Overview of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

The Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine (KPSOM) is committed to anti-racism and fostering equity, inclusion, and diversity (EID) in every aspect of its operations. We believe in diversity of thought, life experiences, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, abilities, veteran status, socioeconomic background, and more. Our school’s commitment to these values is rooted in Kaiser Permanente’s mission of improving the health of its people and communities.

EID is embedded in our curriculum. It also guides our recruitment and admission practices and the makeup of our leadership, faculty, staff, and student body. Our commitment to EID is active and continually evolving. As part of our effort to continuously improve and further enhance the design and implementation of EID measures, we solicit ongoing feedback from our community and regularly track our efforts toward ensuring that our school’s culture is welcoming, inclusive, and anti-racist.

Our approaches and accomplishments related to EID include the following:

Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (EID)

The Office of EID has the staff and financial resources to create and evaluate EID efforts in all spheres of the school. The office’s strategic framework supports the entire school community.

• Leadership
  o The Senior Associate Dean for Admissions and Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity is the former Assistant Dean for Diversity and Community Partnerships at another medical school.
  o The Associate Dean for Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity is the former Physician Director of EID at one of the Permanente regional medical groups.

• Staff
  o The Office of EID staff also includes a Director, Coordinator, and Executive Assistant. The office’s strategic framework supports the entire school community.

• Committees and work groups
  o **Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Advisory (EIDA) Committee**: a standing committee responsible for advising the Dean on opportunities and challenges in meeting the school’s goals on EID, and recommending activities and projects that support our commitment to EID
  o **EID Community Forum**: provides an opportunity for sharing practices, projects, and research that support KPSOM’s commitment to EID in alignment with the KPSOM EID strategic framework
  o **Student EID Committee**: promotes inclusion and engagement within the learning community; supports the recruitment, retention, and advancement of community members; collaborates with community stakeholders to support diversity initiatives and activities; and supports community engagement and ongoing learning for our community
  o Curriculum-related work groups (see Curriculum section for details):
    • Inclusive Curricular Design Support Team
    • EID Curriculum Thread Work Group
Curriculum
From the outset, the school has embedded anti-racism and related topics throughout its curriculum and strived to incorporate principles of EID across the school. For instance:

• Health Systems Science
  o KPSOM has the first Department of Health Systems Science (HSS) in the country.
  o Through HSS and the departments of Biomedical and Clinical Science, the school has developed a robust curriculum focusing on health disparities, social determinants of health, and structural inequities, as well as training in leadership and advocacy skills needed to tackle these issues.
  o Within the Department of HSS, the school has the HSS Anti-racism Work Group, which is reviewing evidence-based practices to inform future initiatives within the school.

• Service-learning
  o Students are exposed to diverse patient populations and communities through a two-year Service-learning course, which begins in their first weeks at the school.
  o In partnership with six Federally Qualified Health Care Centers, each student is placed at a community health center where they engage with patients, clinic staff, administrators, and clinicians to provide an experiential opportunity to learn about health equity and community centered care.

• Content and continued review of student curriculum
  o The EID Curriculum Work Group ensures that the full curriculum is developed and reviewed through an EID lens and has developed an EID tracker intended to ensure that patient demographics in case studies incorporated into curriculum mirror the demographics of Los Angeles County.
  o EID Curriculum Thread Work Group
    • The curriculum includes four longitudinal threads that integrate content that emphasizes the skills and values needed in today’s healthcare environment; one of these threads is focused on EID. The threads are woven throughout all phases, courses, and clinical experiences.
    • The work group develops EID thread-specific learning objectives mapped to a graduation outcome for diversity and develops EID thread session activities and aligned assessments.
    • The work group has developed a longitudinal anti-racism learning arc including topics such as social identity, intersectionality, microaggressions, power and privilege, cognitive bias mitigation, the history of race and racism in medicine and science, and media bias and literacy.
    • The work group continually reviews the entire curriculum to ensure it is broadly representative with respect to social identity (e.g., race, ancestry, gender identity) and the intersections of those identities and is as free of bias as possible.
Recruitment and Diversity of Student Body, Board, Leadership, Faculty, and Staff

- Holistic admissions and inclusive student recruitment practices
  - Our approach to student admissions is to evaluate the full experience of each individual, including academic, personal, and other characteristics that contribute to defining the whole person.
  - This approach increases the likelihood of admitting students from diverse backgrounds.
  - KPSOM also actively recruits students from a number of diverse institutions, including historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs), and emerging HSIs.
- Diversity of the student body
  - Our commitment to diversity is illustrated in the composition of our inaugural class, which is among the most diverse in the country.
  - Out of our 50-member class, more than one-third come from racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in medicine relative to their numbers in the general population, and more than one-third come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds.
  - Of the 155 allopathic medical schools in the country, the school ranks in the top 10 based on the percentage of students underrepresented in medicine overall and in the top 15 based on the percentage of Black students.
- Board, leadership, faculty, and staff recruitment
  - For all recruitment of board members, administrators, faculty, and staff, whether by search firms, human resources professionals, or faculty committees, the school has been intentional in our goal to hire and appoint individuals from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences.
  - Recruitment materials strongly emphasize intentionality regarding EID, and candidates are asked about their experiences with EID.
  - Selection committees include at least one designated EID advocate.
  - Mandatory bias mitigation training, tailored to the selection process, is required of all search committee members.
- Diversity of the Board of Directors
  - Of the Board’s 17 members, 5 are from groups underrepresented in medicine, 7 are women, 1 is a member of the LGBTQ community, and 1 is differently abled.
- Diversity of school leadership
  - More than 40 percent of our leadership team are members of racial and ethnic groups that are underrepresented in medicine, more than 40 percent are women, and one-third are members of the LGBTQ community.
- Diversity of faculty and staff
  - Women make up 51 percent of our faculty, and 22 percent from groups underrepresented in medicine. Our primary teaching faculty (teaching at least one day per week) is 46 percent women and 32 percent from groups underrepresented in medicine. Among our staff, 51 percent are women and 19 percent are from groups underrepresented in medicine.
Support and Development for Students, Faculty, and Staff

- **Student support and development**
  - KPSOM places a high priority on helping students develop into healthy, resilient physician leaders.
  - In addition to our robust academic and career resources, our REACH (Reflection, Education, Assessment, Coaching, Health, and well-being) program includes threads focused on EID, advocacy, and leadership, and teaches our students how to advocate for their patients, families, and communities as well as other healthcare providers.

- **Faculty and staff support and development**
  - The full school goes through bias mitigation training, with additional role-specific EID training for faculty and staff that includes education in mitigating individual cognitive bias, mitigating bias in selection, mitigating microaggressions and macroaggressions, and addressing mistreatment in the learning environment, among other topics.
  - The school offers financial support for faculty underrepresented in medicine.

- **Schoolwide affinity groups**
  - KPSOM has several affinity groups for students, with parallel groups for faculty and staff based on identities that are important to them (see Community Support and Engagement section for details).

- **Anti-racism and EID resources for every member of our community**
  - The Office of EID and the EID Workgroup have created a collection of resources housed in the school’s anti-racism resources site, as well as an Anti-Racism and EID Plan.
  - The school has established anti-racism discussion groups.
  - The school regularly offers co-curricular programs and events through the offices of Student Affairs and EID to celebrate heritage months, days, and observances, including Black History Month.

- **School culture and climate**
  - The school conducts culture and climate surveys to help ensure that the school continues to work on and make progress towards achieving its EID goals.

- **Inclusive art program**
  - Conscious choices of art that reflect our anti-racist and EID values are an integral part of our new Medical Education Building.
  - The collection augments our educational programming, which underscores the importance of narrative medicine.
Community Support and Engagement

- Support of Pathway/Pipeline programs
  - Through our Pathway/Pipeline Program Workgroup, our school has engaged with Kaiser Permanente’s extensive network of pre-existing programs to identify volunteer and mentorship opportunities.

- Community engagement
  - Our school actively seeks opportunities to be of service to the wider community through our Office of Community Engagement, service-learning curriculum, and other community service initiatives.
  - The Office of EID has also supported the development of several staff and faculty affinity groups that endeavor to bring staff and faculty together for meaningful dialogue focused on developing supportive communities within the school. Current staff and faculty affinity groups include:
    - KPSOM Asian American and Pacific Islander Community Group
    - KPSOM Black Alliance Community Group
    - KPSOM Community Group
    - KPSOM Latino/a/x Community Group
    - KPSOM LGBTQIA+ Community Group
    - KPSOM Womxn’s Community Group

Scholarship

- Much of the school’s initial writings have been focused on anti-racism and advancing EID, putting the school’s commitments into action.
- Pieces published in 2020 by the school’s founding Dean and collaborators include:
  - On Being Gay in Medicine: After the Supreme Court Victory, Still Work to be Done (CommonHealth Blog, 6/24/20)
  - Better Doctor Training Means Focusing on Equity, Advancing Racism (Modern Healthcare, 8/22/20)
  - Building Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Into the Fabric of a New Medical School: Early Experiences of the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine (Academic Medicine, 9/1/20)
  - Prop 16 Is Needed Now: Race Matters in Higher Education Admissions (LinkedIn, 10/13/20)