

MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Racial Equity & Inclusion Plan



Introduction

The Milwaukee Public Library (MPL) is an anchor institution working to build healthy families and vibrant neighborhoods resulting in a strong Milwaukee. MPL is committed to ensuring that patrons and employees of all racial identities are included, welcomed, and supported. In 2021, MPL engaged P3 Development Group (P3), an independent consulting firm, to conduct a Racial Equity & Inclusion (REI) assessment of the library and facilitate the development of an REI plan. The resulting Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan is centered on two desired results:

RESULT ONE



Milwaukee Public Library attracts and retains employees across racial groups and roles who report feeling effective, engaged, and supported in their performance and growth.

RESULT TWO



Patrons across racial groups report feeling well served and engaged by the Milwaukee Public Library.

During the next five years, Milwaukee Public Library will enact several strategies in order to achieve these two results. This document outlines the process, strategies, measures, and workplan that will be used to implement Milwaukee Public Library's Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan.

This plan has been approved and authorized by the Library Director, MPL Leadership Team, and Board of Trustees. In addition, the Library Director authorized a Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee that will be responsible for plan oversight and coordination, and support of continuous learning and improving. The committee will report to the Library Director and provide regular updates to all staff on progress.

Summary of the Plan

In order for MPL to attract and retain employees across racial groups and roles who report feeling effective, engaged, and supported in their performance and growth, the Library will:



1. **Create a system-wide MPL Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee** to oversee the REI Plan, and Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) staff affinity groups to support each other's development and support REI goals.

2. **Develop more transparent decision making, productive and inclusive staff meetings, and new feedback mechanisms** that engage and respond to more staff perspectives.



3. **Implement and track annual employee, branch, and department goals and workplans** tied to library strategic goals.



4. **Create a comprehensive staff development program emphasizing racial equity and inclusion** that supports learning and career advancement opportunities.



5. **Work with the City Department of Employee Relations (DER) to accelerate hiring and increase pathways to career advancement** by revisiting job classifications and requirements to better recognize staff service and experience.

To ensure that patrons across racial groups report feeling well served and engaged, the Library will:



1. **Define Milwaukee Public Library's approach to hospitality and update the code of conduct** with training to help staff address patron issues in trauma-informed ways that support staff and patron safety.



2. **Build mutually-beneficial relationships** to expand the services and programs of the Library and lift community partners.



3. **Curate library collections with more diverse selectors, publishers, and input** from staff and community members.



4. **Refine fining policies**, and make sure our approach is simple to communicate and understand



5. **Create a community engagement plan**, train staff in community engagement, and enable staff to discover and engage with neighborhood assets by creating time in schedules.

Planning Process



Planning Process

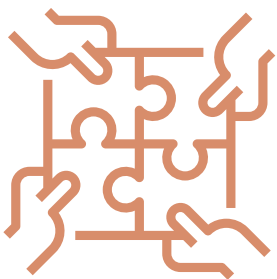


From October through December 2021, P3 worked with the Milwaukee Public Library to gather input for the plan across the organization. This included:

- ◀ Survey of all MPL staff (181 respondents)
- ◀ Survey of the MPL Board of Trustees
- ◀ Survey of library patrons (355 participants)
- ◀ Eight focus groups of staff
- ◀ Interviews with MPL Administration



After gathering, analyzing, and summarizing this input, P3 also conducted research on Racial Equity and Inclusion initiatives at other libraries across the country to learn from these national models.



P3 then formed an REI Strategy Team composed of 24 staff members that represented diverse perspectives across the library. This included three members from Administration, five managers, six supervisors, and 10 non-supervisory staff from nine different branches. Thirteen Strategy Team members identify as people of color. Together, they created the Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan through a series of facilitated meetings and feedback on draft documents. The MPL Leadership Team was engaged throughout, most often accepting and approving the work proposed by the strategy team.

Planning Process

Timeline highlights for the REI strategic planning process include:

- ◀ **JANUARY 25, 2022:** The REI Strategy Team reviewed and analyzed the data gathered from our input process and analysis of MPL and other libraries, defined the two main results for the initiative, brainstormed and prioritized factors they saw as supporting or impeding those results from happening at MPL, and identified research that would help them finalize these and build strategies.

P3 conducted research and interviews to answer the questions identified by the Strategy Team and gathered feedback from the MPL Leadership Team on the results and factor analysis.

- ◀ **FEBRUARY 24, 2022:** The team refined their results and priority factors, reviewed the data and research they requested (especially on leading practices from other library systems), and drafted strategies that could move the priority factors.

P3 assessed the strategy options with MPL Leadership to ascertain feasibility and conducted additional research, data gathering, and interviews at MPL and other libraries.

- ◀ **APRIL 20, 2022:** The Strategy Team refined strategies and performance measures, the workplan framework for implementation.

The Leadership Team approved the plan, authorized the Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee to oversee its implementation (reporting to the Library Director), and created a workplan, sequencing implementation with timeline, deadlines, and who will be responsible for each strategy.

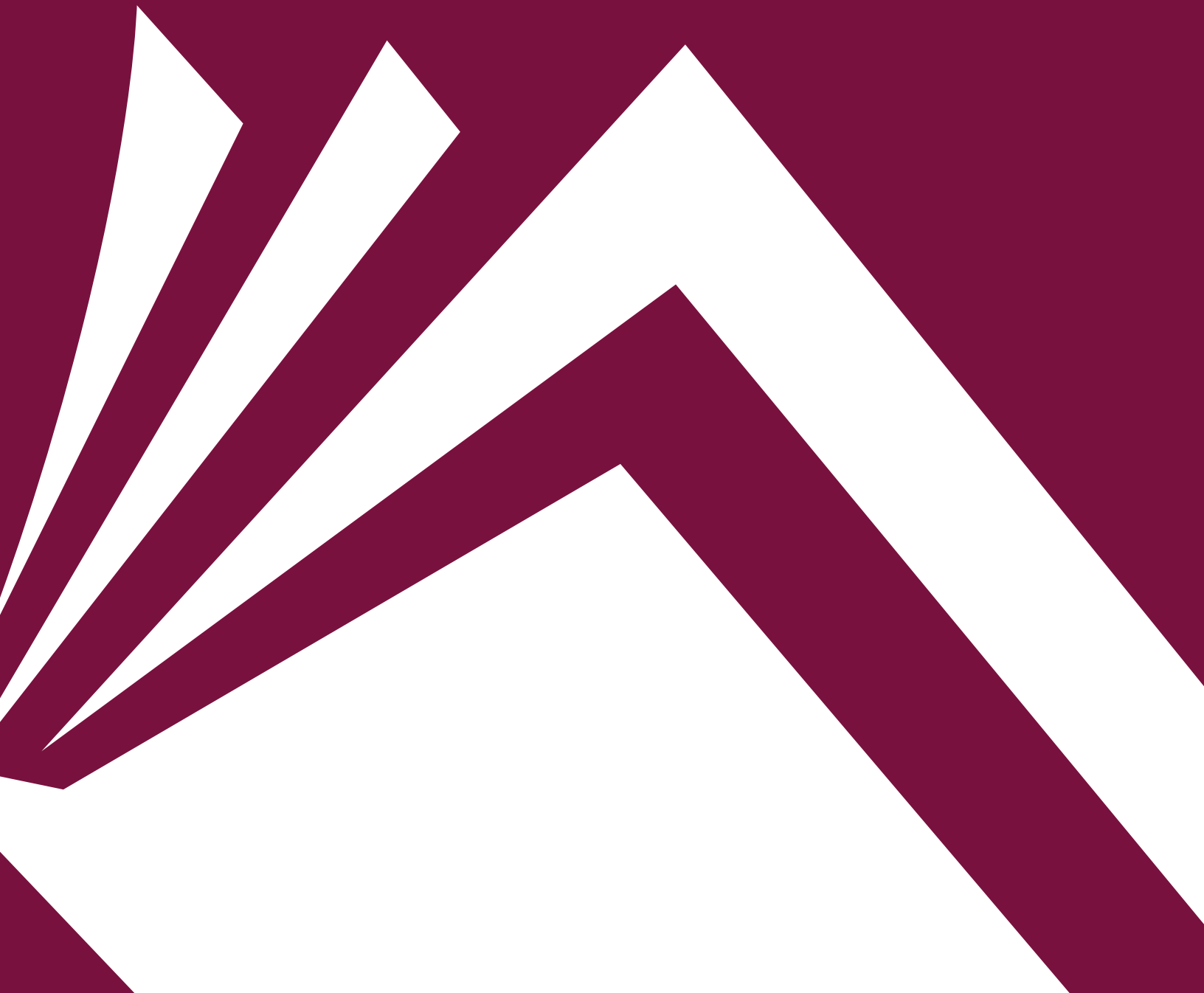
- ◀ **MAY 26 AND JUNE 1, 2022:** P3 presented the the Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan to the full MPL staff.

- ◀ **MAY 24, 2022:** Board approved the Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan.

- ◀ **JUNE 29, 2022:** The REI Committee completed 12 hours of training and orientation during the month to begin overseeing, coordinating, and evaluating implementation of the Plan. The committee is co-chaired by Eileen Force Cahill, Community Relations & Engagement Director, and Hermoine Bell-Henderson, Coordinator of Business, Technology, and Periodicals/ Library Services Manager.

Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan

RESULT ONE



RESULT ONE: *MPL attracts and retains employees across racial groups and roles who report feeling effective, engaged, and supported in their performance and growth at the Milwaukee Public Library.*

Indicators for Result One

In order to measure progress on this result and support continuous learning and improvement of the strategies, MPL will track the following indicators through an annual employee survey that measures:

- ◀ Employee satisfaction across position types and demographic groups
- ◀ Employee trust in leadership and feeling trusted by leadership across position types and demographic groups
- ◀ Employees feeling their ideas and perspectives are valued across position types and demographic groups
- ◀ Employees reporting that they feel connected to and supported by diverse colleagues; and
- ◀ Net Promoter Score

We anticipate the first employee survey will establish a baseline and that MPL will see increases in these scores as the plan is fully implemented.

Strategies to Achieve Result One

After brainstorming and prioritizing factors that support or impede this result and analyzing data and research related to those factors, the Strategy Team created the following strategies that together will move the result and indicators above.

1. Create a Library-wide Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee to oversee the REI Plan, and BIPOC staff affinity groups to support each other's development and support REI goals

Timeline: Begins June 2022

Metrics: REI Workplan goals met, Staff in BIPOC Affinity Group report benefits to engagement

The REI Committee is co-chaired by Eileen Force Cahill, Community Relations & Engagement Director, and Hermoine Bell-Henderson, Coordinator of Business, Technology, and Periodicals/Library Services Manager. Together with a diverse committee of 13 other colleagues from various roles in the Administration and MPL branches, they will oversee implementation of the REI Plan and Workplan. They will monitor and report to staff and other stakeholders on progress, coordinate activities across the Library, evaluate strategies for continuous learning and improvement, and hold staff accountable for implementation. The Committee will report directly to the Library Director.

The BIPOC affinity groups will be networking and mutual support groups for employees. They may also serve as a feedback loop for the REI efforts of the Library. This effort could be connected to other employee resource groups (ERGs) created by the City of Milwaukee.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Launch REI Task Force or Committee to guide implementation of these strategies
- ◀ Determine how REI Committee will be staffed and by who (consider a REI Manager for MPL)
- ◀ Develop a first year workplan for implementation
- ◀ Communicate progress and metrics on these strategies transparently to all staff
- ◀ Develop and authorize BIPOC affinity group

2. Develop more transparent decision making, productive and inclusive staff meetings, and feedback mechanisms that engage and reflect staff perspectives

Timeline: Begin Quarter 4, 2022

Metrics: Employees report greater self-efficacy and greater trust in leadership

In order to build greater trust, it is important to create more avenues for two-way communication. This is especially true when an organization is going through significant change. Change management requires continuous communication that helps employees understand what change will look like, why it was decided, what steps will be taken, the challenges employees may experience, and how they will be engaged and supported.

Trust is also built through consistent relational engagement (face-time). From staff, we heard the desire for Administration leadership to visit branches and interact with public service staff more often. These visits build relationships, trust, and help ensure staff are heard. Town Halls have been an important new avenue, but could be designed better to maximize engagement. A regular calendar of team meetings and more engaging team meeting designs could encourage planning, problem solving, and other forms of collaboration rather than just information exchanges. It will be helpful for employees to have a handy visual document describing feedback mechanisms and expectations.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Develop expectations and calendar of staff, department, and branch meetings, and a consistent design for meetings that engage staff experience and perspectives
- ◀ Create a visual document that checklists ways employees can share ideas and feedback, and what they should expect from managers in terms of communication, feedback, open doors, etc.
- ◀ Create a plan for Administration to have more consistent visits to and face-time with staff at branches

3. Implement and track annual employee, branch, and department goals and workplans tied to library strategic goals

Timeline: Begin Quarter 1, 2023

Metrics: (1) Annual workplans in place (2) Employees report clarity about annual goals for self, branch/department, and library (3) Employees report receiving regular feedback on performance toward goals

Another way to build trust, fairness, and efficacy in the organization is for employees to have clear goals, objectives, and workplans that feed into MPL's overall strategic goals. In order to do this, branches and departments should establish annual goals and objectives that contribute to MPL's strategic goals, and managers should then help employees develop goals and objectives that contribute to their department or branch's goals. Progress should be tracked at least quarterly with regular feedback and annual reviews. Many staff expressed confusion about authority and discretion, and many managers reported staff had more authority than they realized. Staff will benefit from greater clarity on the boundaries of their authority, where they do have discretion for actions and decisions within their duties, goals, and objectives. It is also important to celebrate when staff, branches, and departments achieve their goals and objectives.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Create a template and process for how departments and branches will collaboratively establish annual goals and objectives
- ◀ Create a template and process for workplanning for individual staff and managers, and a clear consistent process for regular staff check-ins on their progress and needs for support and annual reviews
- ◀ Develop checklists for positions that spell out where staff have authority and discretion regarding duties and tasks, and where they must seek approval
- ◀ Update employee evaluation tools and provide annual reviews to all employees

4. Create a comprehensive staff development program emphasizing racial equity and inclusion that supports learning and career advancement opportunities

Timeline: Begin Quarter 4, 2023

Metrics: (1) Staff report feeling prepared and supported in performing their duties and advancing careers in MPL (2) Staff report increased knowledge, skills, and practices to engage in conversations on race and support MPL's REI goals

Increased staff development will support diverse staff to advance, and all staff to better practice racial equity and inclusion. It is important that training be aligned with best practices of adult education in being practical, interactive, building off participant experience, utilizing actual scenarios, and creating mechanisms to follow up on practice. Instruction that is one-way does not produce the same learning or improvement. It is also important that staff and managers are clear on expectations about how much and what kinds of trainings they can access related to their duties, goals, and career paths.

MPL will build a training and development plan that includes internal trainings on priorities like REI, trainings offered by the City and other community partners. Ideally, some of these should be done in cohorts of employees in similar positions or on similar career paths to sustain the learning and practice. In addition, MPL should close branches once or twice a year for full-day staff trainings designed with diverse cross-section of staff that build esprit de corps, build skills that advance REI practice and other MPL goals, and engage the input and experience of staff for Library planning and continuous improvement.

Another theme that emerged through staff surveys and conversations was that staff and leadership do not know enough about different branches, departments and employee talents. There were many ideas for how staff can better learn and access the human and other resources of the Library. The orientation process for new staff could review the organizational chart and introduce different roles or departments and even enable shadow opportunities. In addition, departments could hold virtual and/or in person open houses each year where staff can learn about different department's roles, work, resources, and how to best engage them. A searchable directory of staff (via an Intranet) highlighting special skills and talents could be helpful, and staff believe it is important to compensate people for utilizing special skills like language or conducting trainings, etc. Finally, a formal mentorship program could also support career and skill development.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Develop a staff development plan, building on existing offerings with learning opportunities to support employees in their duties and career advancement (and clarify cost/funding for them when needed)

- ◀ Within staff development plan, there will be specific REI trainings offered to staff each year
- ◀ Clarify manager and employee expectations in terms of participation in staff development opportunities
- ◀ Organize semi-annual or annual all-staff trainings that support REI and other goals, engage input and feedback from employees, and build esprit de corps
- ◀ Create Open Houses, directories, and other resources for sharing employee and department roles and assets; Also update and streamline mentorship and job shadow policies

5. Work with city to accelerate hiring and increase pathways to career advancement by revisiting job classifications and requirements to better recognize staff service and experience

Timeline: Quarter 4, 2024

Metrics: Increase in BIPOC hires for all roles, including management roles

In order to increase diversity at all levels of the library and ensure that employees' skill sets are aligned with their positions, their teams, and their public service duties, it is recommended that the Library improve recruitment and advancement practices. This may include re-visiting the requirement for MLIS degrees in management roles as some other library systems have done, recognizing specific experience and service in the organization along with credentials. In addition, it can include clearer pathways connected to training or education partnerships that help staff obtain the skills, experience, and credentials necessary for management roles (with tuition reimbursement or scholarship benefits). MPL should work with the new Mayor, Department of Employee Relations, and the Common Council on ways to improve hiring equity by speeding up the hiring process and eliminating or easing barriers such as drug testing and physical examinations.

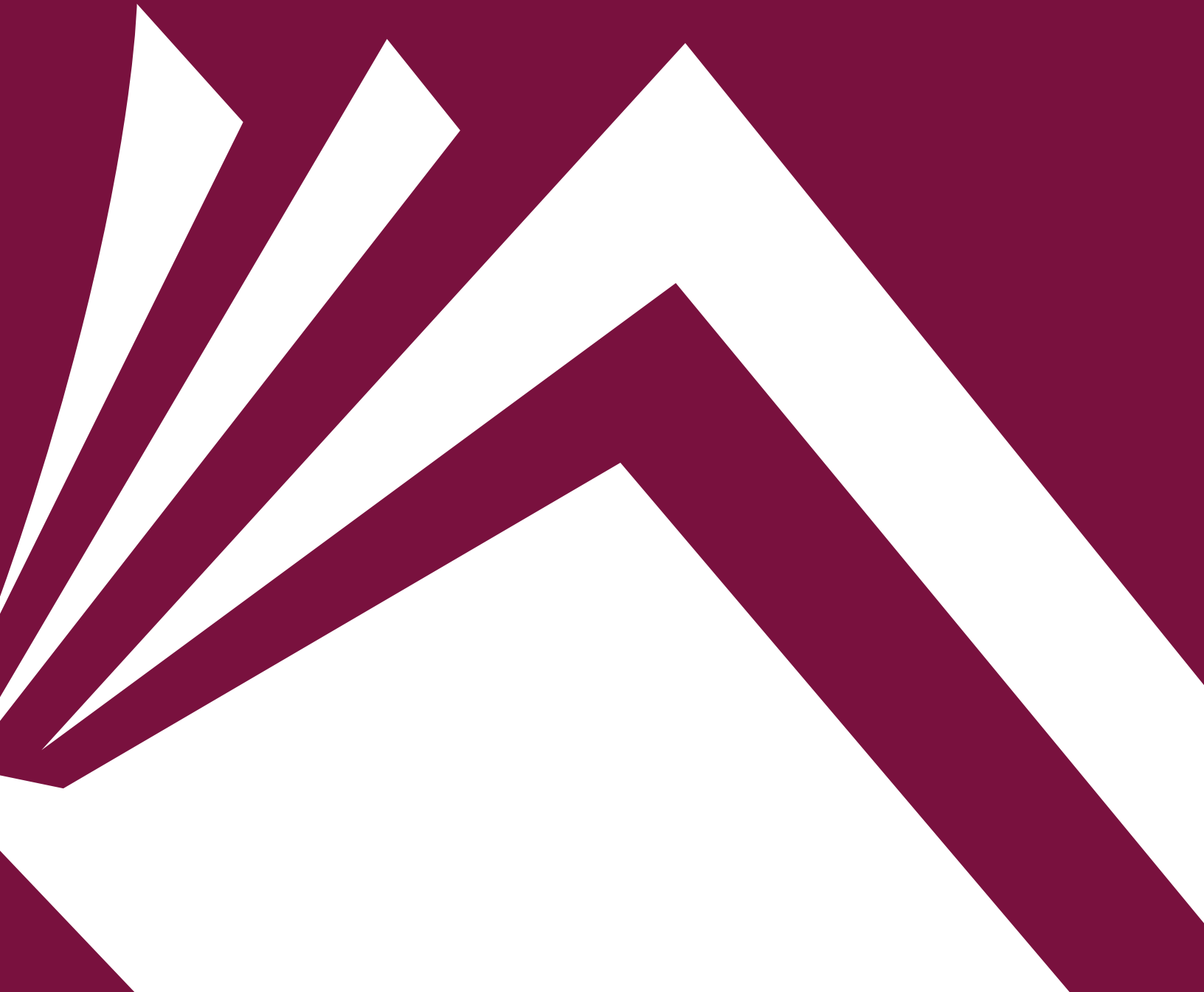
Staff expressed concern that managers are often promoted for technical skills instead of people skills. They would like to see candidates for management interviewed, hired, and reviewed more explicitly on their personnel management, collaboration, communication, and customer service skills. Staff also suggest that MPL better promote open positions internally. MPL should also consider more opportunities for high school and college age staff.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Work with DER to complete equity audit of positions and share data to advocate for equitable hiring, advancement, and compensation within MPL
- ◀ Develop and advocate improvements to the hiring process to the Mayor/DER
- ◀ Strengthen management interview process to include interpersonal skills and scenarios
- ◀ Communicate process in brief one-pager (infographic) for internal hiring process, how positions are posted, what internal candidates should expect, etc.
- ◀ Develop plan for supporting career paths by revisiting job classifications and requirements and helping staff gain skills, degrees necessary

Racial Equity and Inclusion Plan

RESULT TWO



RESULT TWO: *Patrons across racial groups report feeling well served and engaged by the Milwaukee Public Library*

1. Define our approach to hospitality and update our code of conduct with training to help staff address issues in trauma-informed ways that support staff and patron safety

Timeline: : Quarter 4, 2022

Metrics: (1) Increase in patron satisfaction (2) Reduction in security incidents (3) Employees report feeling better equipped to de-escalate emerging conflicts

Library staff will be helped by a consistent approach to patron service across sites, one that is designed to guide patrons from entry into the building to accessing what they need. This approach should help the patron “get to yes” without compromising dignity or safety. Staff believe that the code of conduct and security protocols should be updated with input from security and public service staff. Specifically, staff asked for tools to address conflict earlier before it escalates to a security or police call. Scenario-based trainings (learning by reconsidering actual incidents and experiences) and trauma-informed practices will help staff de-escalate conflict and hold boundaries. The library should also build on past efforts to hire or partner with social workers through UWM or local agencies to support libraries with more social needs and security incidents. Some also suggested directly hiring security again through MPL instead of contracting with an outside agency.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Develop and train staff in consistent customer service approach, and scenario-based training for de-escalating conflict in a trauma-informed way
- ◀ Revisit code of conduct, and clarify approach and steps for de-escalating emerging conflicts with patrons (clarify proper roles and boundaries to protect staff and patrons)
- ◀ Develop partnerships with social workers or others with social services experience to help de-escalate issues with patrons and support staff at libraries that have a higher rate of security incidents and more patrons with social needs.

2. Build mutually-beneficial partnerships to expand the services and programs of the Library and our community partners

Timeline: Quarter 1, 2023

Metrics: (1) Number of partnerships and programs with BIPOC-led groups (2) Increase in patrons from BIPOC zip codes

One way to increase BIPOC resident engagement with the library is to partner with organizations that are led by and/or predominantly serve BIPOC populations. Local organizations often don't know how the library could be helpful to their work and outcomes beyond offering meeting space. Staff suggested that a *Partnership Kit* with examples of past partnerships, criteria MPL seeks for effective partners, and a menu of possibilities would aid development of mutually beneficial partnerships. It is important to continue thinking of new ways the Library's assets and reach can support such groups. Also, staff could learn from having an internal catalogue of existing partnerships, as few know the scope of current partnerships and opportunities. Building on past efforts, staff should engage in planning around underserved populations and consider non-traditional partnerships with places those populations go

whether doctor's offices, hair salons, neighborhood restaurants, or other places people already know and trust. In addition, staff have also suggested in-house computer classes and job assistance as areas for partnership to meet clear needs. This strategy will be enhanced by implementation of the community engagement strategy.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Build *Partnership Kit* with examples and menu of ways groups can partner with the Library
- ◀ Build an internal catalogue of existing partnerships
- ◀ Identify potential partners who are led by and/or serve BIPOC populations, and determine best outreach strategies
- ◀ Conduct first round of outreach to form new partnerships

3. Curate library collections with more diverse selectors, publishers, and input from staff and community members

Timeline: Quarter 3, 2023

Metrics: (1) Patrons report access to greater number of culturally relevant materials (2) BIPOC employees report greater number of culturally relevant materials

Diverse residents should be able to find relevant materials at their neighborhood libraries. In order for that, the library should better promote how patrons can request MPL purchases, better display culturally relevant materials in neighborhood libraries, and perhaps create a community panel of diverse patrons to advise library material purchases and placement. Public service staff should also have a clearer role in requesting culturally relevant materials for the populations they serve. It may also be helpful to perform a diversity audit of branch collections. Staff also suggest clarifying and strengthening pathways for public service staff input on culturally relevant materials and how to promote through locations, displays, signifiers (stickers, shelf labels), and programs.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Promote process for requesting MPL purchases
- ◀ Create a community advisory group on culturally relevant resources
- ◀ Provide training to public services staff on how to better promote and recommend BIPOC authors and relevant topics
- ◀ Consider other ways to bring more diverse perspectives to the selection and placement of resources for adult, children and teen books with POC characters.

4. Refine fining policies, and make sure our approach is simple to communicate and understand

Timeline: Quarter 4, 2024

Metrics: (1) Number of patrons receiving relief by Zip Code (2) Number of patrons re-registered with MPL

Many libraries have begun to eliminate fines (as distinct from material fees for lost or damaged materials) as part of their equity work. In Milwaukee, this is complicated because it requires municipal and state action as well as coordination with the suburbs in the federated library system.

MPL experimented with fine forgiveness in 2016 and it led to thousands of re-registered patrons. MPL will explore options for addressing fines in ways that improve equity and engagement. Examples may include prioritizing solutions for accounts tied to children, encouraging more patrons to use digital resources, limited amnesty or forgiveness campaigns (perhaps with philanthropic support), program participation to pay down fines, and clearer staff authority to waive some fees or create plans with patrons for fee reduction. In addition, staff recommended reducing or eliminating the use of collection agencies, especially for children's accounts. Simple, clear visual messaging on fining policies and options for paying should be displayed and marketed to patrons.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Refine fining policies in terms of forgiveness campaigns (or use of philanthropic dollars for that purpose), use of collection agencies, and public service staff authority to waive or help patrons plan so they can utilize resources again (simplify fine dispute form)
- ◀ Develop clear, simple, visual communications about fining policies and options to make it easier for patrons to understand how to come back

5. Create a community engagement plan, train staff in community engagement, and enable staff to discover and engage with neighborhood assets

Timeline: Quarter 4, 2024

Metrics: (1) Increase in patrons from neighborhoods around branches (2) Employees feel equipped with knowledge, skills, and practices to support robust community engagement

Staff recommended that clearer expectations for community engagement, training, and time available for engagement will help them increase programs, partnerships, and patron engagement. This may require different service models and mindset changes among branch managers about staffing and desk time. Community engagement can also be done virtually and by inviting people into the library. Perhaps a few Milwaukee neighborhood-focused philanthropies could fund pilot projects for community engagement and neighborhood partnerships. The Library might also create programs for patrons at neighborhood libraries where together with staff they "asset-map" their neighborhoods to identify trusted residents, organizations, businesses, and other resources.

Key Actions:

- ◀ Include community engagement and facilitation trainings in the annual training calendar
- ◀ Set clear expectations for staff community outreach, and ensure there is time and ability to be outside the library
- ◀ Pilot a new funded outreach effort in two neighborhoods in partnership with residents or local organizations

MPL's commitment to a thorough and transparent racial equity and inclusion assessment has been evident throughout this process. The new REI Committee is well-positioned to hold MPL accountable to implementing the key strategies and keep all MPL staff updated on progress, challenges and opportunities. In doing so, MPL will work toward building a thriving workplace culture in which employees across racial groups feel effective and supported in their work, and patrons across Milwaukee are well-served and engaged.

MPL REI Workplan



Result 1: MPL attracts and retains employees across racial groups and roles who report feeling effective, engaged, and supported in their performance and growth at MPL

Indicators:	<i>Increase in employee satisfaction across position types and demographic groups as measured in annual surveys</i>
	<i>Increase in employees trusting leadership and feeling trusted by leadership across position types and demographic groups as measured in annual surveys</i>
	<i>Increase in employees feeling their ideas and perspectives are valued across position types and demographic groups as measured in annual surveys</i>
	<i>Increase in employees reporting that they feel connected to and supported by diverse colleagues as measured in annual surveys</i>
	<i>Increase in Net Promoter Score</i>

Strategy 1	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Create a Library-wide Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee to oversee the REI Plan, and BIPOC staff affinity groups to support each other's development and support REI goals Metrics: (1) REI workplan goals met (2) Employees in BIPOC affinity group(s) report benefits from participation	Launch REI Committee to guide implementation of these strategies	Task Force created, meetings scheduled for year	2022-Q2
	Determine how this will be staffed and by who (consider an REI Manager for MPL)	Decisions made	2022-Q2
	Develop a first year workplan for implementation (including standing meetings)	Workplan complete	2022-Q2
	Communicate back progress and metrics on these strategies transparently to all staff	Staff receive communication after each meeting, staff report awareness of REI work being implemented	2022-Q2
	Develop and authorize BIPOC affinity group(s) that enable staff in different role types to participate	Participation, Satisfaction	2022-Q2

Strategy 2	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Develop more transparent decision making, staff meetings, and feedback mechanisms that engage and respond to more staff perspectives Measure: (1) Employees report greater self-efficacy and greater trust in leadership	Develop expectation and calendar of staff, department, and branch meetings, and a consistent design for meetings that engage staff experience and perspectives	Calendar created, Surveys demonstrate effectiveness of consistent meetings	2022-Q4
	"Create a visual document that checklists ways employees can share ideas and feedback, and what they should expect from managers and central administration in terms of communication, feedback, open doors, etc.	Infographic on feedback mechanisms, expectations; Feedback channels actively used, staff report feeling heard more often	2022-Q4
	Create a plan for more consistent visits and face time from central staff to branches (e.g., key Administration leaders could visit 2 branches/month for face time and listening)	Develop calendar of branch visits by Central staff, leadership, staff report greater connection, trust with Admin	2022-Q4

Strategy 3	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Implement and track annual employee, branch, and department goals and workplans tied to MPL's strategic goals Metrics: (1) Annual workplans in place (2) Employees report clarity about annual goals for self, branch/department, and library (3) Employees report receiving regular feedback on performance toward goals	Create a template and process for how departments and branches will collaboratively establish annual goals and objectives	Template and process created, in place	2023-Q1
	Create a template and process for workplanning for individual staff and managers, and a clear consistent process for regular staff check-ins on their progress and needs for support and annual reviews	Workplans in place, employees report greater clarity on goals and progress	2023-Q1
	Develop checklists for positions that spell out where staff have authority and discretion regarding duties and tasks, and where they must seek approval	Checklist template complete, employees report greater clarity on authority	2023-Q1
	Update employee evaluation tools and provide annual reviews to all employees	All employees get reviewed	2023-Q1

Strategy 4	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Create a comprehensive staff development program emphasizing racial equity and inclusion that supports learning and career advancement opportunities Measures: (1) Staff report feeling prepared and supported in performing their duties and advancing careers in MPL (2) Staff report increased knowledge, skills, and practices to engage in conversations on race and support MPL's REI goals	Develop a staff development plan, building on existing offerings with learning opportunities to support employees in their duties and career advancement (and clarify cost/funding for them when needed)	Annual Training calendar complete; Attendance by race, position in training opportunities	2023-Q4
	Within staff development plan, offer specific REI trainings to staff each year.	Training calendar, attendance by race, position in training opportunities	2023-Q4
	Clarify manager and employee expectations in terms of participation in staff development opportunities	Policy established	2023-Q4
	Organize semi-annual or annual all staff trainings that support REI and other goals, engage input and feedback from employees, and build esprit de corps	Retreat scheduled; Retreat held; Employee survey on effectiveness	2023-Q4
	Update and streamline mentorship and job shadow policies	Resources completed, employees report these opportunities have been helpful	2023-Q4
	Create Open Houses, directories, and other resources for sharing employee and department roles and assets;	Resources completed, employees report these opportunities have been helpful	2023-Q4
	Also update and streamline mentorship and job shadow policies	Resources completed, employees report these opportunities have been helpful	2023-Q4

Strategy 5	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
<p>Work with city to accelerate hiring and increase pathways to career advancement by revisiting job classifications and requirements to better recognize staff service and experience</p> <p>Measures: (1) Increase in BIPOC hires for all roles, including management roles</p>	Work with DER to complete equity audit of positions and share data to advocate for equitable hiring, advancement, and compensation within MPL	Audit complete, changes that support equity documented	2024-Q4
	Develop and advocate improvements to the hiring process to the Mayor/DER	Recommendations complete, delivered; Recs adopted	2024-Q4
	Strengthen management interview process to include interpersonal skills and scenarios	Refined interview process in use	2024-Q4
	Communicate process in brief 1 pager (infographic) for internal hiring process, how positions are posted, what internal candidates should expect, etc	Communications shared with all staff	2024-Q4
	Develop plan for supporting career paths by revisiting job classifications and requirements and helping staff gain skills, degrees necessary	Plan in place, communicated, staff of color participating in, increase in advancement of POC staff	2024-Q4

Result 2: Patrons across racial groups report feeling well served and engaged by the Milwaukee Public Library.

Indicators:	<i>Patron surveys demonstrate greater satisfaction with library service from BIPOC patrons</i>		
	<i>Increase in membership, visits, and program participation from predominantly BIPOC zip codes</i>		
Strategy 1	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
<p>Define our approach to hospitality and update our code of conduct with training to help staff address issues in trauma-informed ways that support staff and patron safety</p> <p>Measures: (1) Increase in patron satisfaction (2) Reduction in security incidents (3) Employees report feeling better equipped to de-escalate emerging conflicts</p>	Develop and train staff in consistent customer service approach, and recurring scenario-based training in de-escalating conflict in a trauma-informed way	Approach outlined, trainings held, number of staff participating	2022-Q4
	Revisit code of conduct, and clarify approach and steps for de-escalating emerging conflicts with patrons (Clarify proper roles and boundaries to protect staff and patrons)	Code of Conduct updated, de-escalation steps outlined, Staff report better ability to de-escalate	2022-Q4
	Develop partnerships to provide social worker or other social service with expertise in de-escalating issues, supporting staff at libraries that have more social needs and security incidents	Pilots initiated	2022-Q4
	Communicate back progress and metrics on these strategies transparently to all staff	Staff receive communication after each meeting, staff report awareness of REI work being implemented	2022-Q2

Strategy 2	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Build mutually-beneficial partnerships to expand the services and programs of the Library and our community partners Metrics: (1) Number of partnerships and programs with BIPOC-led organizations (2) Increase in patron visits from BIPOC zip codes	Build <i>Partnership Kit</i> with examples and menu of ways groups can partner with the Library	<i>Partnership Kit</i> complete	2023-Q1
	Build an internal catalogue of existing partnerships	Catalogue complete	2023-Q1
	Identify potential partners who are led by and/or serve BIPOC populations, and determine best outreach strategies	Partner list with priorities, approaches complete	2023-Q1
	Conduct first round of outreach to form new partnerships	New partnerships in place, BIPOC led groups report benefits of library partnership	2023-Q1

Strategy 3	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Curate library collections with more diverse selectors, publishers, and input from staff and community members Measures: (1) Patrons report greater number of culturally relevant materials (2) BIPOC employees report greater number of culturally relevant materials	Promote process for requesting MPL purchases	Promotions implemented, increase in requests	2023-Q3
	Create a community advisory group on culturally relevant resources	Advisory group meeting	2023-Q3
	Provide training to public services staff on how to better promote and recommend BIPOC authors and relevant topics	Training completed, staff report helpfulness of training	2023-Q3
	Consider other ways to bring more diverse perspectives to the selection and placement of resources, especially for children and teen books with POC characters even if not available through Baker & Taylor	New approaches identified and implemented, increase in purchases of culturally relevant materials	2023-Q3

Strategy 4	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Refine fining policies, and make sure approach is simple to communicate and understand Measures: (1) Number of patrons receiving relief by Zip Code (2) Number of people re-registering accounts with MPL	Refine fining policies in terms of forgiveness campaigns (or use of philanthropic dollars for that purpose), use of collection agencies, and public service staff authority to waive or help patrons plan so they can utilize resources again (simplify Fine dispute form)	Refined fine policies and campaign implemented, increase in renewed memberships esp from POC zips	2023-Q4
	Develop clear, simple, visual communications about fining policies and options to make it easier for patrons to understand how to come back	Materials complete, decrease in lapsed members due to fines	2023-Q4

Strategy 5	Key Actions	Metrics	Start
Create a community engagement plan, train staff in community engagement, and enable staff to discover and engage with neighborhood assets Metrics: (1) Increase in patrons from neighborhoods around branches (2) Employees feel equipped with knowledge, skills, and practices to support robust community engagement	Include community engagement and facilitation trainings in the annual training calendar	Trainings Scheduled, Number of staff who complete	2024-Q1
	Set clear expectations for staff community outreach, and ensure there is time and ability to be outside the library	Expectations or policies in place	2024-Q1
	Pilot a new funded outreach effort in two neighborhoods in partnership with residents or local organizations	Pilots initiated	2024-Q1



Acknowledgements



P3 DEVELOPMENT GROUP TEAM

- ◀ Dominique Samari, Partner
- ◀ Jessie Tobin, Project Manager
- ◀ Paul Schmitz, Planning Consultant
- ◀ Sue Northey, Evaluation Specialist
- ◀ TJ Cobb, Evaluation Specialist
- ◀ Marquayla Ellison, Graphic Designer

P3 would like to thank the entire Milwaukee Public Library staff and leadership. We are especially grateful to all those who provided their insights and expertise throughout the planning process, including the following groups:

LEADERSHIP TEAM

- ◀ Joan Johnson
- ◀ Eileen Force Cahill
- ◀ Anne Rasmussen
- ◀ Hermoine Bell-Henderson
- ◀ Jennifer Meyer-Stearns

REI STRATEGY TEAM

- ◀ Kevin Atkinson
- ◀ Hermoine Bell-Henderson
- ◀ Kenya Biarni
- ◀ Mary Bird
- ◀ Maria Burke
- ◀ Eileen Force Cahill
- ◀ Tanya Dhein
- ◀ Petra Duecker
- ◀ Jen Fait
- ◀ Lauren Falicki
- ◀ Tiffany Goggins
- ◀ Dan Lee
- ◀ Gwendolyn Long
- ◀ Mary Lopez
- ◀ Tammy Mays
- ◀ Lydia Nimke
- ◀ Karli Pederson
- ◀ Alejandra Rodriguez
- ◀ Kevin Sullivan
- ◀ Kirsten Thompson
- ◀ Jamal Tisdale
- ◀ Peter Van Peursesem
- ◀ Amy Waldman
- ◀ Paul Wellington, Jr.

REI COMMITTEE

- ◀ Hermoine Bell-Henderson, co-chair
- ◀ Maria Burke
- ◀ Eileen Force Cahill, co-chair
- ◀ Eric Johnson
- ◀ Mary Lopez
- ◀ Justin McCulla
- ◀ Karli Pederson
- ◀ Victoria Robertson
- ◀ Amy Waldman



MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC LIBRARY



Racial Equity & Inclusion Plan

