

HMT Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – April 2022

Advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and in our work with students is critical to accomplishing our mission. To effectively support students and maximize Heart Math Tutoring's impact, we must have diversity of thought, identity, and experience within our staff and volunteer base; an inclusive workplace where people of all backgrounds are welcomed, celebrated, and cherished; and an ongoing, strong commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of our students, their families, our team members, and our community.

The team at Heart Math Tutoring (HMT) is specifically committed to supporting racial equity, recognizing disparities in education, employment, and other outcomes by race and ethnicity shaped by history and still present today. These disparities impact our students, 90% of whom are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC); the adults involved in Heart Math Tutoring; and the larger community. We are committed to operating with a racial equity lens in understanding and addressing needs, evaluating our program, and proactively pushing for opportunities for all.

We are currently focused on three efforts as of April 2022, and we will update this statement over time:

- Building an inclusive culture within Heart Math Tutoring
- Our responsibility to share more context with the community on the causes of the racial disparities in education they hear about from us and see firsthand as tutors.
- Honoring and supporting the “whole child,” ensuring students receive culturally proficient support and experience empathy, compassion, and empowerment while in our program.

Our team is engaged in proactive work - structured and organic - to become a team that appropriately balances work/tasks and relationships and leans more heavily on our *growth-mindset* core value that is meant to support a learning culture. Adaptations and program innovation required during the pandemic presented a great opportunity to shift to a fail-forward, learning, risk-taking culture, and we anticipate continued innovation ahead. We hope successful learning leads to another core value at HMT, *precision*, but we won't mistake precision for perfection.

For the students that we serve, our desire is that students are seen, valued, cared for and respected as their full selves during tutoring in a culturally responsive environment facilitated by our volunteers and staff. The Tutor Code of Conduct now outlines this vision with more specificity, and tutor orientation was expanded from one to two hours in 2021 in part for time for training on relationship-building and providing culturally competent support. Tutors and staff must reflect on how our differences in identity and background may be shaping how we view students, listen and learn from our students, and express unconditional belief in our students' potential. We aspire to operate with an asset-based approach, focusing on students' strengths and potential rather than needs and gaps. In 2020/21, we initiated a DEI Network, with over 320 volunteers electing to receive additional resources and be invited to occasional events and online conversations on the topic in the 2022/23 school year. (Interested tutors [sign up here.](#))

Ultimately, we aspire to see our students consistently understood, celebrated, and empowered in the program and to see talented people of all backgrounds thrive as leaders at Heart Math Tutoring. We're happy to share our more detailed, guided DEI statement that we use internally with staff. Please reach out to Greg Okotie (gregory.okotie@heartmathtutoring.org) for more information.

