

# CIVIL RIGHTS

2016 Resolutions

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## **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHER WORKFORCE DIVERSITY**

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4 WHEREAS, The Albert Shanker Institute (ASI), as endowed by the American Federation of  
5 Teachers, published research regarding teacher diversity in the United States of America via *The*  
6 *State of Teacher Diversity in American Education* in September 2015, and

7  
8 WHEREAS, the ASI found that all students benefit from being educated by teachers from a  
9 variety of different backgrounds, races, and ethnic groups, as this experience better prepares  
10 them to succeed in an increasingly diverse society, and

11  
12 WHEREAS, positive exposure to individuals from a variety of races and ethnic groups,  
13 especially in childhood, can help to reduce stereotypes, attenuate unconscious implicit biases,  
14 and help promote cross-cultural social bonding, and

15  
16 WHEREAS, minority students profit from having among their teachers individuals from their  
17 own racial and ethnic group who can serve as academically successful role models and who can  
18 have greater knowledge of their heritage and cultures, and

19  
20 WHEREAS, the minority share of the American student population has grown in the period from  
21 1987 to 2012, now accounting for half of all public school students, and

22  
23 WHEREAS, the minority share of the American teaching force-including Black, Hispanic, Asian  
24 and Pacific Islander, American Indian and multiracial teachers has only increased from 12 to 17  
25 percent in the same time period, resulting in an underrepresentation relative to the students they  
26 serve, and

27  
28 WHEREAS, the most significant impediment to increasing the diversity of the teacher workforce  
29 is not in hiring of minority teachers, but in the reduction of attrition among minority teachers, not  
30 due to the concentration of minority teachers in high-poverty, minority communities, but due to

31 challenging working conditions, therefore

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33 **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) urges the Ohio Department of  
34 Education and the Ohio Statehouse to review education-related legislation and policy for their  
35 impact on teacher diversity, and amend or modify them to promote diversification and avoid the  
36 unintended consequences of diminishing diversity, and therefore

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38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT encourages close partnerships between schools,  
39 school districts, and universities as a vehicle to enhance training, mentoring, support, and  
40 retention in culturally responsive practices to novice teachers-of all races and ethnicities-working  
41 in challenging conditions of high-poverty, de facto racially segregated schools, and therefore

42  
43 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT supports the development and expansion of  
44 programs with evidence of helping to recruit, mentor, support, and retain minority teachers such  
45 as, but not limited to, *Call Me MISTER-Mentors Instructing Students Towards Effective Role*  
46 *Models* (<http://www.clemson.edu/hehd/departments/education/research/callmemister>), *Grow*  
47 *Your Own Teachers*-paraprofessionals career ladders-(<http://www.growyourownteachers.org>),  
48 *Minority Teacher Identification and Enrichment Program* (<http://www.elu.edu/~mtiep>), *Teacher*  
49 *Quality and Retention Program* ([http://tmcf.org/our-programs/k-12-education/teacher-quality-](http://tmcf.org/our-programs/k-12-education/teacher-quality-retention-program)  
50 [retention-program](http://tmcf.org/our-programs/k-12-education/teacher-quality-retention-program)), and *Urban Teacher Enhancement Program*  
51 (<http://www.uab.edu/education/cue/current-projects/urban-teacher-enhancement-program>), and  
52 therefore

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54 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, the OFT supports locals as they work collaboratively with  
55 school districts to develop strategic plans for the diversification of their teacher workforces.  
56 These plans should include specific actions that will be taken and programs that will be  
57 developed and supported to improve teacher diversity in all schools, with a particular focus on  
58 the educational needs of students from disadvantaged minority groups.

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62 **RESOLUTION FOR THE PROMOTION OF INCLUSIVE RESTORATIVE**  
63 **JUSTICE PRACTICES IN OHIO'S SCHOOLS**

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65 WHEREAS, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) adopted the resolution *Support*  
66 *Restorative Justice Programs in Schools that Receive Public Funds* at the 2014 national  
67 convention, and

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69 WHEREAS, restorative justice is based on respect, responsibility, building and repairing  
70 relationships with the goal of keeping students in school, creating safe learning environments,  
71 and providing social and emotional support, and

72  
73 WHEREAS, restorative justice practices are a three-tiered approach with the first tier involving  
74 community building as a preventative measure, tier two incorporating intervention such as  
75 mediation and group circles, and the third tier supporting the reentry of students who have been  
76 out of school due to suspension, expulsion, truancy or incarceration, and

77

78 WHEREAS, zero-tolerance policies across the nation impose overly harsh disciplinary  
79 consequences that push students down the pipeline and into the juvenile justice system, often  
80 circumventing due process, and  
81

82 WHEREAS, schools and districts across the United States of America have experienced a  
83 decline in suspensions and expulsions when restorative justice practices are integrated into the  
84 discipline system, and  
85

86 WHEREAS, the AFT Racial Equity Task Force recommends a change in school discipline  
87 policies to include restorative justice and fairer enforcement, therefore  
88

89 **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) promotes professional  
90 development in restorative justice practices for all school employees, teachers, administrators  
91 and support staff, and therefore  
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93 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT promotes the inclusion of restorative justice practices  
94 in Ohio's schools, and therefore  
95

96 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT makes available resources from the AFT  
97 (<http://www.aft.org/news/american-educator-explores-positive-school-discipline>) for union locals, schools,  
98 and districts to assist in the implementation of restorative justice practices into school and district  
99 discipline policies.

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102 **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF EFFORTS TO RAISE OHIO'S**  
103 **MINIMUM WAGE**  
104

105 WHEREAS, Ohio's minimum wage is \$8.10 per hour for full-time workers and \$4.05 per hour  
106 for tipped workers, and  
107

108 WHEREAS, an estimated 1,797,000 people in Ohio are poor, 340,000 families are determined to  
109 be poor and 79 of Ohio's 88 counties had significantly higher poverty rates during 2009- 2013  
110 than they had in 1999, and Ohio's current minimum wage does not afford an employee a livable  
111 income that can meet basic needs, and  
112

113 WHEREAS, the Ohio Fair Wage Amendment would raise Ohio's minimum wage to \$10.00 per  
114 hour on January 1, 2017, and \$0.50 per hour each year after until it reaches \$12.00 per hour in  
115 2021, and would raise tipped employee wages to \$6.00 per hour in 2017 with yearly increases of  
116 \$1.00 per hour until it equals the full minimum wage, and  
117

118 WHEREAS, proposed petition language has been approved by Ohio Attorney General Mike  
119 DeWine and the Ohio Ballot Board has certified the Ohio Fair Wage Amendment, therefore  
120

121 **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) supports efforts to raise Ohio's  
122 minimum wage, and therefore  
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124 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT and its locals pledge assistance in collecting

125 signatures to place the initiative on the November 2016 ballot.  
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129 **A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SERVICES THAT PROVIDE**  
130 **EDUCATIONAL ACCESS TO REFUGEES AND UNACCOMPANIED**  
131 **MINORS**  
132

133 WHEREAS, an unaccompanied minor arrived in the United States before turning 18, has no  
134 parent or legal guardian in the US or the parent or guardian is not able to provide care and  
135 physical custody, and has no lawful immigration status, and  
136

137 WHEREAS, a refugee is someone who flees their native country because of fear of persecution  
138 based on race, religion, nationality, social group, and/or political opinion, and  
139

140 WHEREAS, some refugee children and unaccompanied minors have witnessed terrible violence  
141 and have lost friends and family. They may have been living in the middle of war, gang violence,  
142 political oppression, sexual violence, torture, famine, and/or religious persecution, and  
143

144 WHEREAS, refugees and unaccompanied minors have managed to escape, but often without  
145 family members and personal belongings, and  
146

147 WHEREAS, refugee families and unaccompanied minors often struggle trying to understand  
148 their new life in a strange and different country that has different customs and traditions from  
149 what they're used to, and  
150

151 WHEREAS, past schooling for refugee students and unaccompanied minors can range from no  
152 education at all to disruption of a rigorous education, resulting in educational quality and  
153 consistency that can be very limited in comparison to United States schooling, and  
154

155 WHEREAS, even if refugees have attended school, it may have been in a refugee camp, where  
156 resources can be extremely limited making it difficult to determine their academic knowledge  
157 and abilities, and  
158

159 WHEREAS, grade placement can be a challenge, especially if an older refugee or  
160 unaccompanied minor student has had minimal education, and  
161

162 WHEREAS, this can mean refugee and unaccompanied minors can find themselves in  
163 classrooms with teachers having no or limited knowledge of the developmental, social,  
164 emotional, language, and academic needs of these students, and  
165

166 WHEREAS, it is challenging to instruct a student who cannot speak English and does not  
167 understand the rules and procedures of a classroom, and  
168

169 WHEREAS, English Language Learners with limited or interrupted schooling will need to  
170 acquire background knowledge prerequisite to educational tasks at hand, and  
171

72 WHEREAS, immigrants and refugees have the right to receive a public school education through  
173 the 12<sup>th</sup> grade regardless of immigration or refugee status, and  
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175 WHEREAS, numbers of unaccompanied minors in Ohio continue to remain steady or rise,  
176 therefore  
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178 **BE IT RESOLVED**, the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) advocates for resources that will  
179 support the education of refugees and unaccompanied minors and the teachers that design  
180 instruction to meet their needs. These resources may include, but are not limited to, increased  
181 translator services, bilingual social workers and counseling services to address social and  
182 emotional needs, and family and community supports for refugee and unaccompanied minor  
183 families, and also the communities they are joining to foster school and community engagement,  
184 and  
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186 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, there should be a significant investment in technological  
187 resources such as, but not limited to, one-to-one devices including laptops and tablets, classroom  
188 resources including interactive white boards and document cameras, and investment in language  
189 acquisition software programs in order to meet the needs of all students, parents, and school  
190 staff, and  
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192 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the OFT encourages that Limited English Proficient plans will  
193 be implemented with integrity, and professional development will be provided for teachers and  
194 staff members with the end result of a free and appropriate education.  
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198 **A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LAWS, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES**  
199 **THAT ENSURE SERVICES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**  
200

201 WHEREAS, English Language Learners (ELLs) are a heterogeneous group with differences in  
202 ethnic background, first language, socioeconomic status, quality of prior schooling, and levels of  
203 English language proficiency. Some students lack the listening, speaking, reading and/or writing  
204 skills in English that allow them to participate in classes. ELLs with limited or interrupted  
205 schooling will need to acquire background knowledge prerequisite to educational tasks at hand,  
206 and  
207

208 WHEREAS, nationally, the percentage of public school students in the United States who were  
209 ELLs has shown steady increases from the 2002-2003 school year of 4.1 million students in U.S.  
210 schools to a present approximation of 5 million students, and  
211

212 WHEREAS, more specifically, the ELL population in Southwest Ohio has grown over 250%  
213 within the past 5 years, and  
214

215 WHEREAS, almost all of the ELLs are concentrated in urban districts, and  
216

217 WHEREAS, we are largely a nation of immigrants who must value our diversity, not declare war  
218 on it, and our students deserve a well-rounded education that makes no judgment on any group's

19 ethnicity, and

220  
221 WHEREAS, ELLs have been placed in classrooms with teachers with no or limited knowledge  
222 of teaching ELLs, sometimes finding themselves in classes that are not meeting their  
223 developmental and social needs, and

224  
225 WHEREAS, students who are not proficient in English are sometimes inappropriately placed in  
226 special education classes because of their lack of English proficiency. Qualified students often do  
227 not have access to high track courses or Gifted and Talented programs, and

228  
229 WHEREAS, it can take 6 to 9 years for ELLs to achieve the same levels of proficiency in  
230 academic English as native speakers, and

231  
232 WHEREAS, ELLs may suffer repeated failure in the classroom, falling behind in grade, and  
233 dropping out of school if they are not provided services to overcome language barriers, and

234  
235 WHEREAS, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race,  
236 color, or national origin. In *Lau v. Nichols*, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the United States  
237 Department of Education (USDOE) memorandum of May 25, 1970, which directed school  
238 districts to take steps to help limited-English proficient students overcome language barriers and  
239 to ensure that they can engage meaningfully in the district's educational programs (USDOE), and

240  
241 WHEREAS, Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) mandating that no  
242 state shall deny equal education opportunity to any individual, "by the failure by an educational  
243 agency to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation  
244 by students in an instructional program," and

245  
246 WHEREAS, Federal law requires programs that educate children with limited English  
247 proficiency to be based on a sound educational theory; supported with adequate and effective  
248 staff and resources, so that the program has a realistic chance of success; and periodically  
249 evaluated and, if necessary, revised. ELLs must be provided with alternative services until they  
250 are proficient enough in English to engage meaningfully in the regular program, and

251  
252 WHEREAS, the Office of Civil Rights does not require or advocate a particular educational  
253 approach to the instruction of ELLs. Districts have substantial flexibility when developing  
254 programs to meet the needs of ELLs; however, there is no equality of treatment merely by  
255 providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum for students who  
256 do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education, and

257  
258 WHEREAS, in Cincinnati, Ohio, Cincinnati Public School District (CPSD) staff at the ELL  
259 Welcome Center develop a Limited English Proficient (LEP) plan (an educational plan that  
260 aligns with the needs of the student) for the student so that teachers and school staff can tailor the  
261 student's education for the best possible chance of success, and

262  
263 WHEREAS, ELLs participating in thoughtfully designed programs of bilingual or sheltered  
264 content instruction remain in school longer and attain significantly higher rates of academic  
265 achievement in comparison to students without such advantages, and

266

267 WHEREAS, a research-based and validated instructional model such as the Sheltered Instruction  
268 Observation Protocol (SIOP) has been proven effective in addressing the academic needs of  
269 English learners throughout the United States, and  
270

271 WHEREAS, the SIOP model can be applied successfully in any context where ELLs are learning  
272 content and language simultaneously, and  
273

274 WHEREAS, there is no legally prescribed teacher-student ratio for ELLs in Ohio, and  
275

276 WHEREAS, other students with special needs, such as students with IEPs, receive small class  
277 sizes, a legal document implemented with integrity, and funding and staffing resources, not seen  
278 at the same level of support for ELLs, therefore  
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280 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT) advocates for resources across  
281 the state for professional development regarding researched-based instructional models, Teachers  
282 of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Endorsement and/or Masters Programs,  
283 and district-wide development of LEP plans, and therefore  
284

285 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, there should be a significant investment in technological  
286 resources such as, but not limited to, one-to-one devices including laptops and tablets, classroom  
287 resources including interactive white board and document cameras, and investment in language  
288 acquisition software programs in order to meet the needs of all students, parents, and school  
289 staff, and  
290

291 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that district-wide ELL support staff need a teacher-student  
292 ratio that allows them to truly support ELLs spread out among different schools, similar to  
293 caseload laws for special education, and therefore  
294

295 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, ELL Sheltered Content Classroom Teachers need a staff to  
296 student ratio that is comparable to the self-contained classroom ratios seen in the special  
297 education requirements.