

Resolution establishing the Franklin County Family Stabilization Unit pilot program. (Department of Job and Family Services)

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners has a demonstrated 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 a racial equity training, and most recently codified through its Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis¹; 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 basis² 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 systemic and institutional 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 locally³ and across the state of Ohio⁴, and more than two-thirds of them live in areas of elevated or concentrated poverty⁵. 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

¹ Resolution No. 0341-20

² Garcia 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).

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

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

⁵ American Community Survey, regression analysis performed by FCDJFS STAR team.

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higher on Ohio Department of Education Report Cards⁶. 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 population⁷ and African American students are disciplined at much higher rates than their white peers nationally⁸; and

WHEREAS, African Americans experience drastically lower employment rates and median household income compared to the overall population statewide⁹; 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 diabetes¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, the incarceration rate for African American residents is nearly three times the rate for white residents in Franklin County.¹¹ 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 facilities¹²; and

WHEREAS, through the leadership of the Board of Commissioners, the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board has committed to the elimination of racial disparities in the criminal justice system, to prioritize racial equity in our decision making-processes, to acknowledge that communities of color have borne the burdens of inequitable social,

⁶ 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>>.

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

⁸ 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>.

⁹ 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>. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/news/data-releases.2018.html>>.

¹⁰Health Policy Institute of Ohio, 2017 Health Value Dashboard (Health equity profiles).

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

¹² Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections 2019 Annual Report and Ohio Department of Youth Services

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environmental, economic, and criminal justice policies practices and investments, to understand that the legacy of these inequitable policies has caused deep disparities, harm, and mistrust, and to recognize that racial equity is realized when and only when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes; 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; now, therefore,

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

That a new Family Stabilization Unit pilot program be established with the intention of providing wraparound support to assist families in successfully navigating the human services system, using a holistic, multi-generational approach based on the social determinants of health and principles of racial equity for the time period of June 16, 2020 through July 1, 2022; and

That the Board of Commissioners charges this Family Stabilizing Unit to:

1. Work with families that are initially referred through the juvenile court system, with a focus on boys and young men of color who have lower-level offenses such as truancy or minor delinquency.
2. Collaborate all County offices, Courts, levy and social services agencies, and community partners to address all barriers a family may need assistance with removing.
3. Provide access to core public assistance programs administered by the Department of Job and Family Services as well as mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, parenting, physical wellness, in-home services, and other supportive services and programs as deemed necessary.
4. Incorporate a workforce development and education component for families that are unemployed or underemployed.

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5. Work in conjunction with the Department of Job and Family Services to identify clear goals and measurable objectives, as well as evaluation tools.
6. Provide periodic reports to the Board of Commissioners and Department of Job and Family Services.
7. Provide a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the pilot and long-term recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and Department of Job and Family Services no later than July 1, 2022.
8. Pursue federal, state, and outside grant opportunities as they become available to advance the goals of the Family Stabilization Unit pilot.
9. Provide necessary staffing to carry out the mission as outlined in this action.
10. Produce an annual report for the Board of Commissioners outlining the successes and challenges faced by this pilot program.

Prepared by: Bart Logan

cc: Commissioners
All County AGENICES