



DEIB Organizational Update | Oct. 2024

The current RisingOaks Early Learning strategic plan provides direction for the period of 2022 to 2025. Within that plan, the board and leadership team viewed diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) as foundational to achieving our strategic priorities. One of the key performance indicators was to develop a DEIB Action Plan. This work will come to fruition this fall.

In June 2024, we signed a new contract with Credence & Co. to support the development of the DEIB action plan. This builds off the previous work that we have completed including organizational assessment and recommendations report, facilitated dialogues, live and virtual group training, and refinement of organizational health-focused policies.

In mid-June, the RisingOaks reference group (RG) and belonging champions participated in their first DEIB planning session. The group successfully developed and finetuned RisingOaks' DEIB Statement, Principles, and Decision-Making Filters.

DEIB Statement:

Diversity + Equity + Inclusion = Belonging

At RisingOaks Early Learning, we uphold and maintain a community where families, children, educators and staff feel safe, respected, empowered, and a sense of belonging. With this sense of belonging, everyone can learn, grow, challenge themselves, and bring their perspective.

We respect the many different perspectives and lived experiences within our community. RisingOaks commits to being accountable to our community through reflective practice. Collectively, we strive to continuously challenge the status quo and enhance inclusivity and allyship within our community.

DEIB Principles:

RisingOaks' DEIB Principles are the organizational commitments that provide RisingOaks with a tool to affirm at regular intervals that the organization's direction is in alignment with its DEIB Statement.

- We commit to annually reviewing our DEIB policies for areas for improvement.
- We commit to active listening with each other, and to finding ways to gather the voices regarding their DEIB experiences within our organization at least every three years.

DEIB Decision-Making Filters (Leadership Team):

- Will this decision help the parties involved feel safe, respected, and empowered?

- Does this decision allow parties to feel like they belong?
- Are the parties' lived experiences acknowledged and respected?
- What should decision-makers reflect upon after the decision is made?
- How does this decision impact our broader community and sector?

DEIB Decision-Making Filters (RG and Champions):

- Does the decision allow all members of RisingOaks community to feel represented?
- Does the decision deconstruct an us/them dynamic?
- Does the decision create community and belonging?

On September 20, the DEIB RG and champions came together for their 2nd action planning session where we discussed four DEIB priorities that focus on embedding DEIB into our work and being accountable, creating a sense of belonging for all, communication and ongoing learning related to DEIB. Our next planning session is scheduled for October 25.

Communication

A DEIB Update to the champions and leadership team was introduced in May, with an update after each RG meeting. We are pleased to now extend these updates to ensure that all employees – and RisingOaks' families - build awareness of this work so they may better engage in important conversations and feel a sense of belonging. Prior updates can be found here:

- [May 2024](#)
- [July 2024](#)

Organizational Health Policies

Earlier this year, the RG and steering committee worked with the policy team at Credence to review, revise and enhance policies that support organizational health: Code of Conduct (new), Conflict Resolution (formerly Dispute Resolution), Performance Management, Progressive Discipline and Workplace Harassment & Discrimination.

The roll out of these new or revised policies will take place at our All Staff Meeting on November 4. A series of training and awareness videos is being developed to support both employees and the leadership team as we implement these new and improved policies.

Our next DEIB Organizational Update is scheduled for late November.