



Genesee Community Charter School
at the Rochester Museum & Science Center

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Statement on Community

“Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever begin to live together.”

-Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall

Genesee Community Charter School is a public charter school located in the City of Rochester that is intentionally small, project based and diverse-by-design.

Rochester, NY is a segregated city within a segregated county. This segregation is not by accident. Rochester, as with many communities across our country, has a long history of discriminatory and exclusionary practices related to both housing and employment that have left many in our region without access to the same opportunities. Within Rochester, access to a high quality education tops the list.

When GCCS opened its doors, twenty years ago, we committed to providing a rich educational experience that values intellectual rigor, respect for diversity, and community responsibility. We acknowledge that this is a work in progress for our school. We also acknowledge that to be even a small part of the solution, we must do more to erase social and academic boundaries. Our plans to open a second campus in the City of Rochester are specifically focused on creating more opportunities for city families that are reflective of the racial and economic diversity of Rochester—a school that seeks to reflect the increasingly diverse world in which our students presently live and will live in the future.

Here’s what that means:

- GCCS will serve students from across the City of Rochester. We will intentionally recruit students of color from currently underrepresented neighborhoods in our school community. We will target annual growth in enrollment for students of color, ELL students and low-income students.
- We will provide small class size and innovative teaching models that foster a connection to and love of the Rochester community
- We will actively recruit teachers and leaders of color into the GCCS community
- We will celebrate our diverse by design model and continuously build the capacity of our staff, students and families in this belief as one of the many solutions to the separation and inequities that exist in our region
- We will examine, amend and refine our internal practices and approaches to make sure that our school community is truly integrated and inclusive
- We will ground our model in what works for all students, even as we support all the different ways that students learn and need to be supported.

Strategies Tied to Our Beliefs

Within Our Walls

Staff Diversity

- We will continue to promote and support teaching assistants in their endeavor to become certified teachers.
- We will develop relationships with area colleges and universities with historically diverse student bodies
- We will utilize Teacher Recruitment Days to increase our reach for interested candidates

Family Connections

- We will continue to refine the purpose of the Diversity and Racial Equity Committee focused on both personal growth in racial awareness and structural growth in dismantling systemic racism
- We will ensure strong representation from the Family Association in the Diversity and Racial Equity Committee as well as the Community Engagement Committee to support both internal facing work on community inclusiveness and external facing work on community perception
- We will hire a Director of Family and Community Engagement who will support recruitment of students and staff, create and strengthen community partnerships, and serve as a liaison among families and the above committees.

Culturally Relevant Practice

- We will strengthen relationships with families to support education that is culturally relevant and taps into the strengths and potential of families as experts in the community
- We will utilize the Diversity and Racial Equity Committee to continue to serve as “critical friends” as well as a support system of community resources for the staff during curriculum design and development
- The staff will continue to engage in both local and national training and professional development on culturally responsive pedagogy, restorative practices, and anti-racist teaching

In the Community

Intentional Recruitment

- Within the next three years, we will intentionally work to recruit students of color to create a more racially diverse student body by focusing recruitment efforts in neighborhoods that are historically in areas of high poverty and have a higher percentage of black and brown families
- Within the next three years, we will intentionally recruit English language learners by developing stronger relationships with bilingual and/or refugee support organizations

Enrollment Expansion

- Within the next three years, GCCS intends to open a second campus that will provide an additional 210 seats for students in the Rochester City School District
- Within the next three years, GCCS plans to increase enrollment in racial demographic percentages among students of color by at least 5%.

Genesee Community Charter School has a track record of success in the Rochester community. We are committed to creating a more diverse and inclusive school community that provides an excellent education option for the Rochester community.

We will be a part of the solution.