

Upper School Affinity Groups

After learning about the importance of affinity spaces in positive identity development in the Lower and Middle School, students in the Upper School can choose to continue to participate in any affinity group they wish. They are encouraged to attend and welcome to join throughout the year. Often, these groups are led by facilitators with similar identities and experiences to the spaces they organize. In order to meet the developmental needs among students in the Upper School, there are two of each affinity group, including the junior group (jr.) for fifth grade (10/11s) and sixth grade (11/12s) and the senior group (sr.) for seventh grade (12/13s) and eighth grade (13/14s). The senior group often takes the lead in supporting the junior group by participating in meetings and by providing mentoring and support.

- The **Kids of Color (KOC) Affinity Group** was founded in 1992 for children who identify as Black/African American/Caribbean/of African descent or ancestry, Hispanic and/or Latinx, Asian (East, South East, South) American & Pacific Islander, or Indigenous.
- The **Multiracial Affinity Group** was created in 2020 to support our growing number of biracial families and children who are experiencing multiple racial backgrounds by providing a time and space to process and celebrate their mixed culture.
- The **White Anti-Racist Affinity Group** is a place for White students to discuss and explore their experiences as White people living in a racist society.

The following groups support children's identities around family structure and gender.

- **Gender Spectrum Alliance (GSA) Jr.** continues their own education regarding gender, gender identity, and gender expression via personal storytelling and debate. They actively co-create a community that upholds and uplifts their growing understanding of self, allowing room for questioning and the evolution of identities. This group grapples with how best to support the adults in their lives with their understanding of gender diversity and sexual orientation. This includes both nuclear and extended family, as well as adults within our community. Like the other GSA group, they imagine and develop ways they can be leaders in moving this adult learning forward.
- **Gender Spectrum Alliance (GSA) Sr.** analyzes their own gender identity and attraction. Their desire to discuss their deepening understanding of self with their peers guides their conversations and the structure of their time together. They have heartfelt conversations around calling in adults versus calling them out, deeply understanding that the former has the capacity to affect real and long-lasting growth and positive change. Like the other GSA group, they imagine and develop ways they can be leaders in moving this adult learning forward.

- **Banana Splits** is a group that meets once a month in the fall and supports students whose families are separating, separated, or divorced.
- **Adoption Affinity Group** begins in the fall and meets monthly, as well as for potlucks and workshops provided by the parent Adoption Affinity Group.