture clubs, affinity groups, or student government or attended the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) sponsored by NAIS. SDLC is an annual conference that provides a platform for independent schools to reflect upon and discuss issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Public Engagement and Significance

Independent schools across the nation realize the importance and the benefits of having a diverse student body and an inclusive school. Though this study was specific to a particular context, the information gained can help other schools whose mission includes a commitment to increase and support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

Independent schools were initially created to serve the children of the privileged (Flewelling, 2013). Because many originated as racially, economically, and socially homogeneous elite institutions, “inequalities and inequities [are] ingrained” in their history (Witte, 2013, p. 4). In the decades since the Civil Rights Movement, independent schools have increased their focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion by recruiting more students of color and implementing programming to support these students (Blackburn & Wise, 2009; Brosnan, 2004; Coleman, 2010; Quanti, 2013).

Independent schools typically have mission statements that emphasize their commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice, but their espoused mission is not always tied to their lived mission (Wehmiller & Withers, 2007). Independent schools with mission statements highlighting a commitment to diversity are not always racially and ethnically diverse, nor do their populations reflect the diversity of their communities or of society. In areas such as Southern California, some independent schools struggle to recruit racially and ethnically diverse students. Other schools report having 40-50% students of color, but a closer look at their demographic data shows that Asian American students make up a high percentage of students of color, whereas African American and Latino students remain largely underrepresented.

Research also shows that students of color attending independent schools report a need for more inclusive and multicultural school communities (P. Brown, 2015; Polite, 2004; White & Boyd, 2015). Studies on the experiences of students of color in independent schools highlight a need for schools to strengthen their commitment to recruit and retain students of color and

provide stronger programming to support students' emotional health and academic success (Arrington et al., 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

Few studies have investigated how independent schools achieve their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through the recruitment of historically underrepresented students of color, curriculum and programming, and professional development. It is also unknown if and how they measure and monitor their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and how they align their espoused mission related to these goals with their lived mission (French, 2013; Milliman, 2004). Two studies addressing similar topics have been conducted in independent schools on the East Coast of the United States; however, no studies on these topics have been conducted across West Coast independent schools. This study sought to fill the gap in the research by addressing these topics and analyzing the barriers to recruiting, supporting, and retaining racially and ethnically diverse students in predominantly White independent schools (Brosnan, 2010; French, 2013; Harris, 2013).

This chapter begins by highlighting the benefits of diversity on school campuses, focusing on the research conducted in higher education. Although diversity encompasses a wide range of visible and invisible characteristics that mark human identity, this literature review focuses specifically on racial and ethnic diversity. The next section summarizes the history of independent schools and their gradual efforts towards racial integration. I then turn to the topic of diversity in independent schools, outlining gradual increases in structural diversity from the 1960s through today. Next, I discuss the challenges research shows that students of color face as a result of the lack of diversity in independent schools and some of the actions schools take to support these students. I then outline the barriers to diversifying student populations in

independent schools, focusing on issues of race, class, and White privilege, as well as the lack of strategic planning, financial aid, recruitment, and retention. I conclude with a discussion on the lack of research surrounding diversity efforts in independent schools and the need for more studies in this area.

Why Diversity Matters in Schools

Independent school leaders believe that diversity is beneficial for both students and schools (Flewelling, 2013; Marblo, 2007). Diversity benefits students because it exposes them to multiple perspectives and prepares them to live, work, and function in a “multifaceted global community” (Quantis, 2013, p. 9). Diversity further benefits schools as it can help distinguish them as leaders in education (Blackwell, 2013; Flewelling, 2013). Empirical studies conducted in higher education add to the body of evidence that links diversity experiences in education with numerous student learning outcomes and benefits. Although these studies focus on higher education, the same benefits likely apply to all sectors of education, including independent schools that historically are majority White. If empirical data show that “undergraduate education is appreciably enhanced by diversity-related efforts on colleges and universities” (Chang, 2011, p. 18), then the same likely applies to both the public and private sectors of K-12 education. Due to a lack of empirical data regarding the benefits of diversity experiences in K-12 independent schools, the following section discusses empirical studies that highlight the benefits of diversity experiences in higher education.

The Benefits of Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Education

Diversity Challenged in the Courts

Much of the empirical work linking diversity and learning emerged from an area of research termed “the educational benefits of diversity,” which stemmed from the University of Michigan affirmative action cases (Hurtado, 2007, p. 185). In one such case, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), the United States Supreme Court upheld the use of race conscious admissions at the University of Michigan Law School “to further a compelling state interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body” (Biegel, 2012, p. 371). In its decision, the Court reaffirmed Justice Lewis Powell’s opinion on *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978). In the landmark *Bakke* case, Powell identified the attainment of a diverse student body as a compelling state interest and a “constitutionally permissible goal for an institution of higher education” that helps promote an “atmosphere of speculation, experiment and creation—so essential to the quality of higher education” (Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978, pp. 311-312). Powell reiterated that the “nation’s future depends upon leaders trained through wide exposure to the ideas and mores of students as diverse as this Nation of many peoples” (p. 313). Powell’s argument, known as the *diversity rationale*, was used by Sandra Day O’Connor as she wrote for the majority of the Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (Chang, 2011) stating that, “Student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify the use of race in university admissions” (Biegel, 2012, p. 365). In the dissenting opinion, Justice Antonin Scalia questioned the benefits of diversity and warned about potential future lawsuits. Though there was disagreement about the educational benefits of diversity, the Court approved the practice of race conscious admissions at the University of Michigan Law School. However,

the Court struck down the formulaic approach for admitting undergraduates in *Gratz v. Bollinger* (Chang, Denson, Sáenz, & Misa, 2006).

Although the ruling in *Grutter v. Bollinger* allowed for race conscious admissions to continue for the law school, experts doubt that it will be the last word on race conscious admissions practices in higher education (Chang, 2011). Justice O'Connor shared the same view, explaining, "We expect that 25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary to further the interest approved today" (Biegel, 2012, p. 371).

Controversy over the claimed educational benefits of diversity persist. Both before and after the rulings in *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*, researchers acknowledged a "pressing need to understand empirically how students actually benefit, if at all, from racially/ethnically diverse environments" (Chang et al., 2006, p. 431). Since then, numerous empirical studies in this area have emerged and demonstrated the educational benefits of diversity. The following section outlines some of the theories upon which the benefits of diversity experiences are rooted.

Theoretical Foundations for the Effects of Diversity

The work of Erik Erikson (1946, 1956) and Jean Piaget (1985) has been used as a theoretical rationale to support the importance of bringing together students from different backgrounds to create a diverse and complex learning environment (Bowman, 2010; Denson & Chang, 2009; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, 2001, 2007). Erikson's concept of identity posits that late adolescence and early adulthood are distinctive periods of personal and social development. During this time, personal and social identities are formed. According to Erikson, identity develops best when adolescents and young adults are given a *psychosocial*

moratorium: a time and a place to experiment with different social roles before they commit to an occupation, intimate relationships, political affiliations, and a philosophy of life. According to Gurin et al. (2002), this time should “involve a confrontation with diversity and complexity, lest young people make commitments based on their past experiences, rather than actively think and make decisions informed by new and more complex perspectives and relationships” (p. 334). Students’ educational experiences can be especially influential when the social milieu of the school experience is different from their home experience and background and is diverse and complex enough to promote intellectual experimentation that is essential to identity development.

The work of Jean Piaget (1985) also supports the notion that cognitive growth can result from discontinuity and discrepancy, or what Piaget termed *cognitive disequilibrium*. When a person encounters a novel experience or one that seems discrepant with their current worldview, he/she can try to reconcile the novel experience with his/her existing schema, adapt a new schema, or leave his/her schema unaltered. Reconciling or changing one’s schema or worldview requires cognitive effort and results in uncertainty, discomfort, or disequilibrium (Bowman, 2010; Kibler, 2011). It is precisely such disequilibrium or shift in attitude that sparks changes in cognitive tendencies and skills, providing the conditions for cognitive growth (Bowman, 2010). Thus, the more opportunities students have to “engage in difference,” the greater the potential for cognitive growth and learning (Denson & Chang, 2009, p. 326). The following section outlines some of the more recent empirical research that highlights the benefits of diversity in education.

Empirical Research on the Benefits of Diversity

Empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between diversity experiences and student outcomes (Bowman, 2010). A growing body of research in higher education highlights the following benefits associated with diversity experiences:

- Increased complex thinking and critical thinking skills (Antonio et al., 2004; Hurtado, 2007; Pascarella et al., 2014).
- Significant and positive effects on cognitive development and college students' attitudes and values (Bowman, 2010).
- Reduced prejudice across a variety of samples and situations (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006).
- Increased cultural and social awareness and perspective-taking skills (Hurtado, 2007).
- Increased feelings of interpersonal similarity and greater respect and liking; decreased feelings of social distance and stereotyping; heightened awareness of inequality in society; more favorable attitudes toward policies aimed at educational equity (López, 2004).
- Increased self-efficacy, academic skills, and self-change in a student's capacity to engage with racial-cultural differences; cultivating students' knowledge of and ability to get along with people of different races or cultures (Denson & Chang, 2009).
- Higher levels of intellectual engagement and self-assessed academic skills across different groups of students; development of the skills needed to participate in and lead in a diverse democracy; citizenship engagement and racial/cultural engagement (Gurin, et al., 2002).

- Positive effects on students' intellectual, social, and civic development (Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004).
- Higher scores on academic self-confidence, social agency, and critical thinking disposition; development of certain aspects of self; higher amounts of positive interactions with diverse peers (Nelson Laird, 2005).
- Higher levels of cross-racial interaction linked to larger gains in students' knowledge of and ability to accept different races/cultures, growth in general knowledge, critical thinking ability, problem solving skills, and intellectual and social self-confidence (Chang et al., 2006).

During the legal challenges to affirmative action and race conscious college admissions faced by the University of Michigan, Gurin et al. (2002) used single and multi-institutional data from the University of Michigan and the Cooperative Institutional Research Program to explore the relationship between students' experiences with diverse peers and educational outcomes. Their goal was to examine the effects of classroom diversity and informal interaction among African American, Asian American, Latino, and White students on learning and democracy outcomes. The researchers found that diversity experiences had a positive relationship with learning outcomes. In the national study data, they found that informal interactional diversity was strongly related to high levels of intellectual engagement and self-assessed academic skills for all four groups of students. Results from both studies demonstrated that diversity experiences helped students develop the skills to participate and lead in a diverse democracy. Actual interaction with diverse peers was an influential aspect of students' educational experiences. The impact of classroom diversity was statistically significant and positive for White and Latino

students. The results of the study showed that experiences students have with diversity consistently and meaningfully affect important learning and democracy outcomes for college education.

Meta-analyses published within the last 11 years (Bowman, 2010; Denson, 2009; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) have further added to the body of knowledge supporting the benefits of diversity in education. With the rapidly changing demographics of the United States and college campuses, institutions have implemented diversity-related initiatives to promote positive cross-racial interactions and relations. Because research examining the impact of such initiatives yielded inconsistent findings, Denson (2009) conducted the first quantitative synthesis to thoroughly examine the relationship between diversity-related initiatives and college students' racial bias and the magnitude of the relationship. Denson used 27 studies in her sample and found that diversity-related activities showed a moderate effect on reducing racial bias, noting that effectiveness depended on the characteristics of the program and the students. Although the diversity-related interventions she examined used content-based knowledge as one approach to reducing college students' racial bias, Denson found that interventions were more effective when they incorporated a cross-racial interaction component. The study also confirmed that White students benefited more from diversity-related interventions related to racial bias reduction when compared to students of color. Denson concluded that institutional effort, support, and commitment are all needed to successfully create a school climate that fully realizes the benefits of diversity. Highly effective diversity-related initiatives depend upon the level of institutional support, the comprehensiveness of the approach or intervention, a diverse racial composition, and the extent of intergroup contact within the initiative.

In a second meta-analysis, Bowman (2010) used a quantitative method to review the literature on college diversity experiences and cognitive development and systematically examined the relationship between the two. Drawing from the work of Gurin et al. (2002), Bowman formulated his theoretical framework using Erikson's (1946, 1956) concept of identity and Piaget's (1985) concept of disequilibrium. Using hierarchical linear modeling, Bowman found 58 separate effects from 17 studies with a total of 77,029 undergraduates. The meta-analysis showed that college diversity experiences are significantly and positively related to cognitive development. Bowman found that some types of diversity experiences seem to be more effective than others at promoting cognitive growth. Although diversity coursework, diversity workshops, and interactions with nonracial diversity were all found to be positively associated with cognitive growth, interpersonal interactions with racial diversity were the most strongly related to cognitive development. The strength and benefits of interactions is also confirmed in Denson's (2009) meta-analysis. Bowman also found that meaningful engagement with racially diverse peers, not merely the presence of diverse peers on campus, has a positive effect on college students' attitudes and values. Bowman additionally noted positive effects on students' cognitive tendencies and skills such as critical thinking and problem solving.

In a third meta-analytic test of cross-racial contact, or intergroup contact theory, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) used 713 independent samples to statistically test the results from 515 studies. Allport (1954) first formulated intergroup contact theory and maintained that contact between groups under optimal conditions could reduce cross-group prejudice. Allport believed that reduced prejudice would result under the presence of four conditions: equal status between the groups in the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities,

law, or custom. Pettigrew and Tropp tested intergroup theory and found that cross-racial contact typically reduces intergroup prejudice. Effects synthesized from 696 samples revealed that greater intergroup contact is generally associated with lower levels of prejudice. The researchers found that attitudes toward the immediate participants became more favorable, as did attitudes toward the entire out-group, out-group members in other situations, and out-groups not involved in the contact. In summary, the evidence led Pettigrew and Tropp to conclude that intergroup contact can contribute to reductions in prejudice across a wide range of groups and contexts.

The Increasing Need for Diversity Experiences in Education

Taking Erikson's (1946, 1956) concept of identity and Piaget's (1985) concept of disequilibrium, purposefully creating educational environments where students can have meaningful interactions with diverse peers will expose them to different worldviews, perspectives, and experiences that have the potential to shape students' personal and social identities and thinking. Offering students diversity experiences in education is especially important for the following reasons: U.S. society continues to become racially and ethnically diverse (Denson, 2009); K-12 schools across the U.S. are highly segregated and as a result many students have had little previous experience interacting with people from different racial or ethnic groups until they enter college (Bowman, 2010; Orfield & Lee, 2006); and linking diversity with central educational and civic goals is crucial for the proper education of global citizens (Moses & Chang, 2006) and should be a "key impetus...to better position the next generation of leaders for the project of advancing social progress" (Hurtado, 2007, p. 186). According to Martha Nussbaum (1997),

Many of our most pressing problems require for their intelligent, cooperative solution a dialogue that brings together people from many different national and cultural and religious backgrounds. Even those issues that seem closer to home — issues, for example, about the structure of the family, the regulation of sexuality, the future of children— need to be approached with broad historical and cross-cultural understanding. A graduate from a U.S. university or college ought to be the sort of citizen who can become an intelligent participant in debates involving these differences, whether professionally or simply as a voter, a juror, and friend. (p. 8)

Recent U.S. events related to diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion in major businesses (Rosenblum, 2017), in politics (Phillips, 2016), in Hollywood (Deggans, 2016), in higher education (Brown, 2016), within law enforcement, (Funke & Susman, 2016) and most recently in the violence that unfolded in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 13, 2017 (Astor, Caron, & Victor, 2017), demonstrate that now more than ever is it essential for educational institutions to expose students to diverse experiences and promote cross-racial interactions and cross-cultural understanding to help shape students' thinking in hopes that they become citizens who can defend anti-racism and oppose bigotry.

A History of Privilege

At their inception, independent schools were hardly recognized as institutions that embraced racial and ethnic diversity. Most originated as schools of privilege, serving the offspring of a culturally and socially elite group of American families (Cookson, 2013; Flewelling, 2013; Slaughter-Defoe & Johnson, 1988). Until the 1930s, independent schools viewed their homogeneous student populations as a “major asset” and a way for the school to carry out “a common academic purpose” (Powell, 1996, p. 84). However, the Great Depression began to raise “political, moral, and educational questions about homogeneity” (p. 84), leading independent schools to be more critical of the effects of having a student body that lacked racial

and ethnic diversity. In seeking exclusivity and maintaining a homogeneous student body, independent schools were discriminating against people and providing poor preparation for the cultural diversity found in the real world. Schools were criticized for promoting cultural elitism and social exclusivity and for perpetuating privilege among the already privileged (Powell, 1996).

The 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, and the resulting call for the desegregation of public schools, led to further homogeneity across some independent schools and to the establishment of exclusively White, Southern preparatory schools that did not want to become racially integrated (Powell, 1996). Not all independent schools responded this way. The *Brown* decision and the federal civil rights laws of the 1960s compelled other schools to develop efforts to recruit minority students for both moral and economic reasons. The rapidly changing demographics of America's school-aged population also represented a potential market for the maintenance, sustainability, and expansion of independent schools (Speede-Franklin, 1988). Thus, these three imperatives—morals, economics, and demographics—led independent schools to integrate by race voluntarily in 1963, unlike public schools, which were integrated because of court mandates (Powell, 1996; Speede-Franklin, 1988). Independent schools gradually began to change from being predominantly White and elite institutions to more inclusive and diverse schools (Cookson, 2013; Cookson & Persell, 1985; Powell, 1996; Speede-Franklin, 1988). By the 1970s, independent schools that were still segregated faced the threat of losing their tax-exempt status for failing to comply with racially nondiscriminatory practices (Speede-Franklin, 1988). The independent school response to early criticisms of homogeneity

and to their deep-rooted segregation became known as *diversity* and has since constituted an integral mission of many independent schools (Bisgaard, 2005; Powell, 1996).

Diversity in Independent Schools

The Changing Definitions of Diversity

Diversifying independent schools and making them more socially equitable institutions began to take on greater importance in the 1960s (Bisgaard, 2005; Davis, 2013). As diversity initiatives changed, so did the definition of diversity in independent schools. Independent schools first defined diversity as socioeconomic differences in the student population (Milliman, 2004; Powell, 1996). They began recruiting less affluent students by offering scholarships to middle-class families who shared their same culture and values. In this way they could maintain the racial homogeneity of their student body, but diversify it socioeconomically. As schools sought economic diversity, they also sought academically strong students. Between 1940 and 1960, attracting financially needy but academically successful students who reflected the same values and culture of the school was the extent of schools' actions regarding diversity (Powell, 1996).

As the goals associated with diversity shifted, so did schools' definition of the term. Between the 1960s and 1970s diversity in independent schools referred to racial diversity and was most associated with having more African American students on campus. Deliberate efforts were made to recruit these students to help diversify the homogeneous student population that was characteristic of independent schools (Speede-Franklin, 1988). Efforts to achieve racial and ethnic diversity came under the guise of a sense of *noblesse oblige* or a moral imperative (Flewelling, 2013; Speede-Franklin, 1988). Schools began to diversify their student body with the desire to share some of their privilege with a select group of high achieving students of color.

The minority student would enjoy the benefits of an independent school education while the majority White students could have a diverse social circle. For the student of color, attending an elite and privileged school would represent an opportunity for progress and social mobility. The institution would change the student, but the institution would not be changed by the student (Flewelling, 2013). By the mid-1990s, diversity in independent schools had expanded to include Asian, Middle Eastern, and Hispanic students, gays and lesbians, and students with disabilities (Milliman, 2004).

Since the late 1990s, a cultural shift within independent schools has resulted in working toward greater inclusivity *on all levels*, moving beyond race and ethnicity (Brosnan, 2012). Today, independent schools define diversity in a much broader sense, moving away from a narrow focus on race and ethnicity to other forms of diversity. The Assessment of Multiculturalism and Inclusion (AIM), a school-climate survey created by NAIS (2015d), defines diversity as

Embrac[ing] the wide range of human characteristics used to mark or identify individual and group identities. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, race, national origin, age, personality, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion, ability, and linguistic preferences. Diversity is a term used as shorthand for visible and quantifiable statuses, but diversity of thought and ways of knowing, being, and doing are also understood as natural, valued, and desired states, the presence of which benefit organizations, workplaces, and society. (p. 1)

This focus on diversity in its broadest sense is similar to a trend found by French (2013) in her research on diversity at a 300-year old independent school. French observed that attention to race was being replaced with a “much more varied and more nebulous attention on diversity or inclusion” (p. 183) that is meant to retreat from race. Thus, as schools focus on broader

definitions of diversity, they divert their attention away from the stagnant numbers of certain racial and ethnic groups (French, 2013).

Today, diversity (in its broadest sense) and inclusion are important topics in independent schools. They also make up an important part of school mission statements. The following section will discuss mission statements and their focus on diversity.

Mission Statements and Commitments to Diversity

In their mission statements, independent schools outline their commitment to diversity in its broadest sense. Increasing and valuing student diversity along with demonstrating a commitment to equity and inclusion form part of the mission and statement of purpose of independent schools across the nation and a central mission of statewide and national independent school organizations such as the NAIS (California Association of Independent Schools [CAIS], n.d.; NAIS, 2014). NAIS (2015a) is a nonprofit membership association that provides research analysis, leadership guidance, and professional development to more than 1,500 independent K-12 schools in the U.S. Membership in the organization is contingent upon a school's agreement to abide by the NAIS (2012) Principles of Good Practice (PGPs). One PGP addresses equity and justice and outlines the responsibility of school leaders to articulate strategic goals and objectives that promote diversity, inclusion, and equity at the school. The principles emphasize that the school must deliberately ensure that the board of trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and student body reflect the diversity present in our country.

As of 2017, many independent schools have mission statements that explicitly express and establish the school's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (Bradberry, 2013). Despite espoused commitments to diversity, independent school leaders acknowledge that

further work needs to be done to make their schools more diverse, equitable, and inclusive institutions (Bisgaard, 2005; Brosnan, 2012). Bradberry (2013) prefaces the handbook *Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and the Practitioner* by outlining several concerns that continue to surround diversity practice in independent schools, such as: the need to translate diversity objectives into true action; the development of strategies for achieving greater success with diversity, inclusion, and equity goals; and creating frameworks for strategic visioning of and accountability for the work of diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice.

In her dissertation on inclusion and diversity in independent schools, Milliman (2004) highlighted that recommendations concerning diversity work given by educators between 1975 and 2000 continue to apply today, indicating a lack of significant progress in certain areas relating to diversity. Among the areas that continue to present a challenge are a lack of faculty of color to serve as role models for students of color, a lack of curriculum that reflects the experiences and voices of minority students, and the need to train teachers to work effectively with a diverse student population (Milliman, 2004). Denevi and Richards (2009) also reported persistent low numbers of teachers of color across independent schools, flat admission numbers for students of color, lack of people of color in department head or senior administrative positions, and few school heads of color. Thus, although many schools have made a commitment to developing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive community, there is often a gap between a school's goals and its lived experience (Wehmiller & Withers, 2007).

Independent schools are not the only educational institutions facing roadblocks in their efforts surrounding diversity and inclusion. Despite the progress made with racial integration in the 1960s, public schools across the nation are more segregated than ever before. Independent

schools are not immune to the lack of diversity among their student bodies, especially considering their history. Although independent schools had a “slow awakening” beginning in the 1960s (Brosnan, 2010, p. 16) have since then gradually diversified their student population, their transition into diverse and inclusive communities continues to be a slow and difficult process (Wehmiller & Withers, 2007). With respect to faculty of color, Denevi and Richards (2009) asserted that achieving racial diversity is one of the biggest challenges independent schools face. This challenge also applies to students of color, as demographic data show that these students, particularly, African American and Hispanic students, remain highly underrepresented in these institutions (NAIS, n.d.). For most independent schools, an unacknowledged silence about racial disparities in the school climate is the racial *elephant in the room* that makes it challenging for schools to make advancements in diversity work (Coleman & Stevenson, 2014). This phenomenon partially explains the challenges around reaching a critical mass of students of color across independent schools to help them become more racially and ethnically diverse institutions. The following sections analyze demographic data showing how independent schools have gradually diversified their student population both racially and ethnically.

Efforts to Diversify the Student Population: What the Numbers Show

Independent schools often use statistics to measure and assess their success and commitment to diversity and inclusion, but do not always move beyond numbers (Milliman, 2004). There are those who believe demographic information to be an important indicator of diversity. Others argue that diversity should be “viewed more broadly and as more than skin deep” (Blackwell, 2013, p. 52), and should move beyond the number of students and faculty of color as a sole measure of their commitment to diversity and inclusion (Witte, 2013). The

following sections provide some of the statistics independent schools use to measure their success and commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

Changing Demographics: 1960-1999

Since the 1960s, independent schools have gradually broadened their access to more diverse groups (Flewelling, 2013). Schools found it imperative to change the composition of their student body and recruit more racially and ethnically diverse students based on moral, economic, and demographic motives (Cookson & Persell, 1985; Powell, 1996; Speede-Franklin, 1988). Because administrators considered *minority* to be synonymous with *Black*, outreach efforts and diversity goals initially focused on increasing the African American student population (Cavanagh & López, 2004; Powell, 1996; Speede-Franklin, 1988). Before 1960, few Black students applied for admission or were sought at independent schools. In 1948, for example, about 20 independent schools enrolled Black students, and by 1960 the number of schools enrolling Black students rose to one-third of schools across the nation (Powell, 1996).

Figures obtained from the NAIS show that in 1970 students of color made up approximately 4% of student enrollment. From 1980 to 1987, the total enrollment of students of color rose from 8.8% to 11.2% (Speede-Franklin, 1988). Racial diversification continued to increase in the 1980s because of new groups such as Asian Americans, whereas in previous years African Americans were the most visible minority (Powell, 1996). In 1980, Asian Americans became the second largest minority group in independent schools. By 1987, they became the largest. By then, diversity went from becoming a “practical economic and public relations strategy” to a “positive good” and an “essential ingredient” of a cohesive school community (Powell, 1996, pp. 89-90).

In the 1990s, independent schools continued to see gradual increases in their enrollment of students of color. By 1990, students of color made up 14.5% of the national independent school population. This number increased to 18.2% by the end of the decade. At that time, Asian American students made up 6.8% of enrollment, African American students made up 5.1% of enrollment, and Hispanic students made up 2.3% of enrollment (Bassett, 2013).

Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the 21st Century

By 2001, the percentage of students of color in independent schools slightly dipped to 16.8%. In 2005 the percentage rose to 21.2% of total enrollment. This percentage further increased to 24.9% in 2010 and 29% for the 2014-2015 academic year (NAIS, 2002, 2005a, 2010; NAIS, 2015b). Today, Asian American students continue to be the largest minority group within independent schools, with 8.3% enrollment. African American students make up the second largest group with 6.3% enrollment. Hispanic students make up 4.4% of independent school enrollment. In 1998, NAIS began collecting data on multiracial students. Today, these students make up 7% of independent schools' enrollment and are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group across independent schools (Kelley, 2007; NAIS, n.d.).

Although independent schools have made gradual progress toward diversifying their student body, some schools continue to reflect little racial and ethnic diversity. Data show that the demographic population of the U.S. is changing rapidly; therefore, it is crucial for independent schools to become representative of the larger population. In 2012, people of color made up 37% of the U.S. population and children of color made up almost half of the school age population. In 2011 the majority of children under 1 year of age were children of color. By the 2015-2016 school year, the majority of kindergarteners in the U.S. were children of color (NAIS,

n.d.). If independent schools want to achieve their mission of being diverse institutions, they must increase their efforts to recruit and retain more students of color.

The Demographics of Independent Schools in Southern California

It is common for independent schools to use demographic data to measure and assess their progress toward achieving diversity and inclusion (Milliman, 2004; Witte, 2013). In states like California, where racial and ethnic groups once labeled as minorities are now becoming the majority, independent schools continue to struggle with maintaining a racially diverse student population (Frey, 2012). In July of 2012, California had the largest Hispanic population (14.5 million) of any state, and Los Angeles County had the largest Hispanic population of any county (4.8 million; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). In the 2004-2005 academic year, independent schools in the West registered more students of color than any other region (NAIS, 2005b). However, in states that are now *majority minority*, such as California, who reported 60.6% minorities in 2012, independent schools continue to enroll low numbers of African American and Hispanic students (Cavanagh & López, 2004; U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). In 2015, independent schools across the nation enrolled 6.3% African American students and 4.4% Hispanic students (NAIS, 2015b). In the same year, independent schools in California enrolled 4.0% African American students and 5.8% Hispanic students (CAIS, 2015). Also in 2015, Asian American students accounted for 12.7% of enrollment in California compared to 8.3% enrollment nationally (CAIS, 2015; NAIS, 2015b).

Even in racially and ethnically diverse cities such as the Los Angeles area of Southern California, independent schools continue to struggle with racial integration. The 2010 U.S. Census Bureau reported the race of the school age population in Los Angeles as 11.8% Asian

American, 6.7% Black, 48.1% White, 60.2% Hispanic, 8.3% two or more races, and 24.3% reporting another race. Among the top three descriptors written in for the category of *other race* were: Mexican, Hispanic, and Latin American. Census data from 2010 also reported that six out of 10 school age children in the Los Angeles area are of Hispanic origin. In the Los Angeles area, African American students account for 6.7% of the school age population whereas Hispanic students account for 60.2% of the school age population. However, in Los Angeles area independent schools, African Americans remain slightly underrepresented, with 4.8% of total enrollment, and Hispanic students remain greatly underrepresented at 6% of total enrollment (NAIS, n.d.).

Several independent schools in Southern California report serving a student population with 40% students of color or greater. Although this seems high compared to the national average of 29% students of color in independent schools, a close analysis of the demographic data separated by race and ethnicity reveals that African American and Hispanic students remain underrepresented, whereas Asian Americans make up the majority of students of color on campus. The low enrollment of African American and Hispanic students in independent schools does not reflect the diversity found within the school age population of the Los Angeles area (NAIS, n.d.).

The challenges regarding underrepresentation of African American and Hispanic students and overrepresentation of Asian American students are not new. In 1988, Speede-Franklin published a chapter titled *Ethnic Diversity: Patterns and Implications of Minorities in Independent Schools*. In her writing she highlighted how during the period from 1967 through 1987, independent schools broadened their focus on diversity to include Asian, Hispanic, and

Native American students in addition to the initial focus on increasing enrollment of African American students. By 1978, Asian American students surpassed Hispanic students in percentage of total enrollment. By 1987, they surpassed African American students in percentage of total enrollment. Since then, Asian Americans have constituted the largest subgroup of students of color, whereas African American and Hispanic students continue to be underrepresented across many independent schools. According to diversity consultant Gene Batiste, the low enrollment of Hispanic students in independent schools is a decades old issue, as many Hispanic families prefer parochial schools over non-sectarian independent schools (G. Batiste, personal communication, February 11, 2016).

Although independent schools have made progress toward diversity and inclusion, the demographic data show that they continue to face some of the same challenges since the decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Civil Rights Movement. Because of a lack of racial and ethnic diversity on campus, students of color who attend independent schools face unique challenges (Arrington et al., 2003; Bisgaard, 2005; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015). The following section outlines research on the experiences of students of color in independent schools that result from a lack of racial and ethnic diversity among the student population of their schools.

The Experiences of Students of Color in Independent Schools

As independent schools continue to strive for diversity and inclusion, research has been conducted to help educators understand and improve the experiences of students of color in independent schools (Arrington et al., 2003; Horvat & Antonio, 1999; Newman, 2005; White & Boyd, 2015). Despite their commitment to diversity and inclusion, the exclusive and affluent

culture of predominantly White independent schools can be “emotionally and socially trying” places where students of color feel like outsiders (Cookson, 2013, p. 52). Citing evidence from the *Independent School Survey*, Bassett (2003) noted significant differences by race in students’ perceptions of their quality of experience in independent schools, with White students having a more uniformly shared experience than students of color. The following studies outline the unique experiences of students of color in independent schools.

Despite the efforts of independent schools to become more diverse and inclusive, students of color continue to attend racially dissonant schools: school environments where a student’s racial group makes up 20% or less of the student body (Arrington et al., 2003). Because they constitute a minority group within independent schools, students of color face challenges that can affect their sense of belonging, academic success, racial identity, and psychological well-being (Arrington et al., 2003; Bisgaard, 2005; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015). Arrington et al.’s (2003) research on the experiences of African American students in independent schools found that 75% of students said they had to make special efforts to fit into their school communities, 82% reported having had negative experiences at their schools, and 40% did not believe that their school treated all students the same.

Drawing from their experiences with supporting students of color in independent schools, Thompson and Schultz (2003) identified the following six difficult psychological experiences that most of these students are likely to face: social loneliness, racial visibility and social invisibility, class and cultural discomfort among White parents and administrators, the burden of explaining oneself to White people, completing studies at a demanding school with minimal parent participation, and the burden of having to feel grateful all the time. Even in schools that

are strongly committed to diversity and inclusion, schools with a White majority can be “psychologically complicated and painful places” for students of color, leaving them with little sense of belonging and with class and cultural discomfort (Thompson & Schultz, 2003, p. 1). Researchers agree that increasing the number of students of color on independent school campuses and developing support mechanisms for these students can alleviate the psychological barriers to their success and the lack of belonging they experience on campus (Arrington et al., 2003; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

In a recent study conducted through the Center for Research on Girls, White and Boyd (2015) sought to understand the experiences of African American girls across five all girls’ independent schools in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Texas, New Jersey, and California. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, they explored several facets of girls’ experiences including: social connectedness, life satisfaction, states of positive and negative feeling, racial identity, school connectedness, school experiences, and the role of socioeconomic status (SES). In their quantitative findings, the researchers noted a relationship between social connectedness and racial identity, with girls who reported a higher level of social connectedness having a stronger sense of racial identity and higher overall life satisfaction. Students who had a strong sense of racial identity reported a more positive evaluation of their race and more positive beliefs about how others viewed people of their race. Higher levels of negative emotions were associated with weaker feelings of social connectedness and lower overall life satisfaction.

From the interviews, the researchers found that students appreciated their schools’ efforts to highlight diversity and emphasized the importance of mentoring relationships with older classmates, faculty, and staff members. Students who reported having an African American

mentor noted that having a shared race with their mentor was a key to feeling understood by and connected to their mentor. Girls also reported having to contend with racial stereotypes both inside and outside of the classroom, such as being singled out to offer the African American perspective during class discussions about racism or slavery. Girls reported classmates looking to them as experts on slang and Black culture as well as feeling isolated within some groups due to race. With respect to racial identity and their experience with race within the school environment, girls gave varied responses. Some asserted that spending time with other African American students was very important to them, whereas others reported that they sought diverse experiences and chose not to associate with other African American classmates. Still others reported the use of code-switching frequently during the school day (White & Boyd, 2015).

Finally, White and Boyd (2015) found that SES interacts with race in independent schools, with results indicating SES to be a more salient factor in their school experience than race, and one that exacerbates racial tensions. Girls reported not being included in certain friendships with other African American girls because they were judged as being of a lower social class. Students who were either receiving scholarships or not expressed frustration because peers and staff members assumed that they were attending the school on scholarship because of their race.

In another study that evaluated a school's progress toward diversity goals, focus groups conducted with students of color revealed that they desired "a stronger sense of inclusion and connection to their school" (Polite, 2004, p. 63). Students reported that if they were to change something about their school, they would want more students of color to attend and a better understanding of how students of color feel. These students also revealed how they struggle to

navigate between the race and culture of their home and that of their school. An earlier study conducted by Horvat and Antonio (1999) on African American girls enrolled at an elite independent all girls' school also highlights the day-to-day challenges students of color face in trying to fit in with the dominant culture of their school. The researchers found that many Black girls had to leave part of their identity behind when they entered their independent school environment by changing their speech, dress, and aesthetics. Parents of these students noted how their daughters needed to act as "chameleons" in order to fit in, noting psychological trauma experienced by their daughters in their attempts to fit in with the school's organizational culture (Horvat & Antonio, 1999, p. 334). These studies on the experiences of students of color at independent schools corroborate other findings that also highlight the psychological stress of living in two worlds and having to leave part of one's identity behind in order to fit in with the predominantly White culture of one's school (Parsons & Ridley, 2012; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

In nearly 4 decades of research related to improving the experiences of students of color in independent schools conducted between 1963 and 2000, Milliman (2004) found recommendations that echo the same themes illuminated in these more recent studies. The fact that the same recommendations are still being made today indicate that improvements are still needed regarding diversity and inclusion in independent schools. Necessary changes across many schools include: achieving a critical mass of students of color; hiring more teachers and administrators of color; appointing trustees of color; examining the curriculum and making it more multicultural; openly discussing White privilege; offering diversity, equity, and inclusion training for school personnel; developing support mechanisms and better programming for

students of color; providing mentors; recognizing the value of affinity groups; and constantly evaluating of diversity efforts beyond reporting enrollment percentages (Arrington et al., 2003; Bassett, 2002, 2003; Bisgaard, 2005; Katz & Wishne, 1999; Milliman, 2004; Newman, 2005; Parsons & Ridley, 2012; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

Despite the need to increase the number of students of color on independent school campuses and improve their experiences, certain challenges and barriers make this goal increasingly difficult. The following section will address some of the challenges and barriers surrounding increasing diversity on independent school campuses.

The Challenges and Barriers Surrounding Diversity

Many of the same barriers to diversity and inclusion that schools have faced during the last 50 years continue to make it challenging for them to transform their espoused mission on diversity and inclusion into concrete actions. Among these barriers are issues of race, class, and White privilege; a lack of strategic planning; and problems with recruitment, retention, and financial aid. The following sections outline these challenges and barriers.

Race, Class, and White Privilege

According to Coleman and Stevenson (2014), one barrier that prevents schools from creating a diverse and inclusive school community is the fear associated with discussing privilege, power, and race. A school's collective organizational vision stems from the narratives and experiences of the majority group. An institution that fails to understand and question their narrative may fail to have initiatives surrounding diversity and inclusion or may dismiss concerns surrounding race. In their research on independent schools, Arrington et al. (2003) reported a "systematic niceness" that "masked the hesitancy of the schools" to fully engage with

research surrounding race and racial issues and which manifested itself in “a desire not to discuss the hard issues of race and racism in many schools” (pp. 18, 21). They found that due to the anxiety that surrounds topics of race and racism, some within the school community tend to deny or downplay racism. Because some faculty define racism as “overt and crude types of discrimination” (p. 16) and are not fully aware of its subtle and covert forms, this results in a failure to see racism as a problem that students of color face at their schools.

Only recently have some independent schools shifted their conversations about racial diversity and multiculturalism into critical discussions of race and class inequities that are ingrained in society (Blackburn & Wise, 2009). However, these discussions continue to present a challenge. Although schools have initiated conversations about White privilege and how it operates within independent schools, some believe there is no such thing as White privilege. Others feel that discussing it will only lead to greater division. However, failing to recognize and engage in discussions about race and racism presents a barrier for diversity and inclusion goals. It leaves notions of privilege and Whiteness unexamined and makes students’ ability to cope with racism more difficult, leading to negative experiences among students of color at independent schools (Arrington et al., 2003). As long as issues of race, class, and White privilege are downplayed and ignored, diversity and inclusion in independent schools will not be achieved and initiatives toward increased diversity will always face resistance.

Strategic Planning: Financial Aid, Recruitment, and Retention

Schools need to engage in strategic planning for diversity and inclusion along with continual monitoring and assessment to identify gaps between their vision and their current reality and direction (Arrington et al., 2003; Harris, 2013). A strategic plan for diversity must

closely align with goals relating to financial aid, recruitment, and retention. Diversity directors in independent schools believe that in order for independent schools to achieve their mission of becoming diverse, inclusive, and superior institutions of learning, they must develop deliberate strategic plans to recruit, support, and retain students of color (Harris, 2013). According to a study on diversity practice in independent schools, two-thirds of the schools in the study include language about the importance of diversity in their mission statements, yet half of the schools surveyed have a formal strategic plan for diversity (Torres, 2010). Without a strategic plan for diversity, challenges and barriers related to financial aid, recruitment, and retention will quickly eclipse any efforts toward diversity.

Financial Aid

Braverman and Looney (1999) argued that diversity and access should play an increasingly critical role in strategic planning for schools, affirming that the two are “inextricably intertwined” (p. 32). Lacking a strategic plan for diversity and inclusion with specific actions that address access presents a major barrier toward advancing diversity goals. This is especially true considering the huge disparities in wealth along racial lines.

In their report on wealth inequality since the end of the Great Recession, the Pew Research Center (Kochhar & Fry, 2014) reported that wealth inequality has widened across racial and ethnic lines. In 2013, the wealth of White households (\$141,900) was 13 times the median wealth of Black households (\$11,000) and more than 10 times the wealth of Hispanic households (\$13,700). When the average tuition at independent day schools is \$22,300 (NAIS, 2015b), a serious commitment to increasing racial and ethnic diversity, especially increasing the number of

African American and Hispanic students, must be met with increasing access for these students by offering scholarships or financial aid.

Nationally, independent schools provide financial aid to 22% of its students with the median financial aid grant at \$12,107 (NAIS, 2015b). This means that with an average tuition of \$22,300, families receiving the median financial aid grant would still need to pay at least \$10,000 a year toward tuition. An analysis on emerging financial aid trends in independent schools reveals that the highest-earning families in America make up the fastest growing portion of financial aid applicants. The highest-earning families in America are typically White families. Considering the major disparities in wealth based on race, if schools are serious about diversifying their student body, they will have to give increased financial aid. However, recent trends in financial aid offered across independent schools indicate that the cost of tuition and increasing income gaps will make it challenging for schools to offer aid as a way to diversify their student population (Mitchell & Flanagan, 2013). Such trends reveal that lack of financial aid will continue to be a barrier to recruiting and retaining students of color in independent schools.

Recruitment and Retention

Because independent schools have a history of being predominantly White and exclusive institutions, families of color are less likely than White families to know about independent schools as an educational option or to have prior connections with the schools. Although independent schools rarely engage in deliberate recruitment of students of color, a strategic plan for diversity should include a robust recruitment and outreach initiative for students of color and a program to support their needs (Blackburn & Wise, 2009). Research on diversity and inclusion

initiatives in independent schools consistently point to the need to have a designated group of school members who can work with the board, the head of school, and other administrators to design and implement a strategic plan for diversity (Blackburn & Wise, 2009; Brosnan, 2010; Kaufman, 2003). Such plans should include deliberate recruitment efforts to find and appeal to diverse students, a multicultural approach to educating all students, affinity groups to support students and help them explore their identity, and concrete goals to hire and retain administrators and faculty of color.

Until now, some independent schools engage in passive recruitment of students of color, relying on the assistance of outside recruitment agencies to match students with their school. To address the problem of low representation of students of color, schools contract services with organizations such as ABC and the Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs (Alliance) to match students of color with schools and help increase diversity among the school population. Both ABC and Alliance seek to increase diversity across independent school campuses and increase student access to institutions that have historically been majority White. The schools that receive student matches benefit by increasing racial and ethnic diversity on their campus. However, these organizations are doing little for some independent schools, matching as few as one student a year (M. Cleveland, personal communication, December 15, 2015). This problem highlights the need for schools to engage in more strategic planning to recruitment students of color.

A Better Chance

During the same time that independent schools began to diversify their student body in the 1960s, organizations such as ABC began working to also increase the number of students of

color at independent schools. Twenty-three headmasters of selective independent schools made a commitment to diversify their student bodies by broadening independent school enrollment to include students of color who were economically disadvantaged, but academically able, motivated, and capable of assuming leadership positions. Approximately 67% of ABC scholars are African American, 15% are Latino, 6% are Asian American, about 1% is Native American, and 8% describe themselves as multiracial or other. The organization grew from 55 students enrolled in nine schools in 1963 to nearly 2,000 students enrolled in more than 300 schools in the 2013-2014 school year (A Better Chance, n.d.). Although the work that ABC has done is commendable, matching 2,000 students of color to independent schools in 1 year (A Better Chance, n.d.) amounts to contributing .42% of total enrollment to independent schools (476,754 was the total enrollment at independent day schools for the 2013-2014 school year), or placing approximately seven students of color at each of the 300 schools they served in the 2013-2014 school year. At a school with a median enrollment of 396 (the median enrollment across all independent schools), this would help increase the number of students of color on campus by only 1.7%. These calculations are assuming the school does contract services with ABC. Although noble in their efforts, this hardly makes a dent in achieving a critical mass of students of color across schools.

Independent School Alliance for Minority Affairs

Alliance is a recruitment organization based in Southern California, that, like ABC, focuses on recruiting students of color for independent schools. Their mission includes informing members of racial communities presently underrepresented in independent schools about the option of an independent school education. In addition, Alliance identifies applicants from these

communities and assists them with the application process while providing support for students and their families. Part of their mission also includes assisting families in their efforts to address issues of racial diversity and multicultural education (Independent School Alliance, n.d.).

Approximately 80% of the students who apply through Alliance are accepted at member schools. The services provided by Alliance include counseling and advocating on behalf of parents of color who are seeking to enroll their children in independent schools. Alliance works with families of color throughout the admissions process and application submission. They provide suggestions for the interview process and school visits, counseling on entrance testing, and if needed, advising on how to apply for tuition assistance. Alliance continues to support students and families throughout their educational experience and they partner with member schools throughout Southern California to enhance their development and implementation of diversity and multiculturalism (Independent School Alliance, n.d.).

Although recruitment organizations such as ABC and Alliance work with students in the Los Angeles area, Hispanic and African American students continue to be underrepresented in independent schools across Los Angeles (NAIS, n.d.). Although many Los Angeles area independent schools have espoused missions regarding diversity and inclusion, their student body does not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of their communities. Relying on outside organizations to recruit students of color, as some of these schools do, is not enough to make significant progress toward racially and ethnically diversifying a schools' student population.

We have discussed barriers to diversifying the student population such as issues of race, class, and White privilege, as well as a lack of strategic planning that outlines specific plans for financial aid, recruitment, and retention. Few studies have researched how independent schools

plan for and measure their progress toward diversity and inclusion and none of these studies have looked at diverse school age populations such as that found in the Los Angeles area. The following section will discuss two studies that have focused on diversity in independent schools and that highlight the need for more research in this area.

The Need for Research on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools

Recent dissertation studies have revealed a dearth of research on the topic of diversity and inclusion in independent schools and specifically how independent schools plan for and measure their commitment and success around diversity and inclusion (Eshoo, 2015; French, 2013; Milliman, 2004). Although independent school leaders have written extensively on recommendations for strategic planning, recruitment, and retention of students of color, there continues to be a lack of empirical data explaining how schools plan for and take action toward diversifying their student body and supporting students of color, and how they measure progress toward their goals.

In her dissertation *Vanishing Point: Diversity and Race at Predominantly White Independent Schools*, French (2013) investigated the management of racial integration at predominantly White independent schools in the northeastern United States. She conducted interviews with diversity policy developers and implementers within independent schools to explore current efforts toward racial integration and diversity. In addition to interviews, French conducted a numerical analysis of enrollment data of students of color and a content analysis of school documents and online materials. She found that the enrollment of Black students remained stagnant despite growth in enrollment for Asian and multiracial students. According to French, independent schools have moved their attention away from race, choosing to focus on

broader themes of inclusivity. French attributes a lack of attention to recruiting African Americans in independent schools to the fact that organizations like the NAIS and schools themselves use a *lumped* category of people of color. This category includes Asian Americans and Hispanic students, Middle Eastern Americans, Native Americans, and multiracial students. French claimed that “creating statistics based on a people of color category opens the door for schools to pursue “easy diversity” (p. 182).

The trend noted by French (2013) is not unique to independent schools in the northeastern United States; it also occurs in Los Angeles area independent schools. Because Asian Americans have historically made up a larger proportion of independent school enrollment and are considered students of color, schools with large proportions of Asian Americans appear to have a larger percentage of students of color. However, a closer look at demographic data reveals that other students of color, particularly Hispanic students, who compose 60% of the school age population in the Los Angeles area, are largely underrepresented, making up only 5.8% of enrollment in Los Angeles County and 4.4% nationally. African American students also remain underrepresented. African American students make up 6.7% of the school age population in Los Angeles County, but only 4% of independent school enrollment in California and 8.3% of enrollment nationally. As French claimed, creating statistics based on a people of color without careful attention to individual groups is *easy diversity*. This phenomenon can be observed in Los Angeles County independent schools. Some independent schools in the area have 40% students of color, but historically underrepresented groups remain few and far between, leading the school population to poorly reflect the diversity found in their community.

In her dissertation titled, *From Exclusive to Inclusive: One Independent School's Journey Towards Diversity*, Milliman (2004) noted that few studies have evaluated diversity initiatives in independent schools other than reporting the numbers and percentages of students of color enrolled in their schools. She found that independent schools often use statistics to measure and assess their success and commitment toward diversity and inclusion, but do not move beyond numbers. Her study assessed the attitudes of students, faculty, and parents at Trinity School, a 300-year old independent school in New York. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, Milliman conducted focus groups and administered surveys to assess Trinity School's commitment to diversity and measure the success of diversity efforts from the perspective of faculty, students, and parents. Milliman found that although the school has made progress toward achieving diversity and inclusion, 70% of students surveyed believed that the school's commitment to diversity was merely lip service. Students also reported that they did not see evidence of the school's commitment to diversity in its curriculum. One-third of the school's stakeholders were not satisfied with the school's level of commitment to diversity. Although parents generally expressed confidence in the school's performance on diversity issues, students reported that they wanted to see more action.

Aside from Milliman (2004) and French's (2013) dissertation research in independent schools in the northeastern United States, there are no research studies examining how independent schools across the West Coast region align their espoused mission on diversity with their lived mission. To date there are no research studies that critically examine how these institutions diversify their student populations through the recruitment and retention of students of color, particularly focusing on underrepresented groups such as Hispanic and African

American students. Other than recommendations for how to carry out commitments regarding diversity and inclusion, there is also no research outlining and comparing the successes and barriers independent schools encounter in fulfilling their commitment to these ideals. To date, no studies have researched how independent schools in diverse cities such as Los Angeles County strategically plan to diversify their student population through targeted recruitment efforts and how they institute programming to support these students.

This qualitative multi-site case study collected and analyzed data across four independent day schools in the Los Angeles area to examine how these schools align their espoused mission on diversity with their lived missions. Through the perspectives of school administrators, faculty members, and students, this study critically examined how these institutions diversify their student population through deliberate recruitment efforts and how they support students of color through programming and curricula. The goal of the study is to offer a multi-site comparison of the successes and barriers independent schools in the Western region of the United States encounter in fulfilling their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Conclusion

Independent schools have a history of being predominantly White institutions. Although they have made gradual progress since the 1960s in diversifying their student body, the low numbers of Hispanic and African American students across independent school campuses show that more work remains. Research highlighting the experiences of students of color in independent schools points to a need for better strategic planning to support these students. Little is known about how schools engage in planning to recruit and support students of color and how they measure their progress, thereby turning their espoused commitments regarding diversity and

inclusion into action. This study sought to fill the gap in the research by offering a multi-site analysis outlining the barriers and successes independent schools encounter in their work with diversity, equity, and inclusion.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

Purpose of Study

Despite their espoused commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, predominantly White independent schools can be “emotionally and socially trying” places where students of color feel like outsiders (Cookson, 2013, p. 52). Because they constitute a minority group within independent schools, students of color face challenges that can affect their sense of belonging, academic success, racial identity, and psychological well-being (Arrington et al., 2003; Bisgaard, 2005; Thompson & Schultz, 2003; White & Boyd, 2015).

Few empirical studies have shown how independent schools carry out their stated goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through recruitment, curricula, and professional development and how they measure their progress toward achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. This study sought to fill the gap in the research by offering a multi-site analysis of how independent schools achieve their diversity, equity, and inclusion goals as well as the barriers they encounter in this work.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. According to administrators, faculty, and students, how do NAIS and CAIS member schools achieve their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - a. How do they recruit and support historically underrepresented minorities such as African American and Latino students?
 - b. How do schools monitor and measure their progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - c. What barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion do schools face?

Research Design

Case study research allows one to examine, in depth, a complex social phenomenon (the *case*) in its real-life context (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 2014). This qualitative case study examined the real-life context of three independent day schools in Southern California. The phenomenon under study was how historically White independent schools achieve stated diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and the barriers they encounter in this work. This case study used multiple sources of evidence such as document analysis, observations, interviews, and focus groups to investigate from the perspective of administrators, faculty, and students how schools achieve their diversity, equity, and inclusion goals through recruitment, curricula, and professional development.

A qualitative multi-site case study provided “a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon” that could not be captured by a quantitative study that relied on survey research or experimental approaches (Merriam, 2009, p. 51). Quantitative studies focusing on how much,

how many, and the relationships between events and phenomena would not have provided an in-depth understanding of the experiences of an institution (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, qualitative case studies are the preferred method when the main research questions are *how* or *why* questions, the researcher has little or no control over behavioral events, and the study focuses on a contemporary phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p. 2). To get at the *how* questions of this study, I used interviews and focus groups that allowed me to gather details about how independent schools achieve their stated goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A multi-site case provides more robust evidence than a single-case study (Yin, 2014). Multi-site case studies also allow for an ample amount of comparative data that help analyze the findings. Furthermore, each case in the study may help strengthen the findings for the entire study. Thus, this case study involved three sites to heighten the degree of certainty. Collecting and synthesizing the findings across sites yielded substantial analytic benefits that would not have been attainable in a single-case study (Yin, 2004, 2014).

Sites and Participants

Site Selection

Schools selected for participation in this study needed to meet the following criteria: membership in NAIS and CAIS, have a high percentage of students of color, have an upper school division, have comparable tuition rates, and represent different geographic locations within Los Angeles County. The three school sites that met these criteria were Oak Academy, Cypress Academy, and Pine Academy (pseudonyms).

The three independent day schools selected for this study are members of the NAIS and the CAIS. Schools from among these organizations were selected because they are expected to

uphold commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Membership in NAIS, for example, is contingent upon a school's agreement to abide by principles that address equity and justice. Such principles outline the responsibility of school leaders to articulate strategic goals and objectives that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at the school (NAIS, 2012). CAIS accreditation indicators for school climate outline that schools should "actively promote diversity and equity in its student body, foster cultural competence in its faculty and staff, and seek to instill in students an appreciation for and understanding of the range of human differences" (CAIS, 2016b, p. 24). Schools undergoing accreditation are expected to demonstrate progress in addressing diversity through the curriculum and in the life of the school. Additionally, students should "experience the school as a safe, equitable, and inclusive place" (CAIS, 2016b, p. 24). The three schools that participated in this study were selected because they are NAIS and CAIS member schools and are expected to have a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that is evident in the school community.

The selected school sites were chosen among the many independent schools in Southern California because they have a high percentage of students of color close to or above the national average (29%). Each of the schools also needed to have an upper school division serving students in grades nine through 12, as focus group participants would represent these grade levels. They also needed to be comparable in cost. The three selected sites have tuition fees ranging from \$35,000-40,000 per year. Finally, the sites selected for this study needed to represent various geographic areas of Los Angeles County. Oak Academy, Cypress Academy, and Pine Academy met these criteria.

Access. As a faculty member at a Southern California independent school and the Dean of Student Voices, I had access to key administrators across school sites who expressed interest in participating in this study. I gained access to sites through various contacts at my current place of employment such as our Head of School, who was able to help me form a connection with Cypress Academy and Pine Academy. Through other independent school leaders I was able to make a connection a third site, Oak Academy.

I first contacted the Head of School of each site via email to establish a relationship. In the initial email communication, I introduced myself, gave a brief explanation of my project, and requested a phone conversation or an in-person meeting to explain the details of the study and see if the school could serve as a site for the study. All three school sites to which I reached out agreed to participate in the study. I spoke with the Head of School at Oak Academy, the Diversity Director at Cypress Academy, and the Head of School at Pine Academy to identify participants and set dates for data collection. Data collection at Oak Academy began in December 2016 and ended in February 2017. Data collection at Cypress Academy took place from February 2017 to April 2017. Data collection at Pine Academy took place from March 2017 through April 2017.

Participant Selection

Four to six administrators and five to nine faculty members from each of the three sites participated in interviews. Five to six upper school students from each site participated in the focus groups. The Head of School from Oak Academy and Pine Academy and the diversity practitioner and Assistant Head of School from Cypress Academy helped recruit administrators, faculty members, and students to participate in this study.

Participating administrators across the three sites included: the head of school, the assistant head of school, the admissions director or other associates from the admissions office, academic deans, division directors, and a diversity director. These key informants were selected because they have firsthand knowledge of their site's mission, vision, and strategic plan regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. They are most knowledgeable about demographic data, recruitment strategies, professional development, and curricula or support systems for students of color or school-wide programming that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion. These informants were able to provide evidence of connections between the school's espoused commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the school's lived mission, in addition to barriers the school has faced.

Participating faculty members included at least five teachers from each site who represented diverse grade levels, disciplines, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. These informants were able to share the faculty perspective regarding recruitment, curricula, and professional development and the extent to which these align with the school's commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Five to six students of color from the upper school division of each site and who are involved in student leadership were selected as focus group participants. These students represented a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds and included students who self-identify as African American, Asian, Latino, and Middle Eastern. Students of color in leadership positions were selected because it was presumed that they would have knowledge about diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives carried out by the school and diversity programming that is available through clubs, conferences, or school-wide events. They would also have knowledge about

student perceptions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion at their site or have a different perspective or experiences as students of color on campus. Student participants were recruited with the help of the head of school, assistant head, or dean at each site. A letter explaining the project and a consent form was given to students identified by administration as potential participants. Students who expressed interest in participating and who returned the signed consent form participated in a focus group.

Research Methods

Data Collection

Good case studies benefit from multiple sources of evidence that allow the researcher to triangulate findings or to establish converging lines of evidence that make the findings more robust (Yin, 2004). Four different data collection methods were used in this study: document analysis, interviews, focus groups, and observations.

Document analysis. Before I conducted any interviews or focus groups at each school site, I conducted a preliminary document analysis to better understand each school's espoused commitments regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. I analyzed public information such as each school's website and the information contained therein, magazines published by the school, and brochures. Most independent school websites contain information about their vision and mission statement, strategic plan, financial aid, tuition and fees, accreditation, student clubs and programs, and percentage of students and faculty of color. Conducting a document analysis with public information allowed me to find connections or disparities between what schools present in their websites and publications, their espoused mission, and their lived mission: what they actually do according to the information reported from administrator and faculty interviews and

student focus groups. Additionally, I analyzed each school's most recent strategic plan or action plan in order to compare goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion to what each school carries out in practice.

Interviews. Interviews with administrators and faculty members were conducted using a semi-structured interview protocol. A complete interview protocol can be found in Appendix A. Questions asked during the interviews focused on the school's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and what the school does to carry out these goals. Participants were asked about recruitment practices and how diversity, equity, and inclusion topics are addressed in the curriculum and professional development. They were also asked how diversity, equity, and inclusion goals are monitored and measured. Finally, all participants were asked to identify barriers the school faces in accomplishing these goals. The information gathered from each interview helped me to see what actions each school takes to achieve their espoused mission and what barriers exist in each school's attempt to fulfill their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Before any interviews were conducted, I piloted the interview protocol with two administrators and one faculty member from my own school site. Interviews were conducted in person at each of the school sites, with the exception of Pine Academy, where half of the interviews were conducted over the phone. Interviews were recorded using an iPhone. A digital recorder was used as a backup in case of any malfunction with the iPhone.

Focus groups. Focus groups were conducted with five to six upper school students at each site. A semi-structured protocol was used to conduct the focus groups. A complete protocol for the focus groups can be found in Appendix B. The aim of each focus group was to find out

from the students' perspective what the school does to achieve its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals. Focus groups were conducted to provide a forum for group thinking and to allow students to draw ideas from one another. In order to get at the *how* of the research questions, a group experience would best uncover the phenomenon of how independent schools achieve their espoused mission regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion. Before the focus groups were conducted, the protocol was tested with three upper school students at my own site.

To help with recruiting participants for the student focus groups, administrators at each site were asked to identify students of color who participate in leadership, cultural clubs, or affinity groups. Once students were identified, they were given a letter of introduction and the appropriate consent and parent permission forms. Focus groups were conducted on each school campus and lasted 30-120 minutes. Focus groups were recorded using an iPhone. A digital recorder was used as a backup in case of any malfunction with the iPhone.

Observations. In order to obtain a sense of visible diversity and inclusion on campus, I conducted observations during lunch. One observation was conducted at each site during middle and upper school lunch. A guided observation protocol, found in Appendix C, was used during each observation. Extensive notes were taken about visible diversity among student groupings during lunch. I noted any visible indicators of racial or ethnic diversity and the visible make up of student groupings. Each observation lasted approximately 1 hour.

Data Analysis

The need to engage in data collection and analysis together is an important aspect of case study research (Yin, 2004). Once interviews and focus group recordings were transcribed, they were immediately coded and analyzed for themes and patterns. The information from the

interviews and focus groups was compared to the school's documents and information gathered during the lunchtime observations to see where each site's commitments and goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion matched with what participants reported.

Interviews and focus groups. Interviews with administrators and faculty members and student focus groups were transcribed within 24 hours using the transcription services provided by Rev.com. Upon receipt, transcripts were compared to the original audio recordings and were checked for accuracy. Any identifying information was deleted. Participant names, school names, and geographic locations were replaced with pseudonyms. I used Dedoose, a web-based qualitative data program, to code transcripts. All transcripts were initially coded based on categories that emerged from the interview and focus group protocols. I conducted a second round of coding and organized data into the following subcategories: recruitment, curriculum, professional development, and barriers.

Observations. In my analysis of the observation notes, I tallied any visible racial or ethnic diversity I wrote about during the observations, namely the number of White, African American, Latino, and Asian students I saw at each school site during lunch. I also made note of whether students of color appeared to interact with other students of color of their same race or ethnicity, if they interacted in large or small groups, and if they appeared to interact with students of different racial or ethnic backgrounds from their own. This information was used to help triangulate data shared by participants regarding diversity and inclusion on campus.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues in this study related to ensuring that the information disclosed by participants was kept confidential. I also had to ensure that the identity of the school sites and all

participants remained confidential. I maintained confidentiality by using pseudonyms for all school sites and participants. Any files containing the actual names of participants were password protected and destroyed once all interviews and focus groups were transcribed. Administrators, faculty, and students who participated in the study were made aware of the intent and purpose of the study in an introductory letter that included a problem statement detailing the need for the study and how the study was to be conducted. Part of the ethical considerations for the human subjects of the study involved conducting informed consent with each participant. All students who participated in the focus groups signed a teen assent form and returned a signed parent permission form before participating. The UCLA Institutional Review Board approved the participation of minors as the study did not present any adverse risk to students.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Triangulation. Once interviews, focus groups, observations, and document analysis were completed at each individual site, the findings from each data collection method were compared and analyzed. Cross-checking or triangulating the multiple sources of data was an important step in ensuring trustworthiness. Triangulating the findings allowed me to search for convergence among the multiple sources of data from each site and helped in the development of additional themes or categories that emerged across the three school sites (Creswell, 2014). Since this was a qualitative multi-site case study, it was important to triangulate the data not only within sites, but also across sites.

Triangulating data sources, people, and collection methods added to the credibility and trustworthiness of the methods, helped deal with issues of reactivity, and helped ensure that I was uncovering the whole story. This process also helped me to ensure that a finding was indeed a

valid finding. By engaging in document analysis, interviewing various administrators and faculty members at each site, conducting focus groups with students across sites, and carrying out observations, I was able to triangulate data, compare schools' practices, and gain perspectives of administrators, faculty, and students within and across sites. Including student voices also helped minimize issues of bias that would emerge if only administrators or faculty had been interviewed. This protocol also addressed the risk of having insufficient evidence. Engaging in systematic data analysis by standardizing protocols and coding procedures also helped me avoid bias.

Summary

By engaging in a qualitative multi-site case study that included document analysis, interviews, focus groups, and observations, I was able to describe how, according to administrators, faculty, and students, independent schools across a geographic region carry out their commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. I was also able to gain a better understanding of the barriers schools face in this work. The following chapter details the findings within and across school sites.

CHAPTER FOUR: Findings

This multi-site case study explored how member schools of the NAIS and the CAIS align their stated commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion with the lived experience of the school. It explored the following research questions:

1. According to administrators, faculty, and students, how do NAIS and CAIS member schools achieve their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - a. How do they recruit and support historically underrepresented minorities such as African American and Latino students?
 - b. How do schools monitor and measure their progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - c. What barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion do schools face?

Findings are organized by themes emerging from: interviews conducted with administrators and faculty, student focus groups, observations, and an analysis of publicly available documents from each school site. The chapter is divided into three main sections, one for each of the three cases: Oak Academy, Cypress Academy, and Pine Academy. Each begins with a description of the school site followed by a brief presentation of findings from the site. The subsequent sections, under the main theme, *Aligning Goals with Practice*, present findings related to four sub-themes: *Recruitment*, *Curriculum*, *Professional Development*, and *Barriers*. The final section of this chapter provides a brief summary of findings across sites.

Case 1: Oak Academy

Oak Academy is a highly ranked, progressive independent school that serves approximately 1,170 students in grades K through 12. Forty-two percent of students at Oak Academy identify as students of color whereas 31.5% of faculty identify as people of color. About 16% of the school's operating budget is allocated to financial aid, which amounts to over \$8 million given to families annually for tuition reduction.

A total of 18 people from Oak Academy participated in this study. I interviewed 13 adults, which included nine teachers and four administrators. Among those interviewed were the Head of School and Assistant Head, one dean, and one associate who works in admissions. Other participants included teachers from the lower, middle, and upper school who represented a range of grades, disciplines, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Five upper school students participated in a focus group. The student participants included four African Americans and one Asian American. One observation was conducted during middle and upper school lunch to obtain a visual sense of racial and ethnic diversity on campus and to observe whether different groups of students interact and mix during unstructured time. I also analyzed public documents about Oak Academy such as the school's website and its most recent written action plan. I first provide an overview of key findings for Oak Academy.

Summary of Key Findings from Oak Academy

In my interviews I asked all 18 participants how Oak Academy carries out its goals and commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through recruitment practices, the curriculum, and professional development. When it comes to recruitment, Oak Academy relies on outside organizations such as ABC and Alliance to recruit historically underrepresented

students. Recently the school has done local outreach to an African American and Latino parent group in the neighborhood. The school has also formed a language accessibility task force to translate school documents into Spanish to provide access for the Spanish-speaking community.

The curriculum was the second focus to analyze connections with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Participants across divisions discussed the extent to which the curriculum focuses on these topics, particularly in the lower school. Nearly all participants noted increased co-curricular programming such as assemblies and guest speakers to educate students, faculty, and staff on these topics.

In line with curriculum development, professional development surrounding topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion also plays a role in how Oak Academy supports students and faculty of color as it carries out its commitments related to these topics. Participants highlighted how the school sends faculty and staff to annual conferences such as the NAIS People of Color Conference (PoCC) and hosts an on-campus 4-day Summer Diversity Institute that helps build staff and faculty knowledge around issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Participants were also asked about barriers the school faces in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The barriers most often highlighted by participants are the cost of attending Oak Academy and the struggle with inclusion due to a large socioeconomic divide. The following sections present these findings in greater detail.

Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Developing a student population that is socially, economically, and racially diverse is one of the five commitments upon which Oak Academy was founded. It is outlined in the school's statement of philosophy as something to which the school demonstrates an "ongoing dedication."

In 2002, Oak Academy's strategic plan included the goal of increasing the percentage of students of color to ensure it is at least 40% of the student body. In 2007, the school achieved that goal and has since then surpassed it. When it comes to socioeconomic diversity, Oak Academy established the goal of having at least 25% students receiving financial aid. During the 2016-17 academic year, the school reports to have given \$8.3 million in financial aid.

A section dedicated to equity and justice is one of six main menu options posted prominently on Oak Academy's website. The section has several pages dedicated to school activities and programming related to diversity, equity, and justice. Some of the programming has included guest lectures from distinguished professors such as Claude Steele, Tyrone Howard, Derald Wing Sue, and anti-racism activists and authors such as Tim Wise. Images of students on Oak Academy's website reflect a wide range of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Although racial and economic diversity constitute one of Oak Academy's founding commitments, in 2011, the school's CAIS accreditation self-study revealed a need for Oak Academy to do a better job of supporting all members of the diverse community the school had brought together. Following the accreditation process, Oak Academy created a written action plan that outlined specific goals to improve in the recommended areas. One of five goals in the school's written action plan became: "To review and strengthen support for all members of our diverse community, with the objective of on-going cultivation and support of diversity." Steps in the action plan included convening a Steering Committee to review all areas of the school community and identify places in need of improvement. The action plan outlined specific domains the Steering Committee would study: reviewing what the school currently does to support diversity within the community; conducting an inventory of how support is manifested

from the point of entry into the school through graduation; and conducting an analysis of curriculum, parent programs, professional development and education, among others.

To accomplish the goals and steps outlined in the action plan and further uncover the specific needs of the school community, in 2012 the Steering Committee had Oak Academy engage in an NAIS study called the Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism (AIM). The findings were not much different from the needs originally outlined in the school's written action plan. Oak Academy needed to continue to increase diversity within the faculty, administration, and student body. The school also found that improvements were needed to ensure a greater feeling of inclusion among all school constituents. During the 2014 academic year, Oak Academy developed the Supporting a Diverse Community (SDC) committee to follow up on the goals outlined in the school's written action plan and the findings that emerged from the AIM study. The specific goals that emerged from the AIM study and that SDC continues to monitor include: creating a way to train all faculty and staff on diversity and inclusion issues; creating new and improving on existing affinity groups for both students and employees; creating a mentor program for students of color; and continuing to educate the student and adult community by focusing speakers and education programs on diversity issues.

Interviews with participants from Oak Academy revealed that the school carries out its written goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion primarily through recruitment practices, the curriculum, and professional development. Although still under discussion, a mentor program for students of color has not been identified or established. The following section details these findings.

Monitoring and measuring progress. All participants were asked how Oak Academy monitors and measures its progress toward goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. John, a senior administrator, admitted that there is “not a whole lot” done when it comes to monitoring and measuring progress toward these goals. He noted how the AIM study was the first big effort to do that. At Oak Academy the tendency is to monitor the school climate anecdotally and to look at progress by analyzing percentages of students and faculty of color and families on financial aid. John highlighted how the school can improve in this area by looking at student and family experiences through survey data. Isaac, an administrator in the middle school, corroborated John’s statements and shared how Oak Academy wishes to be more data driven. Isaac shared that the strategic diversity plan that SDC is drafting this year will provide a way to systematically measure and monitor progress toward goals related to diversity and inclusion.

Aligning Goals with Practice

Recruitment. One of Oak Academy’s most basic goals involves having a racially and socioeconomically diverse student body. The school’s recruitment efforts provide a window into how this goal is carried out through the lived experience of the school. Students, faculty, and administrators from Oak Academy were asked whether the school actively recruits for racial and ethnic diversity. They were also asked what measures the school takes to increase the number of students of color, particularly from historically underrepresented groups such as African American and Latino students.

When it comes to recruiting for racial and ethnic diversity, eight adult participants discussed how Oak Academy’s recruitment effort is primarily with external organizations such as ABC, Alliance, Young Eisner Scholars (YES), and Hype. These access organizations work with

African American and Latino students who historically have been underrepresented in independent schools. They also work with students from low-income communities to help them navigate the independent school world and gain access to these schools.

Paul, an administrator, referenced reliance on outside organizations like ABC and Alliance as barriers to increasing racial and ethnic diversity. He also alluded to the school's culture as not being very inclusive and being "connected to itself," therefore, only attracting students like those already at the school. Confirming this view, another administrator, John, shared how in the past 2-3 years Oak Academy has expanded its recruitment efforts by reaching out to African American and Latino parent groups in the immediate area by hosting "admission nights." These events are held at community centers or parks where these parent groups already meet. The events are offered in different languages so that members of the community have the opportunity to hear about Oak Academy and consider it as a possibility for their children.

Beyond local community recruitment, Oak Academy has also increased language accessibility in their admissions and recruitment work. Six participants noted how the school has worked to translate documents into Spanish to provide greater access to Latino families. Students who are fluent in Spanish have also assisted in giving campus tours in the target language to Spanish-speaking families.

Although Oak Academy serves 42% students of color, works with outside organizations, and initiates external outreach, half of the participants expressed that certain student groups remain underrepresented. African American non-athletes and girls, Latino students, and Asian students were among the groups participants felt are most underrepresented on campus.

Two faculty members shared that Asian students are underrepresented on campus, despite the fact that in many Southern California independent schools these students often represent the largest subgroup of students of color. Paul corroborated this view, noting “a lack of critical mass” when it comes to Asian students, “which is interesting, because they’re often the most represented group.” Paul noted that Asian American families gravitate toward “achiever schools” and less progressive schools like Oak Academy. However, he noted that this trend seems to be shifting as the school gives greater focus to technology.

Five participants alluded to the notion of the school recruiting students of color to play sports. Tabitha, a Middle School teacher, hinted at this when she mentioned she felt that African American non-athletes were an underrepresented group on campus. Mark, a faculty member from the upper school, expressed how he feels that some students of color are admitted solely on account of their athletic ability or to play sports and how these students end up struggling academically. Jude, an African American student who participated in the focus group, explicitly discussed the stereotype of “Black kids” being admitted to play basketball, but expressed how this should not be the case.

I will say that most of the people of color here play sports. I play basketball. I’m going to say it’s the Black kids, play basketball usually, and that’s because you go up to your friends and be like, “Hey, come to school here. It’s cool, and we can play basketball together.” But I feel like it shouldn’t just be that. It should be people who don’t play sports to just say it’s a cool spot to be and just have a good school experience.

Samuel, an African American teacher and former student, did not directly mention sports as a way to bring diversity on campus. However, as a person of color who played sports for Oak Academy and who was on the first team that won a championship for the school, the image of the athlete of color recruited to play sports in an independent school is reinforced. Samuel also

teaches physical education at Oak Academy. His experiences as a student, and now as a faculty member who teaches physical education and coaches sports, confirm the stereotype of increasing racial and ethnic diversity in independent schools through athletics.

Paul was the only participant to explicitly mention financial aid as a way to increase diversity on campus. He identified it as “the strongest ethnic and racial diversity tool that we currently have.” Paul added,

The vast majority of students who are students of color, also receive financial aid at Oak Academy. There’s a much smaller number who are full pay. That’s an issue and it should be an issue for the school. We need to normalize that race and class are not one in the same.

Although Paul felt that race and class are not “one and the same,” he failed to note that race and class are tightly intertwined and difficult to separate. In reference to financial aid, Thomas, a faculty member from the Middle School noted: “No surprise, maybe it’s a little sad, but if you look at those who are getting full rides, most of them are non-White.” Although Paul and Thomas both made connections to financial aid and racial and ethnic diversity, they failed to elaborate on why most students of color at Oak Academy require financial aid.

In sum, though Oak Academy recruits for racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity, participants indicated that African American, Latino, and Asian students remain underrepresented within the 42% of students of color on campus. This was also apparent during lunch observations conducted on campus during middle and upper school lunch. Out of the 206 students I was able to observe, 69% appeared White, 29% appeared African American, 8% appeared Asian, and 5% appeared Latino. During lunch, I observed what appeared to be students of the same racial or ethnic group self-segregated into small groups throughout campus. Though I did see instances of

White students and students of color sitting and talking or eating together, for the most part African American students sat with other African Americans or other students of color. Of the approximately 12 different groupings involving African American students I observed, 10 of those included two or more African Americans. The largest of these groupings consisted of six African American boys, two of whom participated in the focus group. Tatum (1997) described that self-segregation during lunch is not unusual in racially mixed high schools. She explained that such “joining with one’s peers for support” is a “positive coping strategy” “and a “developmental process in response to environmental stressor[s]” such as racism (p. 62). For these students, joining together with other students of color provides a way to seek support from those with similar experiences (Tatum, 1997).

Although several participants discussed recruitment stereotypes and the need for financial aid among students of color, participants were silent around the larger systemic issues. I will discuss this silence further in Chapter Five.

Curriculum. The 18 Oak Academy participants were asked how the curriculum addresses topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They were also asked what, if any, support systems were provided for students of color to feel included in the school community. Participants across divisions discussed the extent to which each division brings topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion into the class curriculum. Fourteen of the 18 participants also talked about the school’s push in recent years to invite guest speakers and have film screenings that address these topics. Thirteen participants discussed the presence of affinity groups on campus as an example of a support system for students of color. Eight participants discussed the work of two different committees that coordinate programming around topics of diversity, equity,

and inclusion for their division or the entire school. The remainder of this section addresses these findings in greater detail.

One way in which Oak Academy carries out its written action plan related to diversity, equity, and inclusion is through the work of groups like the SDC committee. Five participants discussed the work carried out by the SDC committee as an instrumental piece in bringing more programming related to social justice topics. SDC was formed to implement the goals outlined in the school's written action plan and the recommendations from the AIM study. Part of SDC's work includes ensuring that the school expands diversity within the student body, faculty, and administration, and that it works to ensure that everyone feels more included at Oak Academy.

SDC is composed of 27 members who represent a range of stakeholders from the school community. The committee includes faculty from the lower, middle, and upper school divisions, students from the upper school and middle school, one division head, the Assistant Head of School, staff members, and trustees. The committee meets once a month and coordinates school-wide programming for students, faculty, and staff related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Isaac, an SDC member and administrator in the middle school, described the shifting structure of SDC over the last 2 years. The committee began as a space where members can talk about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and engage in planning to invite speakers. Currently, SDC provides a space for people to share best practices related to these topics. Isaac explained that the number one focus of SDC in its third year is to develop "goals and objectives that [SDC] can check and regularly work on so that years from now [the committee] can continue and not get lost in conversation." This year SDC has engaged in drafting a diversity strategic plan. At the

time of my interview with Isaac, SDC began this planning by drafting a vision statement and they were in the process of developing a mission statement. Isaac admitted the challenge behind getting this work done with such a large committee.

Tabitha and Rebecca, two SDC committee members who are faculty members from the middle and upper school, described how much of SDC's work has involved bringing in guest speakers to talk to students, faculty, and staff about topics such as microaggressions, stereotype threat, race and privilege, gender equality, juvenile justice reform, and anti-racism. Tabitha noted how in previous years the school "inundated" faculty, staff, and students with guest speakers. Both shared how at times there has not been adequate preparation for or follow-up to these discussions for students and teachers, which is something that both groups need. When it comes to guest speakers and discussions around race, Rebecca added how she has observed some resistance from students who make comments like: "We talk about it all the time. Why are we talking about race again?"

In addition to SDC, other committees have been created to bring diverse perspectives and a social justice lens to the curriculum. Three participants discussed the work of the Justice, Action, Inclusion, and Diversity committee (JAID) in the lower school and some of the curricular focus the committee has helped this division adopt. John, one of Oak Academy's administrators, described JAID as "a committee of students and faculty that are really looking at equity and justice in the elementary school."

John, a second administrator named Paul, and two teachers from the upper school commented that the lower school at Oak Academy is the "farthest ahead" when it comes to incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum. Paul also noted how this

division works with faculty and parents to engage with the entire community around these topics. John attributed the progress in the lower school to top-down support that made topics related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice a “huge” focus within this division. He emphasized that “so much of that has been a result of both the former elementary school director, and the current elementary school director who really basically made it a priority that this is what we’re going to be teaching.” Josephine, a long time teacher in the lower school, alluded to the top-down support when she shared how the former lower school director made it very clear to teachers and parents that the lower school would be engaging in difficult conversations related to racism and social justice and encouraged parents to “be on board” with what the school values. This year, the division has the school’s first administrator of color. Topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are part of her “life’s work,” as Paul noted. As an entire division, the lower school has also attended workshops at the Museum of Tolerance and the NAIS PoCC. Professional development along with collaboration among lower school teachers has helped this division develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and confidence to bring topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion into the curriculum.

Lower school teachers shared specific examples of class activities focused on equity and social justice. James and Samuel, both long time teachers from the lower school, discussed specific events such as “Dot Day,” the “Book of the Month,” and class gatherings. James noted that during the past couple of years the “Book of the Month” has included more books related to diversity and race. This focus has been intentional so that students of color see themselves reflected in the curriculum. James and Samuel also described “Dot Day,” an event carried out in the lower school every 3 years. On “Dot Day,” students get the opportunity to experience

different levels of privilege. The activity appears to be similar to Jane Elliot's famous blue eyes/brown eyes exercise. During "Dot Day," students receive a certain color dot that they must wear all day and that represents having certain privileges or no privileges. Samuel discussed how activities like "Dot Day" are important for students in the lower school to begin developing a social justice lens and a deeper understanding of diversity, race, and privilege. Such experiences also prepare students for situations they may encounter in middle and upper school.

In addition to the committee work carried out by SDC and JAID, nine faculty members mentioned affinity groups as another way the school supports diverse students on campus. Oak Academy began having affinity groups 3 years ago, despite complaints from some parents and faculty members that the groups were not being inclusive. Affinity groups are meant to support students from various underrepresented racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, as well as students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). Oak Academy's affinity groups in the upper school include: Alma Latina for students who identify as Latinx, Black Student Union for students who identify as Black, PRIDE for the LGBTQ student community, and PEACE Club (People for Ethnic and Cultural Equality). The middle school does not have affinity groups. However, they do have PRIDE, which focuses on social justice issues. In addition to the growing affinity groups on campus, each year the school sends six students to represent Oak Academy at the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) sponsored by the NAIS. SDLC is a multiracial, multicultural gathering of upper school student leaders from across the U.S. The conference focuses on self-reflecting, forming allies, building community, and understanding the nature and development of effective strategies for social justice.

Although affinity groups, SDC and JAID committee work, and teachers interested in diversity, equity, and inclusion aim to provide students with a diverse and inclusive curriculum and school climate, Samuel shared that his “gut feeling” says the school “could do a little bit better.” John and Martha shared similar sentiments, noting that the extent to which courses focus on equity and justice depends on the teachers’ passions, their experience, and their comfort level with incorporating these topics in the curriculum. Isaac noted that teachers have a lot of autonomy. If a teacher does not feel passionate about this subject or does not feel equipped to include it in the curriculum, it is likely that he or she will not. According to Martha and Rebecca, incorporating these topics in upper school courses presents a challenge as teachers tend to be more “opinionated” or complain that they lack time because of all the content they need to cover. Others simply do not see the need to incorporate such topics in their course. Martha continued: “Some people are far educated [in these topics] and [are] proactive. Other people are completely in denial, ‘I don’t need to do any of this. Why are they doing this to us?’”

Because of the varied extent to which teachers incorporate these topics in their curriculum, John highlighted a need for scope and sequence surrounding an equity- and social justice-informed curriculum. Five participants, including John, talked about Oak Academy’s future goal of developing an Equity and Justice Institute. Although the Institute is still in the planning stages, John envisions that it will house all the work the school does related to social justice. His first goal for the Institute is to help Oak Academy develop a scope and sequence across grades and divisions that is focused on social justice.

This section provided findings related to how Oak Academy achieves its goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through the curriculum. In addition to the curriculum, participants

were asked what, if any, professional development the school provided to prepare teachers to address topics related to equity and justice in the curriculum. The following section outlines the findings related to professional development.

Professional development. One goal in Oak Academy’s written action plan was to identify best practices and professional development to help faculty and staff acquire the knowledge and skills to support all members of the school’s diverse community. Participant responses to interview questions about professional development revealed that Oak Academy strives to continue to build faculty and staff knowledge and skills around diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. Ten participants noted how the school makes it a priority to send faculty and staff to the annual NAIS PoCC.

Eight participants also talked about Oak Academy’s Summer Diversity Institute, which the school first offered to 14 faculty and staff in 2015. This year Oak Academy plans to offer two sessions, one at the beginning and one at the end of summer so that more faculty and staff can participate. The institute provides a 4-day strategic diversity training. John and Isaac noted that the goal is to have all faculty and staff attend the Institute. This would allow all faculty and staff — even participants who do not make this work a priority in their teaching—to have a common language, understanding of, and confidence to address issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Martha discussed the impact that attending the Summer Diversity Institute has had on her growth as an educator, noting that it has been helpful to her “as a human being, at the personal level, [and at] a professional level” and has motivated and pushed her to reshape her lessons and be more conscious about issues related to equity and social justice.

Barriers

All Oak Academy participants were asked to identify barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion that the school faces. Thirteen participants, including four students, noted the cost of tuition and the socioeconomic divide among Oak Academy students as a major barrier to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Thomas and Mark, middle and upper school teachers, spoke about the high cost of tuition as a barrier to greater diversity and made some connections between race and class. Thomas discussed how “it’s hard to separate race and economics” and noted the role financial aid potentially plays in attracting a more socioeconomically and racially diverse student population. Both failed to note the historical reasons why most students “getting full rides” are non-White, why students of color may be more likely to come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and why they are historically underrepresented in independent schools.

Ezequiel, Jude, Micah, and Lola, four students from the upper school, alluded to the socioeconomic and racial divide as evidenced from reactions wealthy kids have about assemblies or current events related to equity and justice. Ezequiel and Jude pointed to the bubble in which some students live and how they are “sheltered from the outside world,” making them oblivious to serious social issues like the use of deadly force on unarmed Black men. The student body would be more “concerned about a celebrity dog” yet “no one would care” or realize when the news was inundated with headlines about kids of color getting shot, as Ezequiel expressed. Students “would talk about everything else that was going on” in the world, but they would not know or care about what was happening outside of their bubble. As Ezequiel noted, “Like what do they care? They don’t have to worry about getting killed at a stoplight by a policeman because

they live on Park Avenue.” Ezequiel’s comment illustrates the disconnect between privileged students and “the outside world.”

The kids were kind of just, for a while, in a certain sense they were self-centered about the fact that they are the 1% of the 1%, and that a lot of the stuff that happens in the outside world, or to other people that go to this school that aren’t part of their 1% club, a lot of that stuff’s not going to happen to them. So they would go to assemblies or there was a lot of ditching of assemblies, people yelling at people and cursing out people talking on stage, not caring.

Jude, Ezequiel, and Micah further explained that the reason why some students do not take topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion seriously is because they feel like it “doesn’t apply” to them. This finding is supported by the reactions of some students when the school has invited guest speakers to present at an assembly about these topics. As Micah reported, some students would gather outside talking about how it was a “waste of time” or ask, “Why do I have to be bothered with this kind of stuff?” Micah’s comment supports the disconnect privileged students have when it comes to topics presented on campus related to equity and justice. He further noted,

I don’t ever feel like it’s the school’s fault. I feel like it’s the student body because they feel like “this doesn’t apply to me” or “when am I ever going to get pulled over” or “when am I ever going to get profiled” or something like that.

This disconnect was also apparent in student reactions to the formation of affinity groups. Lola discussed some of the complaints on campus when the school started its first Black Student Union (BSU). She shared that students asked: “Oh, what’s a BSU? Why do you need that? You would be mad if we started a White Student Alliance.” Lola and Ezequiel also shared how some students mock certain events like the school’s Black History Month Assembly. Ezequiel shared,

Black History Month. I remember a kid came up to me and asked me, ‘There’s all this cool stuff for Black History Month. When’s White History Month?’ I was like, “Every

other day of the year because Christopher Columbus literally kicked a bunch of indigenous people off their land to make stuff for himself, and that's a holiday." I mean, it's just the student body really seemed less concerned with the well-being of the rest of the world or the rest of the population of wherever they are and more concerned with themselves because that's all they're used to.

Adult participants also discussed the lack of socioeconomic diversity and how this affects inclusion on campus. The huge "economic imbalance" and insensitive comments about material things causes some students, including upper school teacher Martha, to experience a lack of belonging. Some students feel uncomfortable with "so much wealth around them and so much bragging about what people have" that they struggle to "fit in." Without thinking about others' economic situation, students ask each other where they are going during winter break or boast "I went here," or "I got this or I got that." As noted by Thomas, some students on financial aid "struggle in many different ways" because "they know that they're somehow different or [they] see it and hear kids talking about their private jet and this and that, and they take the bus to school."

The following comment by Ezequiel summarizes, from the student perspective, a lack of understanding and a socioeconomic divide between wealthy White students and students of color who may have different cultural experiences or come from a more humble socioeconomic background.

I'm also kind of tired. I'm in this strange place. It's weird to try to explain the way that I do things or the way that I walk, the way that I do things in general because of my race because, like, I play baseball, and there's like two other people of color on that team out of 26 people. Especially because this group of people is predominantly like kids from the side of town that have a lot of money, so it's hard to explain to them why I don't drive myself home, and why I walk to the train station and take the train home. And it's hard to explain to them how my mom's not home when I get home. She's working late, so I can go here. It's just really strange to try to explain at first coming from public school because everyone was just like me at public school. Not just in terms of race or religion or

anything, but it was kind of like a mosh pit of everything. And here, for a while, when I came, it was a huge concentrate of one group of people.

Insensitivity around race and class also exists among parents. John and Paul discussed how the “amplified affluence” and “socioeconomic divide” at Oak Academy has an impact on inclusion on campus. John alluded to the “bubble” in which many students live and the assumptions students and parents have about who can afford things based on their race.

I think it’s very hard for students because of the socioeconomic divide here in the school. There’s a tremendous amount of insensitivity on not just students’ parts but parents’ parts on assumptions that are made about what a student or family can and can’t afford or who can’t afford something and who can because of the color of their skin.

Paul spoke extensively about the culture impact on inclusion caused by the “huge ceiling” of affluence at Oak Academy. He alluded to a socioeconomic and class divide among affluent families, who “half buy into” the school’s mission, and the middle and low-income families who experience discomfort and a lack of inclusion because they are surrounded by so much wealth.

I think the full pay plus above has a significant culture impact on inclusion and on equity in terms of a lot of what their expectations are. I do think a trend that I’ve seen for the culture of the school is parents and families who are highly, highly affluent who half buy into our mission and just want a great school for their kid and aren’t worried about trying to maybe uphold that mission outside of school. It plays itself out. Parents want potlucks at parents’ homes with views and the school says no. We have them here. I think a lot of our middle income and low income families that I talk to, they don’t feel like they can engage in the full parent or kid experience, because that would also require them to expose their lifestyle and their home setting. I think that’s an issue. It’s not unique to us, but I think it’s sort of amplified here because what the zenith is on how much you can have here is pretty unbelievable.

The large socioeconomic divide among students also creates barriers to access. Martha shared how she has observed that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are not well-served because they do not have the same access to resources outside of school such as private

tutoring and SAT prep classes. These students have the added pressure of having to “prove themselves” because of their race and background without the added benefit of outside resources. Ruth, a teacher in the middle school, explained that Oak Academy has begun to note that if someone is at the school on scholarship, “There is a responsibility to give them similar resources from outside of school.” The school has done that through such things as tutoring and educational testing.

Two other faculty alluded to “a cultural entitlement factor” families from privileged backgrounds have when it comes to “demanding second chances” around academics or disciplinary issues. The following comment from Joshua, an administrator, illustrates the divisions caused by such feelings of entitlement and its impact on inclusion.

If you have a couple of kids and they are both disciplined, some families, depending on their cultural experience, they are lovely, they say, “Okay, we’re sorry,” and they move. Others are going to fight back. If a child of privilege is struggling in a class, the parents will frequently advocate and push hard on the teacher and say, “What are you doing?” A family that doesn’t have that privilege or financial background or education may just say, “That’s the way it is.” That’s kind of a bummer. It separates them a little bit.

Paul summarized the underlying issue around why Oak Academy continues to experience problems with inclusion, especially as it relates to race and class, in the following statement:

My sense is, we’ve had a do-gooder, do the right thing approach to diversity, versus a needs based assessment of experience with inclusion that informs what we do with diversity. When people say diversity at [Oak Academy], they mean people of color. They don’t mean the whole community, the whole fabric. I think even when the 40% goal for kids of color was established, that was completely framed by the leadership and everyone as “the other.” Diversity is “the other.” We want those kids here, we want them to have fun, be educated well, but they’re separate in some fashion. That makes a lot of sense when you look at the AIM study. I think the school has been more naïve, at times very naïve, about what inclusion actually looks like. The constant complaint is there’s no Director of Diversity and Inclusion for our faculty. People are asking for this. We’ve been focused on it more in the last two to three years. A lot of good stuff happening over the last 2 to 3 years. I think the school is on the White, liberal do-gooder approach to

diversity. We struggle with that because still we only have our elementary school director who is the first person of color on the senior administrative group ever in the history of the school. There's a lot of stuff that the school still needs to work on. We're improving our notions of what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean. I think we're definitely bringing people in that have experience with that.

Oak Academy recognizes the work that lies ahead in overcoming these barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through recruitment, committee work, the curriculum, and professional development, the school strives to overcome these barriers and fulfill their mission of being a diverse and inclusive campus.

Case 2: Cypress Academy

Cypress Academy is a highly ranked, academically rigorous school that serves 830 students in grades K-12. Students of color make up 39% of the student population. Approximately 30% of faculty members are people of color. Equity and inclusion are prominently outlined as commitments in the school's newly adopted mission statement.

A total of 17 people from Cypress Academy participated in this study. I interviewed 11 adults, six of whom work as administrators and five of whom work as teachers. The six administrators interviewed included the Head of School and Assistant Head, directors with various roles, and a college counselor. Teacher participants represented a range of disciplines and racial and ethnic backgrounds from the lower, middle, and upper school divisions. One focus group was conducted with six upper school students. Focus group participants identified as African American, Jewish, and Persian. One lunchtime observation was conducted during middle and upper school lunch to get a visual sense of racial and ethnic diversity on campus. I also analyzed public documents about Cypress Academy such as the school's website and its most recent Strategic Plan. I first provide an overview of key findings for Cypress Academy.

Summary of Key Findings from Cypress Academy

All 17 participants were asked how the school carries out its goals and commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through recruitment practices, the curriculum, and professional development. Cypress Academy works with organizations such as Alliance and ABC to recruit historically underrepresented students. Although recruitment efforts are focused on attracting racially and socioeconomically diverse students, participants shared that African American and Latino students remain underrepresented.

Cypress Academy strives to address topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the curriculum and through school-wide programming and professional development. The school provides a support system for students of color through the Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion and its director. Other support systems include affinity groups in the upper school, parent affinity groups, Lower School Culture Clubs, a Diversity Club, Diversity Week, an advisory program, and assemblies focused on equity and justice. The Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion provides faculty with professional development and curricular support. The school evaluates teachers on how they incorporate topics related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion within their curriculum and provides faculty with funding and support to help them accomplish goals related to this work.

Finally, participants were asked about barriers the school faces related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Participants identified resistance and lack of engagement due to fear, discomfort, and White privilege as barriers to this work.

Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

When data collection began at Cypress Academy, the school had just adopted a new mission statement. The first line espouses a commitment to equity and inclusion. Cypress Academy's written strategic plan includes a Diversity Initiative with the goal of establishing the school as a leader among independent schools in diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion. This goal is outlined prominently in one of the school's website pages. The goal, born out of a board directive, emphasizes that these topics are critical components of academic and co-curricular excellence and an important part of preparing students for college and the global community. The Diversity Initiative includes the following sub-goals: (a) increasing programming and professional development to educate all members of the community about these topics; (b) making multiculturalism and inclusion a strategic focus of curriculum development in each classroom; (c) increasing diversity and finding new ways to recruit and support a diverse student body, faculty, and staff; and (d) ensuring that the Diversity Initiative is understood and applied by all members of the community.

Monitoring and measuring progress. Participants were asked how Cypress Academy monitors and measures its progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. Jacob and Timothy, two senior administrators, noted that most schools, including theirs, do not have a data-driven benchmark to measure success or progress toward these goals. The school is committed to using data to measure progress, but it is still deciding on rubrics. Although the school monitors admissions and hiring data, Timothy noted that they are trying to figure out how to measure the impact of guest speakers, programs, and professional development through survey data.

Aligning Goals with Practice

Recruitment. To learn about how Cypress Academy achieves its mission related to equity and inclusion, participants were asked about recruitment practices on campus. I asked participants whether the school actively recruits for historically underrepresented minorities such as African American and Latino students.

Three Cypress Academy administrators—Jacob, Miriam, and Joseph—discussed recruitment practices aimed at increasing racial diversity on campus. Faculty members were largely unaware of specific recruitment practices. Like most independent schools in the area, Cypress Academy works with access organizations such as Alliance and ABC to recruit historically underrepresented groups such as African American and Latino students. Jacob, a senior administrator, highlighted the school’s relationship with Alliance as “a very important part of [the] work” to recruit students from underrepresented communities. However, Miriam, an upper school administrator, noted that “a small number, anywhere from one to five students a year,” come to Cypress from Alliance or ABC. Such a small number of students of color recruited from two access organizations appears too small to make an impact on the demographics of a campus with over 800 students.

In addition to working with ABC and Alliance, Jacob, Miriam, and Joseph discussed recruitment practices such as “going to schools that have high populations of underrepresented students” and targeting these schools as “potential feeder schools” for diversity. Jacob shared that the school has an admissions officer who recruits from underrepresented communities by attending school fairs and working with and visiting charter schools that could serve as feeder schools for Cypress Academy. According to Jacob, the school’s goal over the years has been to

“forge more meaningful relationships with some of the more successful K-8 and 6-8 charters” and trying to “build a support network among families from underrepresented groups on campus who can then help recruit.”

Although Cypress Academy has 39% students of color, six participants and three students noted that African American and Latino students remain underrepresented on campus. Four participants highlighted that Cypress Academy has a large Persian Jewish community that is counted among students of color and form part of the 39%. Sarah and Miriam, two upper school administrators, and Esther, a middle school teacher, explained how this population of students “make[s] the numbers higher,” but when considering Latino and African American students, according to Sarah, “we’re looking at 5% and under for many independent schools.” Both Miriam and Esther noted that the school counts Middle Eastern students as minority students, although they are not traditionally counted as underrepresented students in colleges or in government census data. Therefore, the numbers “look a little inflated” because the school counts the large percentage of Persian students who attend Cypress Academy. Sarah emphasized how this is “something worth discussing because it makes the number higher, but it’s misleading.” Sarah and Esther noted that it is especially interesting and questionable to count these students in the statistic when Persian students do not identify as students of color and “many of them [are] offended by their count into the statistic” as they self-identify as White.

Sarah highlighted the importance of recruiting and having a critical mass of underrepresented students of color like African American and Latino students on campus. She noted the “heavy burden” these students carry when they are one of two in their grade. Three administrators and two teachers all alluded to the problem of these students sometimes being the

only one in their class or grade level and the importance of recruiting and admitting more students of color.

Sarah, Miriam, and Naomi also emphasized the importance of exposing students to a diverse learning environment. Sarah noted that independent schools, including Cypress Academy, still look like the segregated schools of the 1950s, stating,

If we say that we recognize that there's real value [in diversity], and research shows this and proves this, that students' academic excellence is associated with being a part of a diverse learning environment. It makes you smarter because you have to navigate across differences, you have to get different opinions, you have to hear different perspectives. If we know that and the research tells us that, then now it's time for the action behind it. I feel like it should be so much easier and it's harder than it should be. When you look at some of our schools, it feels really like we're in 1954 for a lot of our schools, and that's unfortunate.

A lunch observation conducted during middle and upper school lunch corroborated participant observations. Of the approximately 105 students observed, 80% appeared to be White or Middle Eastern, 6% appeared to be African American, 11% appeared to be Asian, and 1% appeared to be Latino. There was little evidence of students self-segregating by race during lunch. At the same time, I observed so few students of color, it was difficult to tell if self-segregation was indeed occurring. The students of color I did observe were often walking by themselves or sitting with other students who appeared White.

Curriculum. Cypress Academy participants were asked how the school addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion within the curriculum. They were also asked what, if any, support systems were provided for students of color to feel included in the school community. All 11 adult participants and the six students from the focus group talked about different ways in which the curriculum and out-of-class programming focuses on these topics and provides support to

students of color. Eight adult participants and three students within the focus group shared details about the school's annual Diversity Week. The event consists of daily programming during an entire week of the school year where middle and upper school students have the opportunity to attend different seminars, watch films, or engage in conversations related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion.

As noted by Miriam, Cypress Academy recognizes that students of color, particularly from historically underrepresented groups, "sometimes need different support than other students." For this reason, the school has developed certain systems and programming to support and retain students of color, but also to educate the school community. Six students in the focus group and seven adult participants discussed the following support systems offered by Cypress Academy: an Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion with a full-time director; affinity groups in the upper school; parent affinity groups; Culture Clubs in the lower school; a Diversity Club; Diversity Week; an advisory program; and assemblies focused on diversity, multiculturalism or inclusion that are led by students or guest speakers.

Nine participants identified the Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion and its Director as "a support and resource person" primarily for students of color in the upper school, but also for faculty members who are trying to incorporate more topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their curriculum. Joseph noted, however, that "it would be beneficial to have additional support networks" for students in the middle school, because there are some who feel isolated because of their racial identity. As he put it, "When you're the only Black girl in the grade, there are some challenges." Naomi spoke from her experience with her son who is the only African American boy in his grade. She discussed how Cypress Academy has

tried to mitigate this challenge by clustering students of color as a cohort and engaging in “some conscious social engineering” by placing these students with an African American teacher, for example, if the student is African American. Naomi alluded to a sort of informal mentor program so that students of color do not feel alone. She explained the existence of “through lines” and “fluidity” among the different grade levels so that students of color can be a buddy to other students of color who are younger or older.

Naomi also added how the college counselors try to be really conscious of student opportunities to have faculty and staff who look like them. Because Cypress Academy has a Latina and an African American among the counselors, they tend to have Latino students and the African American students placed with the counselor of their background. This is done as “a best practice” because students of color do not always have the opportunity to work with teachers or administrators who are of their background. This intentional pairing makes students and parents feel more comfortable.

Two administrators, two teachers, and one student acknowledged that Cypress Academy is not doing enough to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion within the curriculum. Timothy, a senior administrator, highlighted that “curriculum stuff is the hardest place” when it comes to including these topics. He added that “part of the challenge in this work [is] to get people to understand both the importance of it and to make shifts.” Sarah highlighted a typical problem across independent school curricula, namely the existence of a canon that “looks very White and very Eurocentric.” Oftentimes there are a lack of courses that speak to the student experience and their personal identity.

Timothy noted that the school is “starting to do a better job” of looking at the texts used in English classrooms. Three teachers from the middle school corroborated his observation. Hannah stated that Cypress is “breaking away from the traditional White, male canon to include diverse voices.” Esther and David, also middle school teachers, discussed improvements being made in English and history classes in the middle and upper school. Teachers are beginning to work together to approach topics that deal with diversity, equity, and inclusion by partnering novels with the history or political science students are studying. Both Esther and David noted how teachers are making a concerted effort to integrate literature, essays, and different resources that promote a different perspective or expose students to local and global issues such as immigration and civil rights.

Although it is more challenging to incorporate, such curricular changes are being planned in math and science. Esther, who is also involved with coordinating the Service Learning Program for the upper school, discussed future plans of how to integrate equity and justice into math and science. In math students in the upper school will use statistics to study hunger and poverty in Los Angeles. In chemistry, they will conduct an environmental project that involves testing on the Los Angeles River and looking at how the city takes care of different parts of the river depending on the neighborhood.

Esther shared two examples of how these topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are already being integrated into history and English. This year students in history class had a major unit on immigration and refugees and then in English they read stories and memoirs of immigrants to the United States. Students conducted interviews with people who are immigrants and learned about some of their struggles. Students also did a social justice project where they

had to go out into the world and do something to help immigrants and refugees. In eighth grade students study civil rights issues from the 1950s through modern times. In English they read *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *A Raisin in the Sun* and in history, they study U.S. History and look at different civil rights movements. At the end of the year, students complete a research project on a group or movement of their choice, like Native Americans, the LGBTQ community, Chicano farm workers, or Black Lives Matter.

Another curricular change is a new mandatory freshman course called Intersections of Identity (IOI). Three faculty members and three administrators shared details about the IOI course that, according to Sarah, “gets [students] thinking about the world” and allows them to explore their identity, their family’s identity, and their community’s identity. Students specifically study Los Angeles, Skid Row, and the impact of gentrification on communities. They study redlining, how areas in Los Angeles were designed to be exclusive, and how these communities have changed over time. Sarah explained that the course helps students analyze how they fit into the rest of the world as it allows them to explore their city outside of their “bubble.” Miriam described it as “a course that gets students thinking about who they are, and how who they are differs from the other people sitting around the table, or in their classroom, or in the world.” Sarah added that the IOI course allow students “to see life happening outside of [the Cypress Academy] bubble as it gets them into Los Angeles” and interacting with the veterans and homeless population. The course helps students challenge assumptions, think critically about the world, and ponder on the diversity within their own city and why many of these communities never converge with one another.

Although changes are slowly being made in the curriculum to include a greater focus on diversity, equity, multiculturalism, and inclusion, Sarah highlighted that this work is “never something you can check off a list.” She and David discussed the need to go farther and look at how these topics are incorporated in the curriculum across all grades. Both Sarah and David discussed their vision of developing a scope and sequence that will progressively expose students in grades K through 12 to topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They envision a curriculum that will include specific benchmarks, measurable goals, and assessments that would build students’ skills and vocabulary around topics related to stereotypes, microaggressions, racism, prejudice, and gender issues, among others. Timothy, a senior administrator, alluded to this idea and shared that the school is moving toward developing “a skills based curriculum around diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion,” as opposed to just diversifying their book list. He noted that the book list “needs to be diversified, too, but I can do that right now in the office. The kinds of things that we need to teach are cross cultural communication skills.”

Professional development. Cypress Academy participants were asked whether the school offered professional development opportunities to help faculty and staff develop their knowledge and skills related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Jacob was the only participant to highlight how the school spends almost \$200,000 annually on diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion. Some of those funds are available for teachers to attend conferences like the NAIS PoCC and the White Privilege Conference. Cypress Academy has also restructured professional development and created an Innovation Grant Program. The purpose of this is to encourage teachers to move beyond simply attending conferences like PoCC and motivate them to become experts and create their own curriculum around diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion. Jacob

shared how Cypress Academy's ninth grade English teams are seeking an Innovation Grant to spend a summer analyzing and overhauling the texts being used in English and see how they can incorporate more literature related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion.

Three Cypress Academy administrators—Sarah, Jacob, and Miriam—and four teachers—Esther, David, Benjamin, and Hannah—shared how faculty are offered professional development through the Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion. The Director partners with departments and individual faculty members in K through 12 to encourage, guide, and support them with developing curriculum and lesson plans that include topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Director also arranges for professional development for affinity group advisors, alerts the faculty about professional development opportunities, and presents at parent-education events where families are encouraged to explore and discuss topics related to diversity and inclusion.

One way Cypress Academy encourages teachers to further develop such skills is through professional goal-setting. There are seven categories on which faculty are evaluated, one of which includes how teachers “interact with issues of equity and inclusion in the classroom,” as described by Jacob. Three administrators, Joseph, Jacob, and Timothy, and one faculty member, David, talked about how teachers are now “assessed with regard to how they include issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in their curriculum” (David). Professional development is available to teachers to help them accomplish this goal. Jacob highlighted how Cypress Academy is one of the only school's in the country to have that in their evaluation protocol. He and Timothy explained the rationale behind “overhauling” the school's protocol to evaluate teachers based on how they integrate these topics into their courses. The administration wanted to “fold it

more fully into each teacher's daily existence" so that people do not perceive it as "an add-on or a sore thumb," but a part of how they operate as community members at Cypress Academy (Jacob). Part of that change in the evaluation protocol involved getting faculty to see themselves as the diversity directors. Jacob and Timothy emphasized how "everybody is to be the school's diversity director" because throwing these issues on a lone Diversity Director is not sustainable.

As Jacob noted,

There should not just be one director of multiculturalism and inclusion, that kind of houses and curates it, but rather [the Head of School] would like to say, "No, we've got 200 employees at Cypress Academy. That means we have 200 directors of multiculturalism and inclusion." And that all those voices need to be at the table.

Although Cypress Academy has restructured its teacher evaluation process and professional development and has a generous diversity budget that allows continued professional growth around diversity, equity, and inclusion, the 2017 CAIS accreditation visit highlighted how "this was still really for self-starters" (Jacob). The evaluation protocol obligates every teacher to "step up and do something" related to equity and inclusion, but in terms of professional development, only the "self-starters" are stepping forward and benefiting from it. The question that arose, in Jacob's words, was, "What do you do with the faculty who aren't stepping forward and saying, 'Hey, yeah, I really want to be engaged with this'?" Jacob identified this lack of engagement as one of the barriers Cypress Academy faces when it comes to work around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Barriers

All Cypress Academy participants were asked to identify barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Although Cypress Academy has a Director and Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism,

and Inclusion, a teacher evaluation system that requires incorporation of these topics in the curriculum, professional development, and a large budget focused on these issues, the school continues to face barriers to this work. Eight adult participants and four students alluded to the lack of engagement around these topics among faculty, students, and parents. One way this is made evident is through the curriculum. Sarah, an administrator, noted how discussion of these topics is happening “in some classes.” Timothy, a senior administrator, emphasized how the lack of engagement and resistance manifests itself through a “low tolerance for discomfort,” a reticence to be challenged, and a “fear of discomfort” and of “being made to feel wrong.” Teachers like Hannah talked about a lack of support and “eye-rolling” among some faculty when there are guest speakers or in-house workshops or assemblies related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion. She added how a lot of students and faculty feel that these topics are being “forced down their throats.” Benjamin, another teacher, shared this sentiment and explained how it is always the “same faculty doing the same thing.” He went on to state,

We do an awful lot for developing multiculturalism and inclusion, almost to the extent of too much, to where instead of it just being within every curriculum, within every classroom, within daily life, we have assemblies and meetings and diversity week. It's being really pushed, pushed, pushed, pushed, pushed. Obviously with it being really pushed, pushes a lot of people to embrace it, but also some people to push back.

Miriam, an upper school administrator, identified “hostile feedback” from some faculty when the school began to increase their focus on diversity, multiculturalism and inclusion. She asserted,

I think that the barriers, especially initially was some hostile feedback from some faculty members. I would say it was a small number of faculty members, but they were particularly vocal, and their argument was very flat in the sense that it was, we're a school, we need to prepare these kids for college. What do we care about diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion? That's all touchy-feely stuff. It's not relevant. Again, it

was not a lot, a handful of people I would say, but again, very vocal, and just dealing with them head on and saying, “Yes, you’re right. We need to prepare them for college, but guess what? Part of what they’re going to confront in college is diversity, and they’re very sheltered, a lot of these kids.” We need to give them the skills to deal with a diverse situation.

In reference to engagement and support around diversity, equity, and inclusion, Esther, a middle school teacher, mentioned “a big shake up and purge on faculty” before she arrived 2 years ago.

Esther asserted that with increased programming over the last few years, “even some of the old school faculty are getting on board.” She went on to state,

Not only has there been a literal shift of humans, but the humans who are left are the ones who are starting to buy in. I feel like with every year and the more visibility and the more tools and language that we’re providing people with, the more the Director of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion speaks to faculty and runs these assemblies, the more that I help run assemblies and incorporate service projects and trips into curricula and integrate these things academically, the more relevance people see that they have. Including the students. That’s ultimately our goal. For the students to value it.

Jacob, a senior administrator, alluded to these issues when he shared that one of the school’s greatest challenges in the next few years is to look at how to “build opportunity for the entire faculty to be engaged in these conversations” because “it tends to be geared at faculty who get it or want to get it” who are a small minority within the school. This will involve overhauling some of what is already being done with diversity. Jacob acknowledged, “The honest truth is probably out of 100 faculty, it is maybe 15 that are deeply, deeply committed and are involved in these conversations. So we’ve got another 85 that we need to bring in to the table.” This lack of engagement from the majority of faculty presents a barrier that the school hopes to overcome in future years.

Six adult participants and the six students in the focus group spoke in greater detail about resistance, lack of engagement, and silence from students and parents around particular issues

related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students who participated in the focus group highlighted how socioeconomic diversity is not discussed enough on campus because the programming focuses on more visible forms of diversity such as race and ethnicity. Lucas, an upper school student, described the existence of an “ambience of guilt” if you are from a higher SES, which makes SES one of “the harder topics” because it makes people uncomfortable. This silences potential discussions around privilege and wealth. Lydia, another student, explained that the silence around SES exists because Cypress Academy “has notoriously been known as more of the rich kids school where we don’t discuss these problems because everybody is perceived to be wealthy or comes from a higher standard of living.”

Six teachers and administrators from the middle and upper school and two students alluded to the “sheltered life” and “bubble” in which many students and families live. Through programming such as Diversity Week and assemblies, Cypress Academy has tried to make students aware of life “outside of the bubble.” Miriam noted that they are becoming increasingly cognizant of the fact that when they go off to college students will encounter people from different backgrounds and with different life experiences. Naomi, an administrator, highlighted that college counseling has been working on the fact that more and more colleges are asking questions that revolve around diversity.

We are explaining to our students and their parents that if Cypress Academy is a college preparatory school, one of the things the school has to do is prepare students for what they’re going to encounter on college campuses in terms of diversity. More and more universities are caring not just about diversity in a broad sense, but also cultural competency. We’ve really been focused on that for the last couple of years.

Even with the increased focus on cultural competency, diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion, faculty members like Esther and David noted how it seems that only 50% of the school values

conversations around these topics. Some acknowledge the importance of engaging in these hard conversations, while others still ask, “Why are we having these hard conversations? I don’t want to question privilege” (Esther). Part of the barrier stems from an unwillingness to look at privilege. Esther went on to note,

We have a very privileged population. And I feel like the push back is coming from some of the more conservative, very privileged wealthy, White and Persian families. Who could self-perceive as White and who are fiscally conservative, sometimes socially conservative and feel, some of them feel like they’ve had to struggle to get where they are and they don’t appreciate the idea of feeling like ... they’re like if I can do it, anyone can do it. There’s not the awareness of the privilege. There’s not a willingness to look at the privilege.

Four upper school students who participated in the focus group talked extensively about student resistance and an unwillingness to engage in difficult conversations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and how this results from living in a bubble. Samuel highlighted how “most students on this campus do not want to have conversations” related to these topics. Malachi’s comment is representative of the sentiments of the four students.

If you are a kid that has grown up with your family and you come to a private school all your life, you do not know any different, and it is not your fault; that is how you were raised. You do not see diversity until you go somewhere else. We have to show what a lot of people are experiencing outside of the bubble that you live in. You have to bring that in, because when you go out [in to the world] that is what you are going to see. There is a wall here [at the school] and we have to move that wall— not just here, but at other private schools. [Students] grow up in this bubble, they don’t see that much diversity. So when it comes to talking about something uncomfortable they do not want to deal with it at all because they have never felt it. When they feel uncomfortable, that is when growth happens. You have to be uncomfortable if you want to go anywhere. No one grows or becomes who they are without being uncomfortable at some point.

Timothy, a senior administrator, recognized that though this barrier of discomfort and silence around White privilege exists at Cypress Academy, “The good news is, everyone is suggesting it’s the important topic to have right now.” Four administrators emphasized how

selective colleges and universities are “increasingly asking for evidence” of students’ work in this area. They expect independent schools that have the resources to be working on these issues to send them students who will lead in this work because the institutions themselves want to lead in this work. Cypress Academy’s challenge in the coming years will be to have all stakeholders on campus engage in and value the difficult conversations about diversity, equity, inclusion, and privilege.

Cypress Academy’s mission statement, strategic plan, Office of Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Inclusion, and the programming that it oversees, demonstrate that the school strives to align its mission and goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion with the lived experience of the school. Through recruitment practices, curricular changes, encouraging professional development, and increased programming related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion, the school hopes to overcome the barriers of silence, resistance, and lack of engagement around these topics and in this way help students and faculty develop greater cross-cultural communication skills.

Case 3: Pine Academy

Pine Academy is a highly ranked, highly selective, academically rigorous independent school that serves 500 students in grades seven through 12. Approximately 52% of students identify as people of color. The breakdown of students of color on campus is: 7.1% African American; 30% Asian; 3.4% East Indian; and 12.1% Latino. Approximately 22.7% of faculty identify as people of color. Thirty percent of students receive financial aid. Pine Academy allocates 12% of the school’s operating budget to financial aid.

A total of 18 people from Pine Academy participated in this study. Interviews were conducted with 12 adults. Participating adults included six administrators and six teachers. The six administrators included the Head of School, three deans, the admissions director, and the athletics director. The six teachers who participated represented a range of disciplines, grades, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. Six students participated in one focus group. Student participants identified as African American, Latino, Asian, and South Asian. One observation was conducted during middle and upper school lunches to obtain a visual sense of racial and ethnic diversity on campus. I also analyzed public documents about Pine Academy such as the school's website and its most recent Strategic Plan. I first provide an overview of key findings for Pine Academy.

Summary of Key Findings from Pine Academy

The only mention of diversity in the school's Statement of Philosophy alludes to diversity of people, talent, interests, passions, and engagement. Because Pine Academy does not have a written mission or strategic plan that focuses on diversity, equity, or inclusion, it was challenging to find where the school aligns its mission or goals related to these with practice. This finding was identified as a major barrier to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This finding corroborates with the observations of four participants who shared that diversity, equity, and inclusion is simply "not a priority" of the school. Rachel, a faculty member at the school, noted that in terms of diversity, the school is "open to discussions," but does not have any "formal constructs." She went on to assert,

If someone else wants to initiate a conversation, that option is open, but it's not something that is already existent at the school or that will naturally come up. It is really

not one of the priorities at the moment. We have other bigger priorities: technology, fundraising, things like that. It just wasn't a chosen priority.

Despite the lack of written goals or commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, I found that the school uses outside organizations and an admissions associate to recruit for racial and ethnic diversity, particularly focused on recruiting African American students. The school does not offer any different support systems to underrepresented groups other than what is provided to all other students. Pine Academy appears to be beginning to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in the curriculum by diversifying the literature students read in English classes, through developing a Global Studies Initiative, and by including assemblies in the school's programming. Professional development around these topics is limited to individual teachers who are interested in seeking out opportunities such as attending the NAIS PoCC.

Pine Academy does not measure or monitor progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion beyond tracking the percentage of students of color through reports from the admissions office. The school also tracks the percentage of faculty of color. Focus groups, surveys, and evaluations are also conducted to gather data on the student experience and to learn about areas in need of improvement.

Commitments and Goals Related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Pine Academy's mission statement does not include any vocabulary or reference to equity, multiculturalism, or inclusion. The school's Statement of Philosophy contains five main clauses, and the word diversity appears once in the last clause. Pine Academy espouses a belief in the value of diversity, which it broadly defines as differences in people, talent, interests,

passions, and engagement. The school's website does not have any pages dedicated to topics related to diversity, multiculturalism, and inclusion. However, the school's main page contains a large picture of an African American student. The school site does list a Multicultural Student Union among its clubs. Although two teachers and a student talked about a Black Student Union on campus, this did not appear on the list of school clubs.

Pine Academy's strategic plan for 2014-2025 does not contain any goals related to diversity, equity, or inclusion. Outlined within the plan is a reference to a goal of the board and of the administration to "diversify the student body" in the 1990s. Beyond that statement, there is no other reference to diversity within the school's strategic priorities.

Throughout the document there are three different references to preserving the school's culture. The plan opens by emphasizing the preservation of traditions that "provide the ongoing cultural and educational integrity" of the school. In a separate section entitled "School Features to Ensure," the strategic plan prioritizes the preservation of the "unique culture" of Pine Academy, which is characterized by "balance, engaged relationships, community, and a distinguished, humane faculty."

A third and final reference to culture is made at the end of the strategic plan and relates to leadership goals. It provides a calling to current and future administrations to "respect and nurture the culture"—the "secret sauce" of the school—"at all costs." It outlines that "the administration must continue to be organized and staffed to respect and shape the culture," recognizing that the first hardest task for an organization is to create a culture, and the second hardest is to preserve it.

Aligning Goals with Practice

Recruitment. Participants from Pine Academy were asked about recruitment and retention practices, particularly among historically underrepresented groups such as African American and Latino students. Seven adult participants noted that Pine Academy recruits historically underrepresented students through access organizations like the Alliance and ABC. A second recruitment practice is through the school's Admissions Community Liaison, who visits traditional and non-traditional feeder schools such as public and charter schools. One participant mentioned the work the Athletics Department does with getting students to volunteer with different organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club. Such connections provide a way for the athletics director to also spread the word about Pine Academy and recruit potential students.

Although Pine Academy works with access organizations like ABC and Alliance, Nathaniel, an associate from admissions, expressed frustration and dissatisfaction with both organizations because they "haven't been helpful" and "they don't send very strong candidates." Since these access organizations do not send many students, Pine Academy does not count on them as a way to recruit underrepresented students. Nathaniel explained that the majority of students they depend on come from other Catholic, Christian, or independent schools. Few actually come from public schools. Therefore, the racial and ethnic composition of those feeder schools creates the racial and ethnic composition of Pine Academy.

Nathaniel highlighted that one goal in admissions is to "maintain an increased diversity." Pine Academy does not feel that it needs to work to increase the White and Asian populations on campus. He noted that in the last several years, the Latino applicant pool and enrollment was so robust that the school is not worried about attracting that demographic. Nathaniel identified the

African American population as one the school “need[s] to worry about” when it comes to continuing recruitment efforts.

Eight adult participants expressed that African American and Latino students remain underrepresented on campus despite the efforts of the school to recruit them. Rachel, a teacher in the middle and upper school shared that the school feels like it is 50% White and 50% Asian. Although the school is apparently more diverse than neighboring independent schools, her classroom demographics tell a different story and it does not seem like a huge concern for the school. She went on to state,

I don’t think I have actually a single African American student this year. Last year I had one. It’s limited. Yet I was told, we are more diverse than the surrounding private schools. I think that even though our diversity is limited, it feels like we’re doing a good job. I don’t know that it’s a huge concern.

John, another upper school teacher, made a comment that corroborated with Rachel’s. He noted that of the 50% students of color on campus, the majority of them are Asian.

On the surface, that 50% looks great. Then you look, the school is 34% Asian. Then when you look at our city, right now is 8% African American, and that’s about where we are. Numbers wise, it looks good, but what I would love to see is more focus on the underrepresented students of color, African Americans or Latinos.

Findings from a lunch observation conducted at Pine Academy corroborated Rachel and John’s observations of the lack of African American and Latino students on campus. During a 1-hour lunch observation I conducted during middle and upper school lunches, it was visually apparent that the majority of students at Pine Academy are either White or Asian. Out of approximately 113 students that I observed during lunch, 55% appeared White, 29% appeared Asian, and 15% appeared African American. Asian students appeared to sit either with each other in small groups or sprinkled among larger groups of White students. I observed three different groups of

approximately three African American students either talking or lounging. The other few African American students I observed were walking on their own to another place on campus. As with my lunch observations at Oak Academy, the few African American students I observed at Pine Academy also appeared to self-segregate during unstructured time such as lunch.

In addition to recruitment practices, participants were asked whether any support systems were provided to historically underrepresented students of color. Nathaniel and Michael, two senior administrators, discussed how “they get treated like all the students who come in” (Nathaniel). All students are paired with a 12th grade peer counselor and a faculty advisor. The school also provides a seventh and ninth grade advisory program for all students in those grades. Nathaniel noted that “there is support, but it is not specific to [students’] background.” He also added how this has seemed to be adequate because Pine Academy’s retention rate is the highest in the area. “Whatever we’re doing has seemed to be more than adequate so far.”

Independent schools commonly have affinity groups to serve as a support system for minority groups on campus. Two faculty members, Rachel and John, noted how Pine Academy does not have affinity groups. One of Pine Academy’s website pages lists the Multicultural Student Union among the clubs available to students. An administrator named Abigail noted that Multicultural Student Union is “an old fashioned name that’s just stuck around,” but the group is mostly a club for “African American concerns.” Four participants noted this club as a potential support for students of color. Michael emphasized that the club invites all students, so there are no clubs on campus for specific racial or ethnic groups like an African American or Latino group. Michael’s comment contradicted that of three other participants who talked about the existence of a Black Student Union. Rachel and John shared that this year the school has run a

“kind of underground” Black Student Union. One of the students who participated in the focus group helped to establish the club this year.

John further discussed the absence of affinity groups at Pine Academy and how he was told that the school does not like affinity groups. Although students have talked to John about the desire and need to have affinity groups, John described it as a “done issue with the school.” When asked why Pine Academy felt this way about affinity groups, John shared, “I think it makes people feel uncomfortable. It makes insecure White students uncomfortable. It makes faculty members suspicious.”

In continued conversations about recruitment and retention, Eunice, an administrator, talked about the success Pine Academy has had over the years with attracting more racially and ethnically diverse students. Her comment, however, alluded to notions of acculturation and assimilation when she explained how diverse students had been “successfully integrated” into the school. This resonates with the notion of preservation of culture outlined so often in the school’s Strategic Plan.

I think we’ve been able to attract more diverse groups of kids and successfully integrated them into the school over the years. I don’t think we have to give up who we are in order to bring a diverse population on campus.

In contrast to Eunice’s comments, Ezra, an upper school teacher, referenced the lack of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity within the city where Pine Academy is located and how he sees students of color being “absorbed by the dominant group.” This assertion once again alludes to the idea of outside groups joining the Pine Academy community to be “integrated” and assimilated into its culture. Ezra noted that although students from other communities are coming to the “dominant group” culture of Pine Academy, they are also voicing their opinions and not

succumbing to the pressures of having to fit into the upper class, predominantly White independent school mentality. Ezra also highlighted that with increasing diversity within the student body, students need to become more aware about the different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity that exists outside of the Pine Academy bubble.

Since participants were not able to identify explicit retention practices to support underrepresented students of color, I asked probing questions about the percentage of faculty of color and the experiences of students of color. I wanted to know whether faculty members of color were seen as mentors or adults with whom students of color could connect with for additional support. When asked about this, Michael denied the research about the importance of students of color having mentors of color to connect with on campus.

I will tell you there's not a complete correlation between racial or ethnic background and comfort with talking to faculty. There are students of color who believe that White faculty are their greatest confidant. There are students of color who are electing to go to certain other faculty of color simply because they haven't developed a rapport with them, even if they had been coached or taught by them. There are certainly White students who find their greatest confidant in a teacher of color. I am just saying the particular issue of like being more comfortable with like. I haven't seen any kind of metric that suggested a deep correlation in that. I haven't seen a pattern in that regard. That having been said, we are one of the more diverse faculty.

Michael's comment stood in stark contrast to Rachel's comment about the lack of faculty of color and her desire to have more of them, especially for students of color to have the opportunity to connect with educators that can relate to them, and provide not only the students of color, but all students with a different perspective. She highlighted that the school's lack of conversations, constructs, and goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion are a "deterrent" for teachers of color searching for jobs at independent schools like Pine Academy or for teachers who are interested in topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. She went on to express,

I obviously wish it was more [the number of faculty of color] because there's a unique perspective that people of color can offer to students that even well-intentioned White people cannot. I wish that it was more, but I guess I worry that our policy is a deterrent. I have one of my friends who is a teacher and is African American and she was looking for teaching jobs. When I told her our official line that we are open to conversations but that there's no official construct, she said, "Well, that's not a place that I want to work." So I think it is a deterrent. I think for anybody for whom this is something they are very interested in, it's a deterrent.

When asked if faculty and staff have engaged in school-wide conversations about the need for greater diversity within the student body and faculty, John alluded to a "very, very surface level" mention during accreditation, stating "We all happened to be there and it was talked about probably over the course of 30 seconds, but I wouldn't call that a dialogue."

Three teachers and two administrators acknowledged that the school's faculty is not representative of the diversity within the student population. Although Michael claimed that Pine Academy has "one of the more diverse faculty," he later contradicted his comment and admitted that the school's percentage of faculty of color is "pretty low." He noted that the school is "very intentional" in their review of applicants and when making faculty offers.

Let's just say it is an advantage to be a candidate of color. We certainly have hired two African Americans over the last two years, an Asian woman just recently. As I look over our Latino population several have joined us in the last few years. I would say the last few years we have become increasingly intentional in wanting to diversify the faculty.

Leah, another administrator, also noted how the school has seen the need to recruit more diverse faculty members to better reflect the diversity present within the student body.

In hiring, we really saw a need to be recruiting Asian American faculty because we have a gap there between the community that we live in and the representation on our faculty. Similarly, African American faculty and Hispanic faculty have been areas where we see a gap between the community we live in and the representation on our faculty.

Three administrators and one teacher noted that the school has attended workshops on minority hiring to help recruit more faculty of color on campus. Despite this, the school's percentage of faculty of color remains low.

Curriculum. Pine Academy participants were asked how the school curriculum addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion. Seven participants talked about the school's partnership with a school and a hospital in a Latin American country. The partnership was established in 2010 and every year the school sends 15 students to serve as volunteers with the school and hospital. Pine Academy received a generous grant and has hosted fundraisers to run the program, which is open only to students studying Spanish at the school.

Michael shared how Pine Academy is looking to grow its Global Initiatives Program next year. The school has already appointed a part-time Global Studies Coordinator to lead interdisciplinary curricular initiatives and help develop a seventh through 12th grade scope and sequence related to global studies. A part-time Global Initiative Coordinator has also been appointed to establish and strengthen local and global partnerships. When asked about the mission and purpose behind the Global Initiatives Program, Michael explained:

The mission of the Global Initiatives is first of all to reinforce and to strengthen our Latin America partnership and to look at further opportunities at integrating Los Angeles in the life of the school. Also, to see if there are other partnerships along the model of Latin America that would make sense for us. The Global Studies Coordinator will be working initially with History, English, language and the arts to see if there are areas where we can cross departmental lines to bring a greater global perspective to students.

In addition to the Global Initiatives Program, four participants talked about an identity course that all seniors take during their final semester. The course has been running for the past 20 years. Initially called "American Identity," 4 years ago the course was completely overhauled

and was renamed “Identity.” The course is a lecture-style seminar structured in a way that gives students the opportunity to hear different faculty members present in their areas of expertise on a particular topic related to identity. Students hear lectures on gender identity, masculinity, femininity, LGBTQ issues, racial identities, and political group identities and affiliations. Students explore national identity, individual identity, gender issues, race and ethnicity issues, and class issues.

In addition to Pine Academy’s Global Initiatives Program and 12th grade “Identity” course, eight participants discussed how topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are addressed in English, history, and language courses. Abigail was the only participant who gave details about some of the recommendations that came out of Pine Academy’s most recent CAIS accreditation process. She was the only participant to explain how leading up to the school’s accreditation report in 2016, “There were many, many different chapters [that] had comments about needing to talk more about diversity.” One of the six major recommendations that came out of the study was for the administration and faculty to “evaluate and modify as needed the academic curriculum, pedagogical practices, social and emotional program, and community engagement to ensure that all students see themselves reflected in the curriculum and experience the school as a safe, equitable, and inclusive community.”

Four participants talked about how different departments, especially English, history, and language courses, have made a conscious effort to bring in new texts that represent diverse voices and give greater attention to race, ethnicity, and gender. Although efforts are being made to incorporate diverse perspectives into courses, Ezra noted that the formal curriculum continues to be very biased, “one-sided,” and Eurocentric. Abigail’s comment regarding the incorporation

of “as many voices as possible” illustrates what the four participants shared about efforts to have the curriculum reflect diverse perspectives.

We also are always trying to make the curriculum open to as many voices as possible. Especially in history, English and languages, although math and science are also and of course performing arts, visual arts are also working on those issues as well.

Four participants talked about programming outside of the formal curriculum that relates to diversity, equity, or inclusion. These participants talked about assembly speakers hosted at Pine Academy this year. These included a *New York Times* writer who spoke about ISIS, a *New York Times* photographer who spoke about experiences in the Middle East, and an immigration lawyer who spoke about her personal and professional experiences with immigration law.

Four students who participated in the focus group expressed that topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion are “not quite as much addressed” in the curriculum, but rather “sometimes come out in conversation” (Joel). Although students acknowledged that they study African American authors or topics like Japanese American internment during World War II, “race and ethnic background is discussed in a more factual and historical way,” through lecture rather than through discussion (Dinah). Phoebe highlighted that race and discrimination are talked about as “more of a historical type of thing” and noted an absence of connections to the present.

We don’t really go deep into a lot of the things that are happening now and a lot of the problems and the inequality that happens now, whether that’s in school or outside of school or wherever it may be. I feel like it’s not so much touched upon and I feel like people in general are blind to it because we talk about it more from a historical standpoint. Like, “Oh, 50 years ago this happened!” But not really about what’s going on now in terms of discrimination or inequality or equality. I think it definitely needs to be talked about more because I don’t think being blind to certain things helps at all. I think that it would be good to get conversations going about inequality and the lack ... If there’s no lack of diversity or the lack of diversity. I think that would help a lot of people who

sometimes think that there isn't a problem, when, in reality, there is. I just think it would create a more open mind.

It was apparent through conversations with the majority of adult and student participants that deeper conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion are missing from Pine Academy's curriculum and programming. This is likely due to the lack of goals, mission, and constructs around these topics and how the school does not make it a priority, especially the "highest echelon" at the school (Abigail). Even students in the focus groups lacked the vocabulary to describe what some of them experience as microaggressions on campus because of their race or religion. Two students of color even described Pine Academy as being color blind as if that was something positive. Ignorance and silence around diversity, equity, and inclusion within the curriculum and school programming presents a disservice to the students of color on campus, and to all students who, as one teacher noted, need to "get out into the community and out of their bubble" (Deborah).

Professional development. Participants were asked whether Pine Academy provides professional development around topics related to diversity, equity, or inclusion. Only two participants talked about the NAIS PoCC, a teacher who had recently attended and an administrator who discussed how this particular faculty member had gone to the conference. Two administrators and one teacher did talk about "Brown Bag Lunches" that took place shortly after the 2016 Presidential Election. The lunch was an informal occasion where faculty could join in to discuss the current political climate. Faculty and administrators in attendance also discussed how to engage in conversations around politics "with sensitivity to groups that may feel under threat" (Michael). Outside of this, Pine Academy does not offer or explicitly encourage or

promote any professional development related to diversity, equity, or inclusion. John noted how professional growth around these topics is “not encouraged by administration,” but rather it is “usually sought out by individual faculty members.” John felt that less than 5% of faculty and administrators are actually interested in these topics because “people feel extremely busy” and there is a “very large population that isn’t really concerned about [these topics].”

Although Pine Academy does not offer professional development focused around topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, professional development funds are available to all faculty members. Faculty members have the freedom to select their own professional development opportunities. Abigail, one of Pine Academy’s administrators, noted that she sends information about professional development opportunities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion to faculty members of whom she knows are “interested in these issues.” This is the extent to which professional development is focused on these topics.

Barriers

Participants were asked to identify and discuss barriers the school faces related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. One key administrator and three faculty members noted that a major barrier is that these topics are not among the school’s priorities, so the school lacks constructs, committees, special support systems and programming, and even conversations and discussions around diversity, equity, and inclusion. The fact that these terms or goals related to them are not mentioned in the school’s mission statement, statement of philosophy, or strategic plan, demonstrates how diversity, equity, and inclusion are not a priority. The extent to which diversity is monitored and measured is through the work done in the admissions office.

Admissions keeps track of the numbers of students of color and reports these numbers to the Board of Trustees.

John, a faculty member, and Abigail, an administrator, identified the school's broad definition of diversity as a barrier to progress around diversity, equity, and inclusion. John highlighted that Pine Academy's broad definition leads the school to pursue "easy diversity" that steers the conversation away from race. He stated, "With the administrators, the conversation's been led to the whole idea of diversity of thought. It becomes a much easier conversation for everybody if we say, diversity of thought." He expressed that the school's emphasis on diversity of thought and its shift away from open discussions about race, religion, and ethnicity is problematic. He alluded to "an old guard" on campus "that is pretty set in the way they teach, the way they think, and the way they deal with people." Until that changes, John does not see the school making progress in these areas.

Abigail made similar observations about the school's broad definition of diversity. She explained that the administration refers to diversity, as not only including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic, and gender differences, but also individual diversity. She alluded to the administration's notion of including many diverse voices and "having all kinds of free speech" where "some people will offend each other." Like John, Abigail also noted that Pine Academy has "a long time head" for whom formalizing conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion are "not a huge priority." She discussed how Pine Academy does not want to be "too politically correct" to the point that conservative speech is shut down.

We don't want to be so liberal that we alienate our conservative students' parents. We want to make this a place where all speech is okay not simply speech that is in support of

traditional liberal causes, which I think are affiliated with many discussions of diversity in independent schools.

Michael, a senior administrator, was one of Pine Academy's participants who held steadfast to a broad interpretation of diversity and appeared uncomfortable with talking about diversity, equity, and inclusion on a deeper level. Although he did not identify the school's broad definition of diversity as a barrier, his comments illustrated the problems with the way some of Pine Academy's administrators conceptualize diversity. In my interview with Michael, he highlighted on three occasions the school's "tent broad" definition of the term and the school's efforts to honor individual members in addition to honoring racial, gender, and ethnic diversity. He alluded to this by identifying Pine Academy as "more of an *unum* school than a *pluribus*" school. Michael ended our interview by saying that independent schools in Pine Academy's vicinity, including Pine Academy itself, are simply "not as interested" in these issues.

Without a mission or strategic plan outlining commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion, it will remain difficult to determine how Pine Academy works toward greater diversity, equity, and inclusion besides just looking at the numbers or percentages of students of color on campus. Although the school recruits for racial and ethnic diversity, the lack of official constructs, priorities, and goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion is evidenced by the lack of reference to these topics in the curriculum, school programming, and professional development.

Silence and Privilege as a Barrier to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This qualitative multi-site case study analyzed how three NAIS and CAIS member schools in Southern California achieve their goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and monitor and measure their progress toward these goals. Participants from the three sites—Oak

Academy, Cypress Academy, and Pine Academy—were asked how their school fulfills its commitments and goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion through recruitment practices, curriculum and programming, and professional development. Participants were also asked to identify barriers their site faces in relation to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Although Oak Academy and Cypress Academy had written and explicit commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their mission statement and strategic plans, Pine Academy was the only site that did not have any written goals or formal constructs related to these values. The school's broad definition of diversity and lack of priorities around issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion were evidenced by participant comments and the lack of focus on these issues in the school curriculum, school programming, and professional development.

Across the three school sites participants discussed how their schools monitor admissions and hiring data, tracking, for example, the percentage of students and faculty of color on campus. None of the sites, however, had a more specific system in place to measure or monitor progress related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Oak Academy and Cypress Academy were the only two sites to express the need to develop instruments and be more data-driven when it comes to monitoring and measuring progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion goals beyond looking at numbers. At Oak Academy, administration outlined the desire to use more surveys to gather information from students and parents about the school climate as it relates to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Although Cypress Academy monitors admissions and hiring data, administration expressed the desire to create surveys or other data collection systems to monitor and measure the impact of programs, professional development, student experiences, and diversity within the curriculum. Pine Academy monitors the percentage of students and faculty of

color on campus in addition to retention and graduation. Student feedback is also obtained through student evaluations of faculty and of the school experience. However, there was no evidence of a specific system or process focused on measuring progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. One administrator noted that monitoring of conversational aspects of diversity occur during the accreditation process, which takes place every 7 years. Other than this, the focus on measuring and monitoring diversity is mostly done quantitatively through the admissions office.

When it comes to recruitment, participants across the three sites noted that their schools work with outside organizations such as Alliance and ABC to recruit historically underrepresented students of color. Each school also engages in various outreach efforts such as visiting feeder schools and making connections with community members. Despite such recruitment efforts, African American and Latino students remain underrepresented across the three sites. Although Cypress Academy and Pine Academy have between 39% and 50% students of color, participants from each site explained how certain demographic groups made the percentages seem inflated, detracting from the fact that historically underrepresented groups such as African American and Latino students still have inadequate representation, especially in relation to the larger community. At Cypress Academy, counting Middle Eastern students among students of color, even though many identify as White, makes their total percentage of students of color misleading. At Pine Academy, the large percentage of students who identify as Asian also makes the total percentage of students of color very high. At both sites, African American and Latino students remain underrepresented compared to the demographics of the greater Los Angeles County area.

Each school site faced similar barriers to achieving goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At Oak Academy, the barrier related to the amplified privilege on campus that created a large socioeconomic and cultural divide affected inclusion and students' and parents' willingness to be fully engaged in conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion. At Cypress Academy, the silence around socioeconomic and privilege and the unwillingness to engage in difficult conversations around race and class was a barrier identified by students, faculty, and administrators. Pine Academy's major barrier was a lack of constructs, conversations, and goals, around diversity, equity, and inclusion, which can be connected to notions of privilege and White fragility. The school's administration has not made goals around these topics a priority at the school. The lack of priorities around these issues reinforces a top-down silence around race, class, and privilege. At Oak Academy and Cypress Academy the opposite occurs. The administration encourages conversations and programming around these topics and the silence comes from the bottom up, from resistant parents, students, and faculty members who continue to experience discomfort around these issues precisely because of their privilege. The following chapter will discuss these barriers further and their implications for organizational and cultural change within institutions such as Oak, Cypress, and Pine Academy.

CHAPTER FIVE: Discussion

In *Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and the Practitioner*, Bradberry (2013) outlined concerns surrounding diversity practice in independent schools. These include translating diversity objectives into true action; developing strategies for achieving diversity, inclusion, and equity goals; and creating frameworks for envisioning and accountability in this work. These are not new challenges for independent schools. Milliman (2004) analyzed studies conducted between 1975 and 1999 and found that “the only change appears to be increased access without accompanying adjustment to attitudes, curriculum, or behavior” (p. 7). She outlined the following challenges schools have faced over the last 30 years:

Measuring change in diversity in independent schools is indeed a challenge. The lack of providing role models within the faculty for minority students, updating curriculum to reflect the invisible histories of many minorities, or training teachers to work effectively with a diverse student population are a few measures that indicate that independent schools have not changed much in the last 30 years.... The gap between belief and practice seems to be at the heart of the dilemma that independent schools face in becoming more diverse communities. (pp. 9, 10)

More recent studies highlight struggles schools face to create an inclusive community in which students of color experience a sense of belonging (Eshoo, 2015; Ford, 2016; French, 2013; Newman, 2005). Ford (2016) summarized the following areas in need of improvement:

U.S. independent schools increasing the percentages of diversity is touted as a symbol of the strength of mission commitment to diversity. However, as the numbers rise, so does the need for vigorous leadership around equitable educational programs, policies, and practices that support the successful integration of this diversity into the school community—and too the proper evaluation of outcomes. (p. 19)

The findings from my study demonstrated that in 2017, independent schools continue to need programs and policies that support diversity, equity, and inclusion, and tools to evaluate the

outcomes of such initiatives. My study was a multi-site case study that explored how three independent schools in Southern California—Oak Academy, Cypress Academy, and Pine Academy—achieve their commitments related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It analyzed how schools achieve these goals through recruitment of historically underrepresented students, through curriculum and programming to support underrepresented students, and through faculty and staff professional development focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The study also explored how schools align their objectives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion with action, how they monitor and measure their progress, and what barriers they face in this work. This study built on others that have explored the management of racial integration in independent schools, and measurement and assessment of diversity, equity, and inclusion in these institutions (Eshoo, 2015; Ford, 2016; French, 2013; Milliman, 2004; Newman, 2005).

This chapter discusses the implications of the key findings on organizational change and culture. It also highlights the continued challenges independent schools face when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion. At each site, the lack of faculty of color and the low percentages of historically underrepresented groups, such as African American and Latino students, aligned with what is already known about independent school populations. We also know that schools do not generally have frameworks or systems of accountability to monitor and measure their progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion beyond tracking admissions data (Milliman, 2004; Newman, 2005; Park, 2017). This was also the case across the three sites. The unexpected findings across the three schools were the barriers of silence, discomfort, and a lack of engagement around diversity, equity, and inclusion. These reactions to diversity, equity, and inclusion relate to White privilege and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011; Hossain, 2015).

Challenges to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Independent Schools

For most independent schools, an unacknowledged silence about racial disparities in the school climate is the racial *elephant in the room* that makes it challenging for schools to make advancements in diversity work (Coleman & Stevenson, 2014). This silence can come from administrators, faculty, students, and parents and manifests itself through resistance and a lack of engagement around topics related to racial diversity, equity, and inclusion. It can also manifest through a lack of mission, strategic planning, and systems of measurement and accountability. This silence is also evidenced by the absence of these topics in the curriculum, school programming, and professional development.

In order for schools to acknowledge the elephant in the room and overcome the silence around racial diversity, equity, and inclusion, school leaders must realize the importance of having clear definitions, a mission, strategic plans, and measurement and accountability systems related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (Park, 2017). They must also help the school community acknowledge how privilege and White fragility play a role in maintaining silence around these issues (Boatright-Horowitz, Frazier, Harps-Logan, & Crockett, 2013; DiAngelo, 2011; Hossain, 2015). The remainder of this chapter analyzes the implications of the findings as they relate to these issues.

Murky Definitions and Lack of Goals Threaten the School Climate

“Easy diversity.” Silence and disengagement around diversity, equity, and inclusion can result from unclear definitions and a lack of goals. Pine Academy’s statement of philosophy and administration defined diversity so broadly that there was an absence of written goals and strategic planning related to racial diversity, equity, and inclusion. The only written goals

surrounding diversity that I found in the school's strategic plan were set in the 1990s. At that time, the goal was to increase the diversity of the student body. Although not written, the admissions office reported the current goal of "maintaining increased diversity," particularly of African American students. The school lacked goals and programming related to equity and inclusion beyond a focus on numerical diversity.

Of the 12 adult participants from Pine Academy, one administrator and three faculty members articulated the lack of priorities around these issues. Two participants attributed the lack of priorities to an "old guard" on campus that is not concerned about or interested in these topics. These participants clearly stated that diversity, equity, and inclusion were not a priority at the school. One teacher purported that Pine Academy's emphasis on valuing "diversity of thought" led the school to pursue "easy diversity." Pine Academy has taken this stance because it is easier to have conversations about diversity of thought, rather than discussions of racial diversity. The school's location in a wealthy, predominantly White and conservative city may also play a role in the lack of priorities around these issues.

This focus on diversity in its broadest sense is similar to a trend found by French (2013) in her research on diversity at an independent school on the East coast. French observed that race was being replaced with a "more varied and more nebulous attention on diversity or inclusion" (p. 183) that is meant to retreat from race. As schools focus on broader definitions of diversity, they divert attention from the stagnant numbers of certain racial and ethnic groups (French, 2013). Stevenson (2014) corroborates what French found. He explains that school's often "define diversity so broadly that it carries no specific plan of action" (p. 42). This is the case with Pine Academy. Although the school has 52% students of color and feels like it is

“doing a good job” (Abigail), the emphasis on “diversity of thought” directs attention away from racial diversity and the experiences and unique needs of underrepresented students. These broad definitions cause topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion to be missing from programming, curriculum, and professional development. Because of Pine Academy’s lack of constructs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the school has struggled to attract more historically underrepresented students of color and more faculty of color. The absence of a clear mission and goals related to these has been a deterrent for families seeking admission and faculty of color seeking employment.

Inclusion and the narrow focus on numerical diversity. Schools are often “eager to report” on numerical diversity on campus, yet they do not always have established systems or programs to support students of color so that they can thrive (Stevenson, 2014, p. 45). Stevenson (2014) explained that growth in numbers “may become a failure if it doesn’t result in school climate safety and optimal academic functioning for the few” (p. 46). He added:

Without a strategy or plan to keep students of color from experiencing disaffection, biased punishment, and little to no emotional protection, what purpose does it serve to increase the number of diverse students? (p. 46).

Oak, Cypress, and Pine Academy all have high percentages of students of color in the aggregate, yet their numbers of historically underrepresented groups, African American and Latino students, remain low. As Park (2017) argues in her workshop on critically rethinking diversity, “adding more canaries [students of color] doesn’t naturally transform the coal mine [a predominantly White institution]”; strategies and systems to ensure equity and inclusion among students of color must be in place before institutions eagerly increase numerical diversity (Stevenson, 2014). This includes ensuring that the experiences of people of color form part of the

curriculum and programming, and that all students learn about diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. It also means that teachers receive professional development around these topics. One way to accomplish this is through what Gorski and Swalwell (2015) call “equity literacy” (p. 36). The authors advocate for the use of “equity literacy, which moves beyond a focus on culture and relies on teachers’ understandings of equity, inequity, justice, and injustice” (p. 36). This approach to diversity and multicultural education puts equity, not culture, “at the center of the diversity conversation” (p. 36). It focuses on a teacher’s ability to “cultivate in students a robust understanding about how people are treated by one another and by institutions, in addition to a general appreciation of diversity” (p. 36).

To different extents, Oak, Cypress, and Pine Academy had developing systems to help in these areas. At Oak Academy, this was evidenced by committee work and planning to bring guest speakers to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. At Cypress Academy it was evidenced through the work carried out by the Director of Multiculturalism and Inclusion and courses like IOI, which addressed topics like red-lining and gentrification. Despite these curricular changes, at both schools students, teachers, and administrators reported that silence and resistance to these topics continued to thwart further progress with this work. At Pine Academy, the school engaged with summer interactions with a school and hospital in Latin America and has begun to plan a global initiatives program across all grades.

Unlike Pine Academy, Oak and Cypress Academy did have written commitments and goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Oak Academy had the target of increasing numerical diversity to 40%. Although the school reached its goal, one administrator noted that the school still struggles with inclusion because it has had a liberal “do-gooder, do the right thing

approach to diversity, versus a needs based assessment of experience with inclusion that informs what [the school does] with diversity” (Paul). Part of this needs-based assessment includes analyzing the experiences of students of color on campus and what they need to thrive. Teachers and administrators at Oak Academy acknowledged the existence of an achievement gap for some students of color, particularly for African American males. Although the school recognizes that more needs to be done to support them, plans to create a mentoring program have not come to fruition. To design a successful program that is inclusive and supportive of students of color and helps close the achievement gap, it is important for schools like Oak Academy to move beyond focusing on numerical diversity and understand the differences in racial dynamics and lived experience between White, Black, and Brown children that contributes to the achievement gap (Stevenson, 2014).

Resistance, racial amnesia, and colorblindness. Stevenson (2014) highlights that “vague plans tend to fuel resistance to diversity initiatives within the school” and “blur distinctions between diversity agendas (age versus gender versus sexual orientation versus race)” (p. 42). Although Pine Academy currently has no written diversity initiatives, I noticed resistance to diversity in my conversations with participants. Such resistance offered evidence of racial blindness, avoidance, and denial. For example, participant responses to my interview questions quickly shifted to diversity of thought, sexual orientation, and gender, rather than racial and ethnic diversity. On several occasions I had to steer the conversation back to race and ethnicity. It was as if talking about racial and ethnic diversity made these participants uncomfortable. This apparent discomfort also helps explain why the school is resistant to having affinity groups on

campus. As one faculty member explained, Pine Academy does not like affinity groups because it makes “insecure White students uncomfortable...and faculty members suspicious.”

In addition to the lack of affinity groups, Pine Academy also stopped sending students to annual NAIS sponsored conferences such as the SDLC, which focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students attended several years ago and returned from the conference and worked in advisory groups. According to Abigail, “There was a sense that they didn’t work as well as they could have” and since then students have not attended. Further explanation was not given as to why students are no longer sent to the conference, which is attended by hundreds of independent school students, faculty, and administrators. Abigail did admit that Pine Academy “may be the only school which doesn’t send students,” which “doesn’t feel very good when talking to colleagues.” She noted that “it’s strange that this hasn’t been a priority.”

The lack of priorities around this issue is actually a symptom of “colorblindness” and “racial amnesia” (Stevenson, 2014, pp. 41, 43). Colorblindness leads educators “to forget or fail to include goals for diversity” (p. 42) in curriculum development and professional training. It also “excuses” them from “having to mention, plan, or integrate racial matters in their curricula, teaching strategies and styles, climate and morale assessments, or relationships with students” (p. 42). The absence of affinity groups for students of color, systems to support these students, and deeper conversations about race, equity, and social justice in the curriculum and professional development denote a sort of “racial amnesia” (p. 43) at Pine Academy as the school has somehow forgotten that racial matters matter and influence learning and achievement, especially at a school where Black and Latino students are a minority.

“Reticent leadership.” Although Pine Academy recruits for racial diversity and acknowledges that African American and Latino students remain underrepresented, it is almost as if there is no knowledge or understanding that these students often need additional systems of support to thrive and experience sense of belonging (Newman, 2005). When asked if there were support systems for underrepresented students of color, one administrator, Nathaniel, noted that “they get treated much like all the students who come in,” which “has seemed to be adequate, because [the school’s] retention rate is the highest in the area.” Another administrator, Michael, acknowledged the low percentage of faculty of color, but later denied the research and correlation between students of color having faculty of color as mentors to support and increase students’ sense of belonging. Such silence toward diversity represents “reticent leadership” (Stevenson, 2014, p. 179). Stevenson (2014) explains:

The most disrespectful act of Reticent leadership is to assume that diversity is an opinion-laden tension, dynamic, or discourse instead of a knowledge-based intellectual, educational, or curricular tension, dynamic or discourse....The knowledge is available, but leaders who have not read about or are unaware of this knowledge are simply incompetent...Educational leaders who do not know this research are most likely blind as to how to bring diversity agendas to their students and will find it difficult to address the emotional reactions that students, parents, and teachers will have about diversity. (p. 179)

Stevenson’s explanation of reticent leadership adequately describes the administration at Pine Academy who define diversity broadly and draw attention away from race, equity, and inclusion by avoiding these topics in larger programming, the curriculum, and school-wide professional development.

“Niceness” and “racial incompetence.” Participants from Pine Academy noted how the school does a good job of enrolling “nice kids” with “character” (Nathaniel), has a “welcoming and warm community” (John), and people who “just really want to be nice” (Abigail). Stevenson

(2014) explained that such a culture of “niceness” is a way to avoid stressful racialized interactions and “prevent public humiliation of [one’s] racial incompetence” (p. 86). Avoidance of topics like racial diversity, equity, and inclusion is a mechanism Pine Academy appears to have taken to reduce racial stress and maintain civility and “niceness” within the student body and community. The absence of a strategic plan or goals to create a “diversity-safe climate for learning” (Stevenson, 2014, p. 46) or support systems to ensure that these students thrive will create issues with equity and inclusion in the long run (Park, 2017).

Pine Academy’s lack of top-down priorities around diversity, equity, and inclusion trickled down to others parts of the school, affecting the experiences of students of color. Students expressed the desire for teachers to include more conversations in the curriculum about current events related to race, equity, and social justice instead of talking about race and discrimination as a “historical type of thing” (Phoebe).

Students in the focus group were hesitant to talk openly about racial and ethnic diversity, equity, and inclusion and lacked the understanding of terms such as *colorblindness* and *equity*. For example, when one student, Dinah, identified the school as being “colorblind” and noted that “race did not matter” at Pine Academy. She spoke about this as if it was a positive characteristic of the school. This comment speaks to the school’s discomfort with and avoidance of discussing race to the point that the students of color interpret this as the school being “colorblind,” when it really denotes racial incompetence (Stevenson, 2014). The students seemed to lack an understanding that the school’s avoidance of race and colorblind stance only works to reinforce the status quo and institutionalized racism. Even when discussing personal experiences of racially charged comments made by peers on campus, students identified these interactions as

“jokes” and lacked the vocabulary to describe these racial encounters adequately. Phoebe commented:

Right after the [2017 presidential] inauguration, people specifically would come up to me and make deportation jokes because I’m Mexican. And like, “Oh, let’s just send you across the border! Let’s build that wall!” And I’m like, “Okay.” You know? They thought it was funny, but in reality it was a little insensitive.

Phoebe did not have the language to identify these “jokes” as what they are: racial microaggressions, which Sue (2015) identified as the “everyday slights, insults, indignities, and invalidations delivered toward people of color because of their visible racial/ethnic minority characteristics” (p. 7). Priscilla, another student focus group participant, described her experiences with highly racialized interactions as jokes. Priscilla shared:

There was this really interesting joke that someone came up to me and made. It was like a deportation joke or whatever, because I’m Muslim, so it was just like ... They just came up to me and were like, “Have fun in Israel!” And I was like, “Okay.” I don’t know. It was a joke and I took it as a joke, but it was just interesting that that was something that occurred to someone. That was really interesting in terms of how they approached the situation.

Like Phoebe, Priscilla was a victim of a racial microaggression, but was unable to identify it as such. Racial microaggressions can induce racism-related stress, which is described as “race-related transactions between individuals or groups” that “emerge from the dynamics of racism” and “threaten well-being” (Harrell, 2000, p. 44). Phoebe and Priscilla’s labeling of their interactions as “jokes” and their simple retort to the perpetrators highlight the racial incompetence among students of color at Pine Academy. Had these students been exposed to programming, curriculum, and faculty mentors with experience related to these issues, they would have been better prepared to respond to such peer encounters. Pine Academy must

recognize its obligation to include racial literacy education into the curriculum to help relieve the racial stress caused by such interactions.

In a school where diversity, equity, and inclusion are not a priority and where discussions about these topics appear to be avoided intentionally, students of color may not have the confidence to bring up these experiences and interactions with adults on campus. A persistent lack of acknowledgement of race at Pine Academy will have grave implications for the school climate and students' sense of inclusion. Rather than focus solely on percentages as evidence of the school's commitment to diversity, Pine Academy must urgently reevaluate its mission, strategic plan, programming, curriculum, and professional development to ensure true equity and inclusion for its underrepresented students of color.

Recognizing Privilege and White Fragility

Across the three school sites, participants described an aura of silence, resistance, and indifference, from faculty, students, and parents when it came to topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. For some faculty members, this manifested itself in reticence and reluctance to engage in professional development related to these topics. At Oak and Cypress Academy there was pushback from some teachers about having to include these issues in the curriculum. Some faculty questioned the value of including these topics in their courses, arguing that such "touchy-feely stuff" is irrelevant to preparing students for college (Miriam).

Resistance from parents manifested itself in complaints to administration and teachers when affinity groups formed or when certain classes or school-wide assemblies engaged in conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion. As Maria, a teacher from Oak Academy, described, some parents remain "a little tentative with going forward with hard conversations."

Because of their wealth and privilege, other parents do not completely “buy into” the school’s mission of being inclusive and they are insensitive to socioeconomic and cultural differences.

At Cypress Academy, parent resistance manifested in the form of complaints about the amount of programming related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. David’s comment illustrates the sentiments of some parents:

I do feel like there’s a parent education component that should be more nurtured. I hear a lot of parents talk about, “Oh great, here’s more diversity,” or, “Here’s more diversity curriculum or initiatives.” I would like them to understand why preparing these kids in all of these capacities is really important.

Parent resistance and silence resulted from an unwillingness to recognize their privilege and the importance of engaging students in conversations related to these topics. One faculty member from Cypress Academy, Esther, noted that White, wealthy, conservative families “are not on board” at her school and do not want to engage in difficult conversations that involve questioning privilege. When students are encouraged to have these conversations during classes, advisory, or assemblies, these parents often push back and write emails or make phone calls to complain.

Silence, indifference, and resistance from students manifested itself in negative comments and lack of engagement during assemblies or other programming. As one student from Cypress Academy, Malachi, noted, students grow up in a “bubble” with very little exposure to diversity, “so when it comes to talking about something uncomfortable, they do not want to deal with it.” Malachi referred to the predominantly White and wealthy world in which students go to school and live and how it insulates them from the racial and socioeconomic struggles and realities of people within their own city and school. Additionally, the lack of exposure to racial

difference within the faculty and student body causes students to develop biases and stereotypes. Such stereotypes manifest themselves in the form of microaggressions toward students of color. For example, students talked about widespread assumptions that kids of color are on campus to increase diversity or play sports. Mateo, another student who works with diversity, talked about “stigma associated with diversity” and how students in general do not like the diversity programming on campus because they are not willing to have hard conversations.

Part of the “low tolerance for discomfort” and resistance to be “challenged” on these issues stems from unrecognized White privilege and White fragility (Timothy). Timothy’s comments illustrate the challenge behind recognizing such privilege:

It’s difficult to really get at this notion that we’re still not living together in a fair and equal way. It’s really hard to have that conversation in a way that doesn’t make White people defensive and want to shut down. Because it means you’re going to have to accept some complicity in it, even if it’s ancestral, and that’s a hard thing for a White person to do. As a culture we struggle with that conversation. What you confront in that is fear, discomfort, like, “I can’t handle it.” It’s always surprising to me when we get a call after a speaker from a parent saying, “You’ve made my child feel uncomfortable.” That’s one of the outcomes of education. Discomfort means you’re not fully settled with something. If that means you have to think about it, explore your own complicities, or your own participation in anything, that’s okay. You’re not going to die from that kind of intellectual discomfort. It’s an important part of education.

As Timothy noted, fear and discomfort work to silence conversations around privilege. Such feelings are linked to what DiAngelo (2011) describes as *White fragility*, which she defined as:

A state in which even a minimum of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. (p. 54)

Across the three sites, the “range of defensive moves” that characterize White fragility manifested through withdrawal, silence, and resistance around topics related to racial diversity,

equity, and inclusion. For institutions such as independent schools to make greater progress with engaging all stakeholders in conversations related to these topics, DiAngelo highlights the need to “build stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race” (p. 66). She further notes that “a continual retreat from the discomfort of authentic racial engagement results in a perpetual cycle that works to hold racism in place” (p. 66). Hence, if historically and predominantly White independent schools wish to create an inclusive school climate for students of color and prepare White students for an increasingly diverse society, the silence and discomfort around race, equity, and inclusion must be interrupted.

Altering the Organizational Culture of Independent Schools

Culture is both created and managed by the leaders within an organization (Schein, 2010). Schein explained that the founders of organizations begin shaping organizational culture by “imposing their own assumptions” (p. 235). Then, through different primary and secondary mechanisms, leaders have the power to embed and reinforce their beliefs, values, and assumptions, which in turn leads to culture formation and evolution. Among the six primary mechanisms leaders can use to teach members of an organization how to think, feel, and behave, are what leaders pay attention to and reward, the ways in which they allocate resources, role modeling, and the criteria they use for recruitment. It may be these very mechanisms utilized by independent school leaders that create the distinction between schools that have robust programs focused on diversity, equity and inclusion, and those who still lag behind.

When school leaders pay attention to the importance of diversity, model an appreciation and a concern for equity and inclusion, allocate resources to supporting students of color and promoting multicultural education, cultural competency, and racial literacy, and actively recruit

faculty and students of color, they can begin to alter the organizational culture of their school and influence the *basic underlying assumptions* of the school community, assumptions often shaped by unconscious biases, privilege, colorblindness, racial amnesia, and White fragility.

Schein (2010) explained that basic underlying assumptions consist of the unconscious, “taken-for-granted beliefs and values” of an institution that is determined by behavior, perception, thought, and feeling (p. 24). Basic underlying assumptions prove difficult to change because they are “nonconfrontable and nondebatable” (p. 28). It is the basic underlying assumptions that give members of an organization a sense of identity, a sense of “who they are, how to behave..., and how to feel good about themselves” (Schein, 2010, p. 29). It is no wonder that Schein (2010) explained that at this level, changing culture is especially challenging, time-consuming, and anxiety-provoking.

Within independent schools, basic underlying assumptions can include the belief in the importance of a rigorous, college preparatory education. It can also be the underlying assumption of *who* gets to attend the school, *who* can afford to attend, *who* fits in with the culture of the school, and what the traditional student and graduate of the school looks like. The history and demographic makeup of elite independent schools indicates that the *who* of this basic underlying assumption have for a long time been students from White, wealthy families. These assumptions are deeply imbedded in the subconscious of the institution, its students, its parents, and the neighboring community. They are assumptions that are understood, but not publicly voiced by members of the organization.

When diversity work is carried out in independent schools it is oftentimes spear-headed by faculty of color and frequently surreptitiously resisted by board members, administrators, and

predominately White and wealthy parents. This is not to say that these community members are overtly racist or intentionally trying to exclude certain students from their campuses. We go back to Schein's idea of basic underlying assumptions — biases, that prove difficult to change.

Furthermore, for most independent schools, an unacknowledged silence about racial disparities in the school climate is the racial *elephant in the room* that makes it challenging for schools to make advancements in diversity work and change their organization on a deeper level (Coleman & Stevenson, 2014).

Secondary mechanisms at a leader's disposal that can also contribute to culture formation and evolution include rites and rituals of the organization, stories about important events and people, and formal statements of organizational philosophy and creeds (Schein, 2010).

Independent school leaders and board members have the power to shape their school's philosophy, mission statements, and beliefs to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion. Many have done this. Yet as discussed earlier, there is often a disconnect between an institution's espoused mission and their lived mission. School leaders can begin to alter this by including rites and rituals that reflect the diversity of greater society, and move away from rites and rituals that perpetuate the ideals of elite, predominately White traditions. They can begin to share and publicize important events and people through multicultural education and racial literacy that highlight the often untold stories and perspectives of historically marginalized groups, rather than center on the Eurocentric curriculum that often forms part of the independent school educational experience.

Even if leaders use the primary and secondary mechanisms at their disposal to effect organizational and cultural change, the history of this nation and that of independent schools, the

deeply rooted, systemic racism upon which this country was founded, and the omnipresence of White privilege will always produce resistance toward diversity and inclusion initiatives across independent schools. For diversity and inclusion initiatives to transform independent schools and effect cultural change, much unlearning must occur that will be psychologically painful, particularly for the groups that have for so long benefited from a privileged status (Schein, 2010). Promoting diversity and inclusion within independent schools is hard work, but it is not impossible work.

Limitations

The greatest limitations of this multi-site case study were time and resources. Because data collection was limited to 4 months across all three sites, I was unable to hear the perspectives of all administrators, faculty members, and students. The voices of parents of color were also missing from this study. Parent voices could have provided an additional perspective that is often missing from studies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Including their experiences could have uncovered additional barriers that did not appear in the findings.

A longer window for data collection and more time at each site could have allowed me to capture a more detailed picture of how each school works toward achieving its commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion and the barriers that exist in this work. It would have been ideal to include a deeper analysis of the school climate at each site, but to do so would have required more time at each site to conduct observations and interview faculty, administrators, parents, and students.

Recommendations for Future Research

Since the 1970s independent school educators and leaders have made recommendations about best practices to help schools become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive institutions. Kalev, Dobin, and Kelly (2006) admitted that while “there has been a great deal of research on the sources of inequality, there has been little on the efficacy of different programs for countering it. At best, “best practices” are best guesses” (p. 590). Independent school educators, conferences, and books promote best practices, yet we lack the empirical research to confirm that these are more than simply best guesses or assumptions. We know from the data that in addition to increasing the numbers of historically underrepresented students on campus, schools need to continue to increase socioeconomic diversity. We know that schools need to increase the number of faculty and administrators of color. We also know that schools can improve the experiences of students of color through including their stories in the curriculum and establishing support systems for marginalized groups. What we lack are more empirical studies conducted in independent schools that reveal the most effective practices for student and faculty recruitment, curriculum development, professional development, and program development to support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The challenge of overcoming barriers such as silence, resistance, and indifference to this work remain. As long as unacknowledged White privilege and White supremacy exist, these barriers will continue to challenge the leaders, teachers, and families for whom this work is important. Worst of all, the independent school experience will continue to be a challenge for students of color if more attention is not given to these issues. Future research needs to uncover

how schools can address privilege and work to disrupt silence, resistance, and lack of engagement around diversity, equity, and inclusion (Johnson, 2016).

The barriers and challenges uncovered across the sites in this study reveal that more empirical data is needed to find out how independent schools can successfully create a school culture among administrators, faculty, students, and parents that is meaningfully committed to and engaged in diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. We know from the case studies and from other research that top-down approaches are most effective when it comes to being a catalyst for cultural change. We also know that changing an institution's culture is hard work (Schein, 2010), and this is not the exception for historically White independent schools. As Schein (2010) explained, "organizational cultures...vary in strength and stability as a function of the length and emotional intensity of their actual history from the moment they were founded" (p. 3). It comes as no surprise that changing over a century's worth of history and culture is not an easy task, particularly when underlying assumptions rooted in systemic racism and exclusion form part an institution's identity. This helps explain why diversity initiatives that were started in the second half of the twentieth century have created slow change and why the student demographics of some independent schools look much like they did over sixty years ago. Cultural change is indeed a slow process. Future case studies of schools that have successfully transformed their culture need to be carried out to help other independent schools in their journey toward becoming more diverse, inclusive, and equitable.

From this multi-site case study we found that even when schools such as Oak and Cypress Academy are mission driven and have outlined priorities around diversity, equity, and inclusion, getting everyone to value a school's mission and goals around these topics can present

a challenge. Research has not yet revealed the most effective professional development to get faculty to become racially literate educators and get all on board with supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. In their descriptions for job offers institutions often outline how they seek teachers who are committed to or have experience with diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. However, how can institutions ensure that they are hiring educators that are truly committed to and experienced in this work? Without continual new and current faculty training on these issues, oftentimes these topics get swept under the rug, and as in the case with Cypress Academy, only the few who are really passionate about these issues end up being the those involved in this work, including it in their curriculum and teaching.

Empirical data are needed to help determine what is the best way to engage in curriculum development that seamlessly embeds topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion across all grades in meaningful and age-appropriate ways without it being a simple add-on. What curricular experiences that include lessons about diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion are most effective? How can teachers create meaningful lessons that help students build racial literacy? Empirical studies are needed to answer these questions.

Further research is also needed to help us better understand the experiences of students of color at institutions who successfully integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion in the life of their school through professional development, curriculum, parent education, and school-wide programming. Such research can help us better determine the most effective practices for promoting diverse and inclusive schools and it can help answer questions such as: Which are the most effective ways of engaging students and faculty in experiences with diversity, equity, and inclusion? Are assemblies, outside speakers, workshops, conferences, or classroom activities

most effective? What are the most effective ways for promoting inclusion beyond increasing the number of students of color on campus? Are peer mentors, faculty mentors, affinity groups, or courses on identity most effective at promoting inclusion among students of color? How can independent schools improve the experiences of students of color and help them thrive? Do schools have assumptions about certain practices that work, but lack the necessary evidence to confirm their effectiveness? Future studies that answer such questions can guide independent schools in creating programming and experiences that are supported by empirical data.

Empirical studies are also needed to determine the best ways to set diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and the most effective ways to monitor and measure progress toward these goals. Oftentimes, as with Oak and Cypress Academy, school's have a mission or strategic plan related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, but there is no measurement tool to help monitor progress beyond tracking student numbers. Schools must become more data-driven in these areas and develop instruments to measure the "impact of policies, systems, and programs," "advancement toward equity and inclusion goals," and "institutional commitment to educational equity in practice, and growth of impact" (Park, 2017, n.p.).

As long as future research in independent schools does not uncover the answers to some of the information gaps that remain, schools will only, like Milliman (2004), have access to lists of best practices that repeat the same recommendations from the last 50 years, but see little actual change in the climate and culture of their schools. Independent schools need to be more data-driven when it comes to diversity, equity, and inclusion and investigators need to give more attention to these institutions as places ripe for research.

Conclusion

If independent schools want to be leaders in education and prepare all students for an increasingly diverse and interconnected society, they must critically analyze their commitments and actions related to diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion. Independent schools strive to provide a high quality education that prepares students for meaningful future leadership in this world. Graduates of these schools pursue higher education at the nation's top institutions and become the future lawyers, judges, scientists, doctors, policy makers, and politicians of this country. What kind of leaders do independent schools hope to produce? One would hope that these institutions strive to shape and mold open-minded, ethical, compassionate leaders with a strong moral compass who show concern for others and the common good. With the continued rise of the alt-right and the White supremacist, neo-Nazi, and racist rhetoric that has been revived in America, now more than ever educational institutions must guard against a closing of the mind. As Stevenson wrote, "The need for racial literacy from the cradle to the grave is greater now than at any time in America's history" (p. 182). Our students can read, write, and do arithmetic, but are they ethically engaged? Are we giving them authentic and meaningful experiences with diversity?

If independent schools want to be leaders in education, they must demonstrate an unfailing commitment to diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion in their mission statement and strategic plans. Schools cannot pay mere lip service to these ideals. Rather, they must be weaved into the breath and life and culture of the school. They must go beyond the written statements of the school and beyond the banners and posters that showcase the racial and ethnic diversity on campus. True progress in this work goes beyond simply recruiting more students of

color and slapping their pictures on the school's website as if to say, "Look! We have students of color and are committed to diversity." Schools that are truly committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion know that such a facade does not help all students thrive. Deeper, top-down changes are involved; changes that challenge the culture and traditions of a school. It must involve changes in curriculum, professional development, and programming to ensure that all voices and perspectives are represented. It involves promoting racial literacy among parents, students, faculty, administration, and the school board. It also includes having tools to regularly check the school's vital signs (Park, 2017), such as the school climate and the experiences of students and parents of color. It involves asking questions about who has access to our institutions and who is thriving. Much of this work will be met with silence, resistance, and indifference from some constituents. This is where it becomes especially important for school leaders to be convinced about the benefits of diversity (Stevenson, 2014). They must be well-versed in the research about race and privilege in order to challenge resistance and not allow it to hinder further progress in this work.

Schools that are truly committed to and value diversity, equity, and inclusion cannot be satisfied with simply recruiting and admitting high numbers of students of color. Increasing numerical diversity is insufficient if one is not critically analyzing whether these students are thriving, if one is not monitoring the pulse of the racial climate and relationships, and if one is not working to find meaningful and effective ways of reducing the achievement and resource gap and "resolv[ing] racial disparities" (Stevenson, 2014, p. 46). Now is the time for independent schools to take an honest look at themselves and ask whether they are truly doing enough to become leaders in diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion. Though the past cannot be

erased, it is imperative that the narrative for the present and future of independent schools include an unwavering commitment to and concrete actions toward greater diversity, equity, social justice, and inclusion. Only then can independent schools become truly great institutions.

Appendix A

Interview Protocol: Administrators & Faculty

GOAL

The goal of this study is to understand how schools align their mission statements and commitments related to diversity and inclusion with the lived mission of the school. I also hope to understand how schools monitor, measure, and fulfill their commitment and progress toward diversity and inclusion from the perspective of administrators, faculty members, and students.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. The interview will last approximately 60-minutes and will be audio-recorded for the purposes of transcription and data analysis. Audio recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. I will delete any identifying information from all transcriptions of audio recordings. I will be asking you questions related to diversity and inclusion at your school site. You may decline to answer questions or parts of questions without discontinuing your participation in the research. Your answers will remain confidential, so your honesty is greatly appreciated. I am recording these interviews so I can transcribe them for purposes of analysis. Do you have any questions before we start?

Now, getting into some more specifics regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion at your school... (RQ1, 1a, 1b)

3. What are your school's goals regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - a. How are these goals achieved?
 - b. How are these goals articulated to families, students, faculty, and staff?
 - c. What activities/programming would you say show how the school works toward diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - d. Is there any professional development provided to faculty and staff surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion? What kind of PD have you found to be most helpful?
 - e. What programs or support systems are available to students of color?
 - f. What feedback do students of color give about the support systems available to them?
 - g. What feedback do parents of color give about their child's experience at this school?
 - h. How does the school know students and parents have given this feedback?
 - i. How does the school monitor what students and parents report and what follow up exists to address any concerns?
 - j. How supportive are families of multicultural and diversity initiatives?
 - k. How supportive is faculty?
 - l. What is the current percentage of students of color on campus and do you feel that is an adequate percentage for your community?
 - m. What goals/commitments does the school have concerning the percentage of students of color on campus?

- n. Which groups would you say are underrepresented? Which are overrepresented?
- *o. What barriers do you feel impede further recruitment of these groups? (RQ1c)
- p. What is the percentage of faculty of color and do you feel it is an adequate percentage for your community?
- q. What is the school doing to recruit and retain more faculty of color? (RQ1a)
- r. What barriers do you feel impede further recruitment of faculty of color?

(RQ1c)

4. What would you say about how diversity, equity, and inclusion is addressed in the formal **curriculum**? (RQ1)?

a. How much emphasis does the school curriculum give to multicultural education or cultural competency? What about the curriculum across divisions, grades, and classrooms? (RQ1)

5. To what extent would you say that the **school climate** is reflective of a school community committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

a. How about the school curriculum?

b. How about the percentage of students and faculty of color?

c. To what extent would you say student groupings throughout the school day reflect a community that values diversity, equity, and inclusion?

d. To what extent do you feel that administration, faculty, students, and parents value and support diversity?

e. What evidence is there of their support or lack of support?

f. What impact, if any, do you personally feel diversity has on student learning?

*I would like to know a little more about **assessment** and **accountability** (RQ1b)*

6. How does your school monitor and measure its progress toward diversity, equity and inclusion? (RQ1b)

a. Who is in charge of monitoring and measuring progress toward these goals?

b. Does your school have a strategic plan regarding these goals?

c. How was the plan developed?

d. How often is that plan revisited and revised?

e. How is it implemented?

f. How often does administration, the **board**, and faculty have conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion goals?

g. What role does the board play in assessment and accountability of diversity, equity, and inclusion goals?

h. What progress do you feel the school has made toward their diversity, equity, and inclusion goals?

i. Do you think the school is diverse and inclusive enough?

*Now I want to talk a little bit about certain **groups** who have historically been **underrepresented** in independent schools (RQ1a)*

7. What does your school do to recruit underrepresented minorities such as African American and Hispanic/Latino students? Does your school actively recruit for racial and ethnic diversity?

(RQ1a)

- a. What activities does your school do to increase the numbers of students of color?
- b. Once students are enrolled, how does the school support students of color? What programs are in place to support them?
- c. What do students of color or their parents say about diversity, inclusion, and equity on campus?
- d. What concerns, if any, have students of color voiced or expressed?
- e. What does the school do to address feelings of isolation or a lack of belonging among students of color?

*I would like to talk now about **successes** and **barriers** to diversity, equity, and inclusion. (RQ1c)*

8. In addition to what you have already shared, what **successes** would you say the school has faced related to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals? (RQ1c)

- a. To what do you attribute this success?
- b. Can you share specific examples of success?
- c. What **barriers** have arisen with regard to diversity and inclusion goals? (RQ1c)
- d. How has the school addressed these barriers?
- e. What role does financial aid play in helping the school reach greater diversity equity, and inclusion?
- f. What role does the **board** play in helping achieve greater diversity, equity, and inclusion?

*To wrap up, I would like to know a little bit about your **personal feelings** regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion at your school.*

9. How do you feel personally about where your school is with regards to diversity, equity, and inclusion? How well do you feel the school lives up to NAIS and CAIS expectations regarding equity and justice?

- a. Looking ahead to the next 5 to 10 years, where do you see the school as it relates to diversity, equity, inclusion? Do you feel that the school will be more or less diverse and inclusive?

Appendix B

Protocol for Student Focus Groups

1. What grade are you in?
2. How long have you attended this school?
3. Are you involved in any clubs on campus? If so, which ones?
4. How do you define diversity? inclusion? equity?
5. What do you understand are your school's mission and goals regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - What specific actions do you know your school is taking to achieve these goals?
 - What activities do you see your school carry out to promote cultural awareness and appreciation?
 - How is diversity, equity, or inclusion reflected in the curriculum?
 - What programs or support systems are there for students of color?
 - What do you know about the percentage of students of color on campus?
6. What can you tell me about the progress your school has made toward diversity and inclusion?
 - What do you think your school has achieved regarding diversity and inclusion?
 - Do you feel that enough action is being taken to achieve the school's diversity and inclusion goals? Why or why not?
 - What activities do you think work?
 - What specific things would you like your school to do regarding diversity and inclusion?
 - What do you think are some of the barriers to achieving diversity and inclusion goals at your school?
 - How do students of color generally feel on this campus? Why do you think so?
7. What do you feel are your school's strengths
 - regarding diversity?
 - regarding inclusion?
 - regarding equity?
8. What do you feel are your school's weaknesses
 - regarding diversity?
 - regarding inclusion?
 - regarding equity?

8. How do you feel about the levels of diversity and inclusion at your school?
9. Can you tell me about a time when
 - you felt that your school was honoring diversity and inclusion?
 - you felt that your school was not honoring diversity or inclusion?
10. What more would you like to see from your school regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Guided Observation Protocol

[illegible]

Appendix D

Research Information Form for Administrators and Faculty Members

University of California, Los Angeles

RESEARCH INFORMATION FORM

Diversity and Inclusion in Independent Schools

Jessica Pérez del Toro (M.A.T.) and Tyrone Howard, Ph.D. from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) are conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a faculty/staff member at an independent school in Southern California who is a member of CAIS and NAIS. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

Independent schools who are members of CAIS and NAIS acknowledge that diversity is a “moral, sociological, academic, pedagogical and economic imperative” (“Why do the Work” in *Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and The Practitioner*, Davis, 2013). For this reason, independent schools across California and the nation have outlined commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their mission statements and strategic plans. This qualitative multi-site case study investigates how CAIS and NAIS member schools align their mission statements related to diversity, equity, and inclusion with their practice and the lived experience of the school. It does so by analyzing how schools fulfill, monitor, and measure their commitment and progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion from the perspective of administrators, faculty members, and students. The goal of the study is to offer a cross-case analysis of the successes and barriers independent schools encounter in realizing their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and to analyze how each research participant conceptualizes their school’s progress toward these goals.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a one-hour in person, video conference, or phone interview if you are a school administrator or faculty member
- Participate in a one-hour focus group with 9th-12th grade students if you are a student
- Allow the interview to be audio-recorded for purposes of data collection and transcription
- Answer questions regarding your school’s diversity and inclusion goals, demographics, curriculum, financial aid, and school climate

- The preliminary analysis and emerging findings will be shared with participants as part of a member check or respondent validation. You may be contacted to engage in such a member check to ensure that the researcher's interpretation of your words "rings true" and to ensure internal validity and credibility

How long will I be in the research study?

Data collection for this research study will take approximately two months.

Though the study will involve a one-hour interview or focus group from each participant, you may be contacted for a member check of the researcher's interpretations of your words.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the research.

The information gained from the study can provide insight and knowledge to other schools whose mission includes a commitment to increasing and supporting diversity and inclusion. The findings from the study can increase awareness about diversity work in independent schools and provide a guide to schools who seek to reevaluate practices related to recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse student body.

Will I be paid for participating?

- Faculty members will receive a gift card in the amount of \$30 for participating in the study.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained by means of using pseudonyms for all school sites and codes for participants. The researcher will eliminate identifying information from transcriptions. Data will be stored on a password protected device that will be accessible only to the principal investigator. All audio recordings of interviews will be destroyed after transcription.

Students who participate in focus groups will be asked not to share what is said during the focus group outside the focus group. However, given the group nature of focus groups, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as the principal investigator will not have control over what participants share outside of the focus group and with whom.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.
- You will be able to review, edit, and erase the tapes/recordings of your research participation if you wish to do so.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Jessica Pérez del Toro
Tyrone Howard, Ph. D.


thoward@gseis.ucla.edu

- **UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):**

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix E

Teen Assent Form

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

ADOLESCENT (Ages 13-17) ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Diversity and Inclusion in Independent Schools

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jessica Pérez del Toro (M.A.T.) and Tyrone Howard, Ph.D. from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a 9-12th grade student at an independent school and you are involved in affinity groups, culture clubs, or student leadership on your campus. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

Independent schools acknowledge that diversity is a “moral, sociological, academic, pedagogical and economic imperative” (“Why do the Work” in *Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and The Practitioner*, Davis, 2013). For this reason, independent schools across California and the nation have stated commitments to diversity and inclusion in their mission statements and strategic plans. This study investigates how independent schools align their mission statements related to diversity and inclusion with their practice and the lived experience of the school. It does so by analyzing how schools fulfill, monitor, and measure their commitment and progress toward diversity and inclusion from the perspective of administrators, faculty members, and students. The goal of the study is to offer a cross-case analysis of the successes and barriers independent schools encounter in realizing their commitment to diversity and inclusion goals and how each research participant conceptualizes their school’s progress toward these goals.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. We will also ask your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if your parents say “yes” you can still decide not to do this.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Participate in a one-hour focus group with other students at your school
- Allow the focus group discussion to be audio-recorded for purposes of data collection and transcription
- Answer questions regarding your school’s diversity and inclusion goals, demographics, curriculum, financial aid, and school climate

- The preliminary analysis and emerging findings will be shared with participants as part of a member check or respondent validation. You may be contacted to engage in such a member check to ensure that the researcher’s interpretation of your words “rings true” and to ensure internal validity and credibility

How long will I be in the research study?

Data collection for this research study will take approximately two months.

Though your direct involvement in this study will be limited to a one-hour focus group, you may be contacted for a member check of the researcher’s interpretations of your words.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in the research.

The results of the research may provide insight and knowledge to other schools whose mission includes a commitment to increasing and supporting diversity and inclusion. The findings from the study can increase awareness about diversity work in independent schools and provide a guide to schools who seek to reevaluate practices related to recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse student body.

Will I receive any payment if I participate in this study?

You will not receive payment for your participation.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Participants will be asked not to share what is said during the focus group outside the focus group. However, given the group nature of focus groups, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as the principal investigator will not have control over what participants share outside of the focus group and with whom.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using pseudonyms for all school sites and codes for participants. The researcher will eliminate identifying information from transcriptions. Data will be stored on a password protected device that will be accessible only to the principal investigator. All audio recordings of focus groups will be destroyed after transcription.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

You may withdraw your assent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty or loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.

You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may leave the study at any time without consequences of any kind. You are not waiving any of your legal rights if you choose to be in this research study. You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. You will be able to review, edit, and erase the tapes/recordings of your research participation if you wish to do so.

Who can answer questions I might have about this study?

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Jessica Pérez del Toro
Tyrone Howard, Ph. D.


thoward@gseis.ucla.edu

If you wish to ask questions about your rights as a research participant or if you wish to voice any problems or concerns you may have about the study to someone other than the researchers, please call the Office of the Human Research Protection Program at (310) 825-7122 or write to Office of the Human Research Protection Program, UCLA, 11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694.

SIGNATURE OF STUDY PARTICIPANT

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF PERSON OBTAINING ASSENT

In my judgment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly agreeing to participate in this research study.

Name of Person Obtaining Assent

Contact Number

Appendix F

Parent Permission Form

University of California, Los Angeles

PARENT PERMISSION FOR MINOR TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Diversity and Inclusion in Independent Schools

Jessica Pérez del Toro (M.A.T.) and Tyrone Howard, Ph.D. from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) are conducting a research study.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because he/she is a student at an independent school and is involved in affinity groups, culture clubs, or student leadership at their school. Your child's participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

Independent schools acknowledge that diversity is a “moral, sociological, academic, pedagogical and economic imperative” (“Why do the Work” in *Diversity Work in Independent Schools: The Practice and The Practitioner*, Davis, 2013). For this reason, independent schools across California and the nation have stated commitments to diversity and inclusion in their mission statements and strategic plans. This study investigates how independent schools align their mission statements related to diversity and inclusion with their practice and the lived experience of the school. It does so by analyzing how schools fulfill, monitor, and measure their commitment and progress toward diversity and inclusion from the perspective of administrators, faculty members, and students. The goal of the study is to offer a cross-case analysis of the successes and barriers independent schools encounter in realizing their commitment to diversity and inclusion goals and how each research participant conceptualizes their school's progress toward these goals.

What will happen if my child takes part in this research study?

If you agree to allow your child to participate in this study, we would ask him/her to:

- Participate in a one-hour focus group with other students at their school.
- Allow the focus group discussion to be audio-recorded for purposes of data collection and transcription.
- Answer questions regarding the school's diversity and inclusion goals, demographics, curriculum, financial aid, and school climate.

- The preliminary analysis and emerging findings will be shared with participants as part of a member check or respondent validation. Students may be contacted to engage in such a member check to ensure that the researcher’s interpretation of their words “rings true” and to ensure internal validity and credibility.

How long will my child be in the research study?

Data collection for this research study will take approximately two months.

Though your child’s direct involvement in this study will be limited to a one-hour focus group, your child may be contacted for a member check of the researcher’s interpretations of their words.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that my child can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts.

Are there any potential benefits to my child if he or she participates?

Your child will not directly benefit from participating in the research study.

The results of the research may provide insight and knowledge to other schools whose mission includes a commitment to increasing and supporting diversity and inclusion. The findings from the study may increase awareness about diversity work in independent schools and provide a guide to schools who seek to reevaluate practices related to recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse student body.

Will information about my child’s participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify your child will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using pseudonyms for all school sites and codes for participants. The researcher will eliminate identifying information from transcriptions. Data will be stored on a password protected device that will be accessible only to the principal investigator. All audio recordings of focus groups will be destroyed after transcription.

Participants will be asked not to share what is said during the focus group outside the focus group. However, given the group nature of focus groups, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed as the principal investigator will not have control over what participants share outside of the focus group and with whom.

What are my and my child’s rights if he or she takes part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want your child to be in this study, and you may withdraw your permission and discontinue your child’s participation at any time.

- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you or your child, and no loss of benefits to which you or your child were otherwise entitled.
- Your child may refuse to answer any questions that he/she does not want to answer and still remain in the study.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Jessica Pérez del Toro
Tyrone Howard, Ph. D.


thoward@gseis.ucla.edu

- **UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):**

If you have questions about your child's rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN

Name of Child

Name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

SIGNATURE OF PERSON OBTAINING CONSENT

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Contact Number

References

- A Better Chance. (n.d.). *Welcome to A Better Chance*. Retrieved from <http://www.abetterchance.org/index.aspx>
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley.
- Antonio, A. L., Chang, M. J., Hakuta, K., Kenny, D. A., Levin, S., & Miley, J. F. (2004). Effects of racial diversity on complex thinking in college students. *Psychological Science*, 15(8), 507–510. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0956-7976.2004.00710.x>
- Arrington, E. G., Hall, D. M., & Stevenson, H. C. (2003). The success of African-American students in independent schools. *Independent School*, 62(4), 10–21.
- Astor, M., Caron, C., & Victor, D. (2017, August 13). A guide to the Charlottesville Aftermath. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/13/us/charlottesville-virginia-overview.html>
- Bassett, P. F. (2002). *The inclusive independent school*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Articles/Pages/The-Inclusive-Independent-School.aspx>
- Bassett, P. F. (2003). Listening to students of color. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/Listening-to-Students-of-Color.aspx>
- Bassett, P. F. (2013). *Diversity and cosmopolitanism in independent schools*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Articles/Pages/Member/Diversity-and-Cosmopolitanism-in-Independent-Schools.aspx>
- Biegel, S. (2012). *Education and the law* (3rd ed.). St. Paul, MN: Thomson Reuters.

- Bisgaard, D. (2005). Diversity 15 years from now. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/Diversity-15-Years-from-Now.aspx>
- Blackburn, G., & Wise, T. (2009). Addressing White privilege in independent schools: Frequently asked questions (and their answers). In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 93-101). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Blackwell, C. (2013). Supplier diversity: Advancing equity through the business of education. In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 35-40). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Boatright-Horowitz, S. L., Frazier, S., Harps-Logan, Y., & Crockett, N. (2013). Difficult times for college students of color: Teaching white students about white privilege provides hope for change. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18(7), 698-708. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2013.836092>
- Bowman, N. A. (2010). College diversity experiences and cognitive development: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 80(1), 4-33. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654309352495>
- Bradberry, K. J. (2013). Cultural artifacts: Mission statements, strategic plans, and other key documents. In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 35-40). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.

- Braverman, P., & Looney, S. (1999, Spring). Tomorrow is today: Preparing schools for greater access and diversity. *Independent School*. Retrieved from <https://www.nais.org/magazine/independent-school/>
- Brosnan, M. (2010). From assimilation to inclusion: Starting the dialogue. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 15-21). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Brown, E. (2016). The overwhelming whiteness of U.S. private schools, in six maps and charts. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/education/wp/2016/03/29/the-overwhelming-whiteness-of-u-s-private-schools-in-six-maps-and-charts/?utm_term=.41996e5afd97
- Brown, P. D. (2015, Summer). Creating cultures of inclusion for families of color. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/Creating-Cultures-of-Inclusion-for-Families-of-Color.aspx>
- California Association of Independent Schools. (n.d.) *Mission statement*. Retrieved from http://www.caisca.org/page/2248_Mission_Statement.asp
- California Association of Independent Schools. (2015). *Independent school facts at a glance for: California association of independent schools (CAIS-CA)*. Retrieved from http://www.nais.org/Statistics/Documents/CAISCA_FactsAtAGlance201415.pdf
- California Association of Independent Schools. (2016a). *CAIS strategic plan 2016-2021*. Retrieved from http://www.caisca.org/page/2243_CAIS_Strategic_Plan_201621.asp

- California Association of Independent Schools. (2016b). *Procedures for appraising the independent school*. Retrieved from http://www.caisca.org/publications/2_2016%20CAIS%20Accreditation%20Manual.pdf
- California Department of Education. (2016). *Definition of a school*. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ds/dos.asp#dospublic>
- Cavanagh, M., & López, M. A. (2004). Understanding the Latino experience. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 131-139). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Chang, M. J. (2011). *Quality matters: Achieving benefits associated with racial diversity*. Retrieved from http://www.kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/reports/2011/10_2011_AchievingBenefitsAssociatedwithDiversity.pdf
- Chang, M. J., Astin, A. W., & Kim, D. (2004). Cross-racial interaction among undergraduates: Some consequences, causes, and patterns. *Research in Higher Education*, 45(5), 529-553. <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:RIHE.0000032327.45961.33>
- Chang, M. J., Denson, N., Saenz, V., & Misa, K. (2006). The educational benefits of sustaining cross-racial interaction among undergraduates. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(3), 430-455. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2006.0018>
- Coleman, S. (2010). Core truths, cultural norms: Aligning daily practice with diversity goals. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 63-75). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.

- Coleman, S., & Stevenson, H. C. (2014). Engaging the racial elephant: How leadership on racial literacy improves schools. *Independent School*, 73(4).
- Cookson, P. W. (2013). *Class rules: Exposing inequality in American high schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Cookson, P. W., & Persell, C. H. (1985). *Preparing for power: America's elite boarding schools*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Deggans, E. (2016, February 22). Hollywood has a major diversity problem, USC study finds. NPR Southern California Public Radio. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/02/22/467665890/hollywood-has-a-major-diversity-problem-usc-study-finds>
- Denevi, E., & Richards, M. (2009). Diversity directors as leaders: Making the case for excellence. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 77-84). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Denson, N. (2009). Do curricular and cocurricular diversity activities influence racial bias? A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(2), 805–838. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654309331551>
- Denson, N., & Chang, M. J. (2009). Racial diversity matters: The impact of diversity-related student engagement and institutional context. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(2), 322–353. <http://doi.org/10.3102/0002831208323278>

- DiAngelo, R. (2011). White fragility. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy*, 3(3), 54-70.
- Eshoo, K. (2015). *Colorblindness, comfort, and amalgamation: Diversity and inclusion in California independent schools* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (UMI No. 1779258959)
- Erikson, E. (1946). Ego development and historical change. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 2, 359-396.
- Erikson, E. (1956). The problem of ego identity. *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, 4, 56-121. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000306515600400104>
- Flewelling, H. (2013). Embarking on the work. In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 17-25). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Ford, C. (2016). *In pursuit of educational equity in U.S. independent schools: A grounded theory study of diversity leadership* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (UMI No. 1865913376)
- French, B. E. (2013). *Vanishing point: "Diversity" and race at predominantly white independent schools* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 1368977930)
- Frey, W. H. (2012). *Census projects new "majority minority" tipping points*. Retrieved from <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/12/13-census-race-projections-frey>
- Funke, D. & Susman, T. (2016, July 12). From Ferguson to Baton Rouge: Deaths of black men and women at the hands of police. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-police-deaths-20160707-snap-htmllstory.html>

- Gorski, P. C., & Swalwell, K. (2015). Equity literacy for all. *Educational Leadership*, 72(6), 34-40.
- Grutter v. Bollinger. (2003). Retrieved from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/02-241.ZO.html>
- Grutter v. Bollinger 539 U.S. 306 (2003). Retrieved from <https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/539/306/case.html#348>
- Gurin, P., Dey, E., Hurtado, S., & Gurin, G. (2002). Diversity and higher education: Theory and impact on educational outcomes. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(3), 330-367. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.72.3.01151786u134n051>
- Harrell, S. P. (2000). A multidimensional conceptualization of racism-related stress: Implications for the well-being of people of color. *American Journal of Ortho-psychiatry*, 70(1), 42-57. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0087722>
- Harris, D. (2013). Strategic planning for diversity and inclusivity. In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 41-49). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Hossain, K. I. (2015). White privilege: Perceptions of pre-service teachers. *Multicultural Education*, 23(1), 52-55.
- Horvat, E. M., & Antonio, A. L. (1999). "Hey, those shoes are out of uniform." African American girls in an elite high school and the importance of habitus. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 30(3), 317-342. <https://doi.org/10.1525/aeq.1999.30.3.317>
- Hurtado, S. (2001). Linking diversity and educational purpose: How diversity affects the classroom environment and student development. In G. Orfield (Ed.), *Diversity*

- challenged: Evidence on the impact of affirmative action* (pp. 187-203). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education.
- Hurtado, S. (2007). Linking diversity with the educational and civic missions of higher education. *Review of Higher Education*, 30(2), 185–196. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2006.0070>
- Independent School Alliance. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.independentschoolalliance.org>
- Johnson, N. K. (2016). *Hidden among privilege: Increasing belonging for low SES students at affluent schools through participatory action research* (Order No. 10128518). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ University of California; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1812534999). Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1812534999?accountid=14512>
- Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. (2006). Best practices or best guesses? Assessing the efficacy of corporate affirmative action and diversity policies. *American Sociological Review*, 71(4), 589-617. Retrieved from https://www.cfa.harvard.edu/cfawis/Dobbin_best_practices.pdf
- Katz, L. L., & Wishne, B. (1999). *Awareness to commitment to action*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Articles/Pages/Awareness-to-Commitment-to-Action.aspx>
- Kaufman, I. (2003). Directing diversity: Advice for schools and diversity directors. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 69-84). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.

- Kelley, M. (2007). Conspicuously mixed: The experience of multiracial youth in independent schools. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 163-169). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Kibler, J. (2011). Cognitive disequilibrium. In S. Goldstein & J. A. Naglieri (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of child behavior and development* (p. 380). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-79061-9>
- Kochhar, R., & Fry, R. (2014, December 12). *Wealth inequality has widened along racial, ethnic lines since end of Great Recession*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/12/racial-wealth-gaps-great-recession/>
- López, G. E. (2004). Interethnic contact, curriculum, and attitudes in the first year of college. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60(1), 75–94. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0022-4537.2004.00100.x>
- Marblo, C. (2007). Leading the way: Why a diversity committee of the board is a must for all schools. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (pp. 131-139). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Maxwell, L. A. (2014, August 1). U.S. school enrollment hits majority-minority milestone. *Education Week*. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2014/08/20/01demographics.h34.html>
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

- Milliman, R. C. (2004). *From exclusive to inclusive: One independent school's journey towards diversity. An examination beyond the "numbers"* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 305157712)
- Mitchell, M., & Flanagan, M. (2013, Winter). How does the "new" financial aid applicant differ from years past? *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/How-does-the-new-financial-aid-applicant-differ-from-years-past.aspx>
- Moses, M. S., & Chang, M. J. (2006). Toward a deeper understanding of the diversity rationale. *Educational Researcher*, 35(1), 6–11. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X035001006>
- National Association of Independent Schools. (n.d.). *Healthy enrollment Los Angeles* Retrieved from <https://www.nais.org/articles/pages/member/healthy-enrollment-losangeles/>
- National Association of Independent Schools. (2002). *Profile of NAIS members school statistical indicators 2001-2002*. Retrieved from https://www.nais.org/Media/Nais/Statistics/Documents/NAIS_Facts_at_a_Glance_2000-2001.pdf
- National Association of Independent Schools. (2005a). *Profile of statistical indicators 2004-2005*. Retrieved from <https://www.nais.org/Media/Nais/Statistics/Documents/NAISmembers2005Reviewed1.pdf>
- National Association of Independent Schools. (2005b). *Students of color statistics in NAIS member schools: Executive summary*. Retrieved from http://www.nais.org/Series/Documents/Member/Students_of_Color_Report_Exe_Sum_2004-05.pdf

National Association of Independent Schools. (2010). *NAIS facts at a glance 2009-2010*.

Retrieved from <https://www.nais.org/Media/Nais/Statistics/Documents/>

NAISFactsAtAGlance200910.pdf

National Association of Independent Schools. (2012). *NAIS principles of good practice*.

Retrieved from http://www.nais.org/Articles/Documents/NAIS_PGP_8-14-2013.pdf

National Association of Independent Schools. (2015a). *About NAIS*. Retrieved from [https://](https://www.nais.org/about/about-nais/)

www.nais.org/about/about-nais/

National Association of Independent Schools. (2015b). *NAIS facts at a glance 2014-15*.

Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Statistics/Documents/>

CAISCAFactsAtAGlance201415.pdf

National Association of Independent Schools. (2015c). *People of color conference*. Retrieved

from <http://pocc.nais.org/about/Pages/Student-Diversity-Leadership-Conference.aspx>

National Association of Independent Schools. (2015d). *AIM survey definitions*. Retrieved from

<http://www.nais.org/Statistics/Pages/AIM-Definitions.aspx>

National Association of Independent Schools. (2016a). *NAIS facts at a glance 2015-16: All NAIS*

member schools. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Statistics/Documents/>

NAISFactsAtAGlance201516.pdf

National Association of Independent Schools. (2016b). *Table facts at a glance - Industry/school*

2015-16 association: California association of independent schools. Retrieved from

<http://www.nais.org/Statistics/Documents/CAISCAFactsAtAGlance201516.pdf>

National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *Enrollment and percentage distribution of*

enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity and region:

- Selected years, fall 1995 through fall 2023 (Table 203.50)*. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_203.50.asp
- Nelson Laird, T. F. (2005). College students' experiences with diversity and their effects on academic self-confidence, social agency, and disposition toward critical thinking. *Research in Higher Education*, 46, 365-387. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-005-2966-1>
- Newman, K. (2005). *A sense of belonging: Creating a multicultural environment in a predominantly white independent school* (Order No. 3175197). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ University of California; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305033015). Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/305033015?accountid=14512>
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1997). *Cultivating humanity: A classical defense of reform in liberal education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2006). *Racial transformation and the changing nature of segregation*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7519d9sh.pdf>
- Park, A. (2017, January 5). *Measuring inclusion and equity: Assessment and accountability for advancement* [PowerPoint slides]. Presentation given at Blink: Critically Rethinking Diversity Workshop, Los Angeles, CA.
- Parsons, J., & Ridley, K. (2012). Identity, affinity, reality. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/Identity-Affinity-Reality.aspx>

- Pascarella, E. T., Martin, G. L., Hanson, J. M., Trolan, T. L., Gillig, B., & Blaich, C. (2014). Effects of diversity experiences on critical thinking skills over 4 years of college. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(1), 86-92. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0009>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751-783. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751>
- Phillips, A. (2016, January 26) The striking lack of diversity in state legislatures. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/01/26/the-real-problem-with-diversifying-congress-state-legislatures-are-even-less-diverse/?utm_term=.35e4c6f21df5
- Piaget, J. (1985). *The equilibrium of cognitive structures: The central problem of intellectual development*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1975)
- Polite, E (2004). *Open the box: Assessing diversity to initiate change*. Retrieved from http://www.gordonschool.org/Customized/Uploads/ByDate/2014/August_2014/August_6th_2014/Open%20The%20Box17723.pdf
- Powell, A. G. (1996). *Lessons from privilege: The American prep school tradition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Quanti, D. 2013. Why do the work? In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 9-13). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.
- Regents of the University of California v. Bakke. (1978). Retrieved from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/438/265>

- Rosenblum, C. (2017, August 8) If Google doesn't say why diversity is good, how can the fragile White men there grasp it? *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/opinion-la/la-ol-google-damore-20170808-story.html>
- Schein, E. H. 2010. *Organizational culture and leadership* (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Slaughter-Defoe, D. T., & Johnson, D. J. (Eds.). (1988). *Visible now: Blacks in private schools*. New York, NY: Greenwood Press.
- Sloan, L. & Boucher, N. (2016, March/April). We're supposed to be better at this. *Brown Alumni Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.brownalumnimagazine.com/content/view/4117/32/>
- Southern Education Foundation. (2016, March). *Race and ethnicity in a new era of public school funding of private schools: Private school enrollment in the south and the nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.southerneducation.org/getattachment/be785c57-6ce7-4682-b80d-04d89994a0b6/Race-and-Ethnicity-in-a-New-Era-of-Public-Funding.aspx>
- Speede-Franklin, W. A. (1988). Ethnic diversity: Patterns and implications of minorities in independent schools. In D. T. Slaughter-Defoe & D. J. Johnson (Eds.) *Visible now: Blacks in private schools* (pp. 21-31). New York, NY: Greenwood Press.
- Sue, D. W. (2015). *Race talk and the conspiracy of silence: Understanding and facilitating difficult dialogues on race*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Tatum, B. D. (1997). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" and other conversations about race*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Thompson, M., & Schultz, K. (2003). The psychological experiences of students of color. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines->

Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/The-Psychological-Experiences-of-Students-of-Color.aspx

Torres, A. (2010). The state of diversity practice at independent schools. *Independent School*, 69(2), 22–22.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2013, June). *Asians fastest-growing race or ethnic group in 2012*, Census Bureau reports [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2013/cb13-112.html>

Wehmiller, A., & Withers, A. (2007). Things that make you say, “Hmmm...” on institutional change and diversity. In M. Brosnan (Ed.), *The inclusive school: A selection of writing on diversity issues in independent schools* (131-139). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.

White, E. S., & Boyd, D. M. (2015). *When and where I enter: A study on the experience of African American girls in all-girls' independent schools*. Retrieved from http://www.laurelschool.org/uploaded/programs/crg/crg_downloads/CRG_when_where_enter-S.pdf

Witte, A. (2013). What is the work? In G. Batiste (Ed.), *Diversity work in independent schools: The practice and the practitioner* (pp. 3-8). Washington, DC: National Association of Independent Schools.

Yin, R. K. (2004). *Case study methods*. In Retrieved from <http://www.cosmoscorp.com/docs/aeradraft.pdf>

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.