

**Resolution establishing racial equity as a core principle of the Board of Commissioners. (Board of Commissioners)**

**WHEREAS**, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners has demonstrated a long-standing record of promoting racial equity, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of county government. This commitment has been exemplified through the development and execution of the Rise Together Blueprint to Reduce Poverty in Franklin County, the Innovating New Pathways to Shared Prosperity Economic Inclusion Task Force and historic investments in racial equity training, and most recently codified through its Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis<sup>1</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS**, these significant initiatives identify racism as a root cause of poverty, constricted economic mobility, and health disparities; and

**WHEREAS**, racism is a social construct with no biological basis<sup>2</sup> that nonetheless permeates within Franklin County, throughout the state of Ohio, and across the country; and

**WHEREAS**, historic legislative and policy decisions implemented across all levels of government and society were designed with the express intent of disenfranchising people of color; and

**WHEREAS**, the impacts of institutional and systemic racism manifest in disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment, health, and criminal justice; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans experience significantly lower home-ownership rates compared to the overall population both locally<sup>3</sup> and across the state of Ohio<sup>4</sup>, and more than two-thirds of them live in areas of elevated or concentrated poverty<sup>5</sup>. According to the Community Shelter Board, Black families make up 76 percent of those served in the family emergency shelter system and 63 percent of the entire emergency shelter system in Franklin County; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans are overwhelmingly represented in Franklin County's urban school districts and are severely underrepresented in Franklin County's suburban school districts, which consistently score

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<sup>1</sup> Resolution No. 0341-20

<sup>2</sup> García JJ, Sharif MZ. Black Lives Matter: A Commentary on Race and Racism. AmJ Public Health. 2015; 105: e27–e30. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2015.302706).

<sup>3</sup> Franklin County Poverty Analysis, Michael Outrich, Mikyung Baek, PhD., and Glennon Sweeney, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> American Community Survey, 2018 Data Section, US Census Bureau, May 25, 2020: <[www.acs.gov](http://www.acs.gov)>.<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.2018.html>>.

<sup>5</sup> American Community Survey, regression analysis performed by FCDJFS STAR team.

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higher on Ohio Department of Education Report Cards<sup>6</sup>. African American males make up 17 percent of Franklin County's youth population but make up 26 percent of the Franklin County truancy diversion program population<sup>7</sup> and African American students are disciplined at much higher rates than their white peers nationally<sup>8</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans experience drastically lower employment rates and median household income compared to the overall population statewide<sup>9</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, African Americans have lower life expectancies than white residents; are far more likely than other races to die prematurely (before the age of 75); and to die of heart disease or stroke, according to the Health Policy Institute of Ohio. Black residents also have higher levels of infant mortality, lower birth weights, are more likely to be overweight or obese, have adult diabetes, and have long-term complications from diabetes<sup>10</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, the incarceration rate for African American residents is nearly three times the rate for white residents in Franklin County.<sup>11</sup> Black residents make up just 12 percent of the Ohio population, but they make up 47 percent of the population of men in prisons, 74 percent of the population of women in prisons, and 53 percent of youth in juvenile detention facilities<sup>12</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, existing racial disparities are further exacerbated by a siloed human services system consisting of myriad local, state, and federal assistance programs with complex and varying eligibility criteria; and

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<sup>6</sup> African-American students are overwhelmingly represented in urban school districts (44%) but are severely underrepresented in suburban school districts (9%). Franklin County's suburban schools average a B on Ohio department of Education's Report Cards, while urban schools average a D. Ohio Department of Education, Data Section, State of Ohio, May 24, 2020: <<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data>>.

<sup>7</sup> Puzzanhera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2019). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2018." Online. Available: <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezapop/>.

<sup>8</sup> Tom Rudd, "Racial Disproportionality in School Discipline: Implicit Bias is Heavily Implicated," Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at the Ohio State University, February 2014, accessed at: <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/racial-disproportionality-schools-02.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> African American median household income for Franklin County residents is roughly, \$25,000/year – grossly lower than the Ohio African American median – \$33,000 a year. African American median household income is grossly below their contemporaries: White families: \$48,000, Hispanic families: \$37,000, and Asian Families: \$57,000. American Community Survey, 2018 Data Section, US Census Bureau, May 25, 2020: <[www.acs.gov](http://www.acs.gov)>. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.2018.html>>.

<sup>10</sup> Health Policy Institute of Ohio, 2017 Health Value Dashboard (Health equity profiles).

<sup>11</sup> Franklin County Poverty Analysis, Michael Outrich, Mikyung Baek, PhD., and Glennon Sweeney, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections 2019 Annual Report and Ohio Department of Youth Services

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**WHEREAS**, in April 2011, the Board of Commissioners established core principles designed to provide strategic direction, clarity and guidance as it pertains to the day-to-day work of the county and serving residents. These core principles of community safety and security, job creation and economic development, health and human services, environmental stability, and fiscally responsible government operations serve as a lens through which the Board of Commissioners view all decision making; and

**WHEREAS**, the commitment to racial equity is implicit within all of those core principles, but the depth of the Board of Commissioners' commitment and the significance of the moment call for explicit, unequivocal recognition; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

That racial equity be codified as a permanent consideration within the Board of Commissioners' core principles; and

That within that core principle of racial equity includes a pledge to:

1. Disrupt poverty by seeking to proactively advance racial equity.
2. Collaborate with residents, community partners and institutions to promote racial equity in all areas of government, education, criminal justice, health, housing and economic success to increase the value of services provided to the community.
3. Commit to creating and sustaining an organizational culture that applies equity principles internally in order to end disparities in hiring and promotions.
4. Increase opportunities in contracting and access for funding to minority businesses.

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cc: Commissioners  
All County Agencies