

1 **Resolution to Promote Ethnic and Racial Sensitivity Training for School Employees**

2 **Whereas**, racism is a system of inequality based on race prejudice and the belief that one race is innately
3 superior to another race; and,

4 **Whereas**, systemic race-based prejudice and misuse of power have justified the conquest and enslavement of
5 people, while the concepts of racism were created explicitly to ensure the subjugation of people believed to be
6 inferior; and,

7 **Whereas**, colonialism has led to racism and created consequences and effects that persist in structures and
8 practices in the United States as Europeans used legal documents to justify the notion that one race was
9 innately superior to those of both the original inhabitants of the United States and the Africans who were
10 forcibly brought to these shores as slaves; and,

11 **Whereas**, in principle, the United States has outlawed racial discrimination; but in practice, little has changed in
12 some communities and institutions where political and legal structures were inherited and persist today that do
13 not correspond to the multi-ethnic, pluricultural and plurilingual characteristics of the population; and, in many
14 cases, constitute an important factor of discrimination; and,

15 **Whereas**, the roots of colonial inequities still bare the fruits of racism - prejudice, bigotry, discrimination, and
16 dehumanization - in our county today as other people who came, and those who are still coming to the United
17 States, by choice or by force, encountered and continue to encounter racism; and,

18 **Whereas**, the damage from years of systemic race-based exploitation has not been erased, and by all
19 measurable indicators, a color-blind society is many years in the future; and,

20 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity are linked to poverty, and both are risk factors for high levels of
21 emotional distress;

22 **Whereas**, poverty, underdevelopment, social exclusion and economic disparities are closely associated with
23 racism and racial insensitivity, and contribute to the persistence of racist attitudes and practices which, in turn,
24 has generated more poverty for centuries which contributed, and continues to contribute, significantly to the
25 personal economy and social life of people; and,

26 **Whereas**, psychologists and other social scientists have established that racism and racial insensitivity are
27 pervasive and persisting challenges for the United States by threatening human development because of the
28 obstacles which they pose to the fulfillment to basic human rights of survival, security, development, and social
29 participation; and,

30 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity have been shown to have negative cognitive, behavioral, affective, and
31 relational effects on children and adult victims, historically and contemporarily, and increase anxiety,
32 depression, self-defeating thoughts and avoidance behaviors, and is linked to a host of other medical
33 complications; and,

34 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity have been shown to negatively affect children's academic and social
35 development, self-esteem, and personal feelings of efficacy negatively affecting the cognitive development of
36 members of the majority by perpetuating distorted thinking about the self and members of the minority; and,

37 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity can promote anxiety and fear, and often leads to acts of hostility and
38 aggression, and disrupts the mental health of both perpetrators and victims of racial injustice; and,

39 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity robs all human beings of their wholeness, and is used as a justification
40 for social, economic, environmental, and political exploitation, causing people to face barriers of social biases
41 and discrimination that prevail in our public and private institutions; and,

42 **Whereas**, as people have been victims of discrimination for centuries, we affirm that they are free and equal in
43 dignity and rights, and should not suffer any discrimination as we stress the continuing need for action to
44 overcome the persistent forms of racism that affects them; and,
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46 **Whereas**, we recognize the value in the diversity of cultures and heritages, whose contributions create cultural
47 pluralism to shape the political and social stability of the community in which they live; and,
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49 **Whereas**, the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of people, must be protected and treated equal to
50 all humans without discrimination of any kind, as our strength as Americans lie in our racial and cultural
51 diversity; and,
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53 **Whereas**, we must work toward a state and nation in which each person's value is respected and nurtured, as
54 our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings, and new relationships, which must
55 be reflected in the policies, structures, and practices; and,
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57 **Whereas**, each school district should promote the universal respect for, and observance and protection of, all
58 children as a fundamental factor in the prevention and elimination of racism and racial insensitivity; and,
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60 **Whereas**, education, development and the faithful implementation of human right's norms and obligations,
61 including enactment of policies, are crucial to combat racism; and,
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63 **Whereas**, education at all levels and all ages is a key to changing attitudes and behavior based on racism and
64 promoting respect for diversity in societies; and,
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66 **Whereas**, education is a determining factor in the promotion, dissemination, and protection of the democratic
67 values of justice and equity, which are essential to prevent and combat the spread of racism and racial
68 insensitivity; and,
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70 **Whereas**, there is a link between the struggle against racism and racial insensitivity to the essential role of
71 education, including human rights education and education which is sensitive to, and respects, cultural diversity,
72 especially among children, in the prevention and eradication of all forms of racism; and,
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74 **Whereas**, we recognize the paramount role of elected officials in the fight against racism and racial insensitivity
75 to adopt appropriate policies overseeing the implementation and allocation of financial resources to encourage
76 concrete steps to promote respect of all races; and,

77 **Whereas**, racism and racial insensitivity have been shown to be attitudes and behaviors that are learned; and,

78 **Whereas**, it is important to pay special attention to new manifestations of racism and racial insensitivity to
79 which youth are exposed, because the struggle against all forms of racism requires continual active resistance
80 against it; therefore,

81 **Be it resolved**, that the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) denounces racism in all its forms for its negative
82 psychological, social, educational and economic effects on human development throughout the life span; and,

83 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT accepts the obligation, on behalf of all children, to take appropriate and
84 effective measures to actively halt and reverse the lasting consequences of racism and racial insensitivity; and,
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86 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT emphasizes the importance and necessity of teaching about the facts and
87 truth of the history of humankind from antiquity to the recent past, as well as teaching the facts and truth of the
88 history, causes, nature and consequences of racism and racial insensitivity; and,
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90 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT encourages involvement of community partners and organizations in the
91 design and implementation of the training and development of racial sensitivity programs; and,

92 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT encourages the development of educational materials to teach young
93 people the importance of racial collaboration and respect; and,
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95 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will encourage school districts to commit financial resources to racial
96 sensitivity education and promote campaigns with values of diversity and respect for the cultures of all people;
97 and,
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99 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will intensify their efforts to promote an understanding and awareness of
100 the causes, consequences of racism and racial insensitivity and encourage school districts to review current
101 materials (such as textbooks, curriculum, dictionaries, etc.) to eliminate any elements that might promote
102 racism and stereotypes; and,
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104 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will encourage the development and improvement of educational material,
105 including history and other textbooks, and to ensure that
106 all teachers are effectively trained and adequately motivated to shape attitudes and behavioral
107 patterns, based on the principles of non-discrimination and mutual respect; and,
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109 **Be if further resolved**, that the OFT will encourage activities aimed at educating young people and instilling
110 values of respect and appreciation of diversity, including respect for different groups, with a special effort to
111 inform and sensitize young people to respect and fight against ideologies based on the fallacious theory of racial
112 superiority; and,
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114 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will promote human rights education, with a
115 view to combating prejudices, which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding among
116 different racial and ethnic groups in schools and support public education programs designed to promote
117 respect for cultural diversity and the self-esteem of victims; and,
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119 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will encourage the establishment and maintenance of youth organizations in
120 the spirit of combating racism, through such activities as: organizing awareness raising campaigns; participating
121 in multicultural education programs; developing proposals and solutions, where possible and appropriate;
122 cooperating and consulting regularly with organizations in developing initiatives; and programs that promote
123 intercultural exchange and dialogue; and,
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125 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will encourage opportunities to deal honestly with the existing racist
126 attitudes and social distance; and,
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128 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT will establish workshops and seminars to study, understand, and appreciate
129 the historical and cultural contributions of each race; and,

130 **Be it further resolved**, that the OFT encourages school districts to review and, where necessary, revise any
131 policy to eliminate all discriminatory policies and practices; and,

132 **Be it finally resolved**, that the OFT challenges school districts to further the efforts to focus on elimination of all
133 forms of racism by: (1) pursuing and requiring diverse racial sensitivity training for all employees, (2) calling upon
134 all employees to eliminate processes and procedures that perpetuate racial insensitivity and education, (3)
135 calling upon all employees to speak out against racial insensitivity by taking proactive steps to prevent the
136 occurrence of intolerant or racist acts, and (4) promote the education of racial sensitivity.