



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION NUMBER: (20150427-4a)

Recommend Undoing Racism Training for City and Austin Police Department Personnel

WHEREAS, racial inequities exist due to policies and practices created by institutions based on implicit biases that lead to negative outcomes for people of color ; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin engaged in the removal of African American and Latino communities through the implementation of city ordinance in 1928 from what is now known as Clarksville to East Austin; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin defied the Federal ruling in Brown vs. Board of Education in 1954 mandating desegregation of the school systems, with Austin resisting desegregation of its school system until 1978; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, African Americans made up only 8% of the city's population yet they accounted for 30% of those who filed formal complaints against the Austin Police Department.

(See *Outlier: The Case of Austin's Declining African-American Population*, Urban Policy, Research and Analysis, Eric Tang, University of Texas); and

WHEREAS, Blacks are 3.4 times more likely than Whites and 2.2 times more likely than Hispanics to be booked into jail in Travis County (2014 CAN Dashboard); and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Blacks/African Americans had a 1 out of 6 likelihood of being searched during a traffic stop, Hispanics/Latino 1 out of 9, and Caucasians 1 out of 22 (Austin Police Monitor presentation to Council on Public Safety during March 23, 2015 Special Called Meeting); and

WHEREAS, 1 out of 3 African American and Hispanic children under age 18 in the City of Austin are living in poverty while less than 1 out of 10 non-Hispanic white children and 1 out of 10 Asian children live in poverty in Austin. (Presentation by City Demographer at Special Called Meeting of Council on March 6, 2015); and

WHEREAS, 51.8% of African Americans, compared to 5.4% of non-Hispanic White children under the age of 5 in 2013, were living in poverty in the City of Austin (Presentation by City Demographer at Special Called meeting of Council on March 6, 2015); and

WHEREAS, students of color are disproportionality disciplined compared to white children (See *Breaking School Rules*, a study by the Council of State Governments with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University of 1 million Texas public school students); and

WHEREAS, in the Austin Independent School District, African American students are 3.86 times more likely than their peers to be identified as having an emotional/behavioral disability (EBD) and 2.24 times more likely to have an intellectual disability (AISD Summer Report 2010); and

WHEREAS, 22% of African American children are sent to disciplinary alternative education programs compared to 10% of the student population in AISD, and 65% of Latino children are referred to juvenile justice compared to 60% of the student population (TEA Statistics); and

WHEREAS, 34% of Black and 48% of Hispanic high school graduates in AISD are college ready compared to 84% of white students (Texas Education Agency, CAN Dashboard); and

WHEREAS, Blacks/African Americans and Latinos/Hispanics in Travis County experienced much higher rates of obesity, 41.7% and 36.5% respectively, compared to 19.4% of Whites (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, while cancer and heart disease are the leading causes of death in Travis County, Blacks/African Americans experience disproportionately higher rates of death due to cancer and heart disease with the death rate due to cancer for Black/African Americans (200.9 per 100,000 people) significantly higher than the rate of whites (164.4 per 100,000 people) and the death rate due to heart disease for Black/African Americans (220.9 per 100,000 people) significantly higher than the rate of whites (156.9 per 100,000 people) (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, approximately 20% of Travis County adults experienced five or more days of poor mental health in the past month, however a greater proportion of Blacks/African Americans (24.3%) experienced five or more days of poor mental health in the past month; and

WHEREAS, a greater proportion of Latinos/Hispanics (26.6%) reported poor mental health than did Whites (17.9%) (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, a greater percentage of White mothers (80.9%) received prenatal care in the first trimester than Black/African American (59%) mothers or Latino/Hispanic (46.7%) mothers (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of newly diagnosed HIV and AIDS cases are among Blacks/African Americans (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, while 36.5% of Black/African American and 27.2% of Latino/Hispanic adults in Travis County in need of healthcare did not see a doctor due to cost, only 10.2% of Whites who needed to see a doctor did not see a doctor due to cost (ATCHHSD Community Health Assessment); and

WHEREAS, public funding for minorities in Arts and Culture has decreased from 20% in 1997/98 to 12% in 2010/11; and

WHEREAS, Undoing Racism training set the foundation to enact Texas legislation mandating state agencies to address racial inequities in child welfare; and

WHEREAS, Undoing Racism training led to an understanding of implicit bias and once addressed led to improved outcomes for children in foster care; and

WHEREAS, the Undoing Racism training has been a catalyst for organizations to review, analyze, and recommend policies and practices that could reduce poor outcomes in families of color; and

WHEREAS, Undoing Racism has led to an understanding of racial oppression within systems.

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Human Rights Commission encourages the Austin City Council to:

(A) Direct the City Manager to collaborate with Undoing Racism Austin to develop a strategic plan, budget, an action plan, and timetable for a minimum of six (6) Undoing Racism

trainings by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond for City of Austin elected officials, department heads, and staff;

(B) Allocate necessary funding for these six Undoing Racism trainings in the FY 2016 budget; and

(C) Develop a strategic plan, budget, action plan, and timetable for continued future Undoing Racism trainings, with the goal of training all City employees.

Date of Approval: April 27, 2015

Record of the vote: 6-0 in favor

Attest: _____

Jonathan Bahad