



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mission Statement

**Brooks School commits itself to creating a socially just community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive, because doing so is critical to providing the most meaningful educational experience our students will have in their lives.**

### Preamble

We, the Brooks School community, collectively acknowledge that Brooks was founded to educate boys who hailed from a base of economic, social, and political power and privilege. With this document, Brooks rests on the pillars of its existing school-wide mission statement and core values to affirm that **a socially just community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive is essential to the well-being and meaningful experience of all members.** This statement also makes clear that Brooks creates and bestows privilege on members of its campus and alumni community just as much as it operates under larger systems of privilege. As such, the school honors and welcomes its **duty to educate and prepare** students to lead the way toward further equity and inclusion in our diverse society. **This duty is a collective one; it is the common responsibility of our community, for which we are each jointly accountable.**

### Mission Statement

Brooks School prides itself on its mission: We seek to provide the most meaningful educational experience our students will have in their lives. **If individual students are to find meaning in their education at Brooks, the school — as an institution and a community — must find meaning in each of them.** This must transcend simply allowing or recognizing the different experiences, lives and perspectives that our community brings to campus; finding meaning also requires a celebration of those experiences, a holding up of those lives and an incorporation of those perspectives into the school's collective heartbeat. Therefore, Brooks commits itself to the dignity and inviolability of every human being by creating a socially just community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive for students, alumni, families and employees. Toward this end, Brooks affirms and forefronts the importance of the lived experiences and voices of past, present and future marginalized groups: **those groups that have been systemically denied, or have only recently come to wield, political, economic, or social recognition and influence.**

Practices and policies that recognize and promote the humanity of these marginalized groups throughout our Brooks community are necessary to fulfill this mission statement and the school-wide mission statement. A key component to the work is **a sustained evaluation of how existing formal and informal power structures and othering practices at Brooks position privileged groups over silenced or marginalized ones.** Brooks will examine how these structures and practices work to realize a socially just community that is diverse, equitable and inclusive in order to develop a data-informed strategic plan and accountability protocols. The school will act to **dismantle and update such structures and practices** in favor of those that reflect and promote the diversity and wellbeing of a socially just community.

It is especially critical that upon graduating from Brooks students are prepared and able to navigate, thrive and act in a diverse world. Brooks graduates must be knowledgeable, **empathetic** and **engaged** about the struggles

marginalized groups have faced in the past and continue to face, and they must work with **confidence, passion and integrity** as they help to **create** a more equitable, more inclusive world. Brooks both draws on and creates power and privilege; therefore, the school carries the responsibility to shape its students into **graduates who will have a tangible, positive effect on their spheres of influence**. The school expects and demands growth, evaluation and evolution in the future. **The school is resolute in its unchanging, fundamental duty** to provide resources and administrative support to develop policies and practices that will help shape our students into graduates who are engaged, empowered and eager to act toward a socially just society. These policies and practices include, but are not limited to, a strategic plan governing all areas of school life.

To acknowledge the depth and breadth of the work we must undertake, a clear understanding of what Brooks means when it uses the terms diversity, equity and inclusion is critical:

We understand **diversity** to be a measure of who Brooks welcomes into this community, and the extent to which it incorporates varied lived experiences and cultural perspectives into its collective identity.

We understand **equity** to be a measure of access to opportunity, the outcomes of those opportunities, and how the school can change opportunities and their outcomes to better reflect and promote the diversity of the community.

We understand that an **inclusive** school empowers, respects and supports all community members such that they recognize themselves reflected and honored in its values and practices.

**We understand that no one of these elements of the work can stand on its own: They are necessarily ongoing and mutually reinforcing.**

## Addendum

### **Understanding of Terms**

**Diversity:** Diversity is achieved both **quantitatively and qualitatively**. Diversity is first partially achieved quantitatively when a variety of lived experiences and cultural perspectives are reflected in the community, especially those from marginalized groups. It must be noted that this is not a moment of procedural accounting, a “tick-a-box” kind of diversity, but rather **an ongoing process to bring about a critical mass of lived experiences and cultural perspectives** such that no one person is required to speak for an entire marginalized group. Second, a diverse community is further achieved qualitatively when the lived experiences and cultural perspectives of **marginalized groups are given time and space to be heard and celebrated**. Exposure to these experiences and perspectives contributes to the diverse collective identity Brooks strives to foster.

**Equity:** Equity has two dimensions: **access to opportunity and the outcomes of those opportunities**. First, equity work clarifies that access to opportunity is characterized by the past and present unequal distribution of and access to resources. This **unequal distribution may lead some to attain markers of success and positions of privilege** more easily than others at Brooks. Second, equity work questions, monitors and **seeks to understand whether the outcomes of opportunity reflect our community**, with specific consideration for those from marginalized groups. This work includes, but is not limited to, **training our administration and other school leaders** to actively monitor the opportunities they oversee and to evaluate their outcomes. Equity seeks to **formally recognize the talents, abilities and interests of marginalized groups** that contribute to the collective Brooks experience.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion admits that a sharing of power and a mutual recognition of interdependence within the community are necessary to ensure that **all members of the community are empowered, respected and supported**. A sharing of power and mutual recognition of interdependence provide every community member with the

common responsibility and joint accountability of enacting the DEI mission statement. Towards this end, decisionmaking bodies throughout Brooks should include the perspectives of marginalized groups and enable them to participate in real and meaningful ways that outlast their own time on campus. Further, each community member should work against perspectives that uphold ignorance and fear, and thereby seek to undermine the community. In these ways, we aim for an ever-unfolding and encompassing community.

### **The Strategic Plan and This Mission Statement**

This mission statement calls for a strategic plan to shape, guide and give continuity and foresight to our ongoing work toward social justice through diversity, equity and inclusion at Brooks. This strategic plan will, specifically, give agency to and affirm the duty of all major areas of school life. It will also, broadly and without limitation, give agency to and affirm the responsibility of every individual at Brooks to work within their sphere of influence toward diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the responsibility of the institution as a whole. This mission statement also forms the basis of the accountability of every individual and the institution as a whole to work within their spheres of influence toward diversity, equity and inclusion. The strategic plan is being developed and will be announced as soon as possible; in no way does the current lack of a finished strategic plan preclude the school or its community members from engaging in the directives, intentions and spirit stated in this mission statement.