

We have five strategies in our Strategic Plan. Strategy 2 states: “We will relentlessly create a fully unified, equitable and inclusive culture.” As such, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging remain a top priority for the Shawnee Mission School District. While the resignations you mention create holes in our team, we are working hard to fill those positions (one of which we hired at the meeting on Monday evening.) Regardless, the work continues, and as I am sure you are aware, in an organization with more than 3500 staff which serves more than 26,000 students, the work to create “a fully unified, equitable and inclusive culture” CANNOT be the work of any one individual. Rather, it is the work of the entire system, led by the superintendent’s executive leadership team (which is itself diverse, with two African American males, one Hispanic male, two white women and two white men.)

With regard to Mr. Carnegie’s position, the work of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging requires that we pay attention to data, and in this case, the decision was made to move the position back to the concept it began with, locating it in one school with a high need. The school it is being placed at has a far more diverse population than the district as a whole (see chart below), and needs the support that position will bring. We plan to post that position, and find a high-quality individual to fill it.

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Multiracial	Economically Disadvantaged	ELL		
Apache	33%	18%	35%	14%	62%	24%		
SMSD	62%	9%	20%	6%	32%	9%		

With regard to support for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, the district has trained 225 building-level trainers. All principals and 32 other district level staff have received Deep Equity Leadership training, and we have staff-led DEIB teams at each building. We have developed equity practitioner teams, who engage in monthly professional learning, in order to support DEIB building teams. We introduced the Youth Equity Stewardship program to engage students and adult sponsors at each of our high schools. This provides opportunities for student leaders to develop and engage in building and district level leadership activities and include their voices in decision-making processes that directly impact students. The superintendent has established an advisory group for diversity, equity and inclusion, and she meets with them three times a year to receive feedback and guidance on strategic areas for district improvement. We have also developed affinity groups for both students and staff of color.

This just scratches the surface of the work we are doing around diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. This is work the district is committed to, and it will continue despite changes in district staff. One of the reasons for having a community-developed strategic plan is that it is not dependent on any one individual.