

# Eliminate Racism 815

**Vision: Rockford is a community where everyone feels valued.**

**Mission: Eliminate Racism in Rockford**

## **Economic Opportunities Quarterly Report**

June 11, 2019

The Economic Opportunities Action Team has recently settled on the following goal:

To facilitate the creation of a Southwest River Development Coalition to promote the recreational, entertainment, and small business use of the Rock River in Southwest Rockford by January 1, 2020.

### Action Steps

1. Meet with some individuals and agencies about their plans and/or how to proceed with this goal.
2. Identify cities which have developed their city rivers as areas of recreation, entertainment, and business.
3. Research ways they have developed their riverfronts.
4. Identify recommendations for riverfront development in southwest Rockford.
5. Meet with key players about creating the recommendations and supporting a coalition.
6. Create a coalition by January 1, 2020.

### Rationale

We are in the process of meeting with some individuals and organizations about their suggestions about how to proceed. These include Martisa Brown, Victory Bell, Gary Anderson, Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Rockford Park District, and the City of Rockford Community Development Department.

The reason we have chosen this goal is that:

- the southwest section of the city has the smallest population,
- most probably lower average income,
- a long history of lack of success with larger businesses locating there,
- the current plans for development in that area or adjacent to that area, (hotel, railroad, Rock Valley Vocational Training Center, Airport expansions, the development of Kent Creek, and the downtown Sport's Center.
- If the southwest part of the river is developed, small business will follow.

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**Education Action Team Quarterly Report**

**June 11, 2019**

During the past quarter the Education Committee has actively worked on our goals and objectives. We have been communicating with Matt Zediker concerning recruitment. We have been informed that a new Director of Recruitment and Minorities has been employed for the district. She is scheduled to start work on June 24, 2019. We look forward to progress in this area.

Members of the Education Committee met with the Mayor and also the Superintendent of RPS 205 and presented some ideas and goals and also a list of community organizations that we could appeal to and ask for their help. We also had a meeting with both Mayor McNamara and Supt. Jarrett. We are hoping to unite these two offices and Eliminate Racism in order to reach our Goal 1 of increasing to 20% People of Color – especially African-American and Hispanic- in all levels of RPS 205 by 2020-2021. We believe we need the support of community organizations to reach this goal. We hope to have a joint meeting with the leaders of community organizations as soon as possible. We are discussing ideas of venues, dates, and the agenda of this meeting. Our next meeting will be June 19, 2019.

Several members of the Education Action Team attended the National Equity and Community meeting that was sponsored by RPS 205 and held at Pilgrim Baptist Church. Reviews of progress were discussed along with expectations of community and district perspectives. Involvement was a key issue and assurance of community connection was guaranteed. Several group activities which required one to one responses were engaged.

This last quarter, members of the Education Action Team visited Alternative Schools: Roosevelt, Illinois Learning Center (ILC) and Regional Office STAR program. We are gathering information related to Goal 2 as it relates to discipline policies and equitable education based on the needs of students. We are also pleased to note that RPS 205 is in the process of implementing a new funding formula which considers needs of low-income students.

We are anxious to see what changes will be found in the Discipline Code Book for the 2019-2020 school year because Eliminate Racism attended the meetings RPS held asking for community input. We are hoping to see a much stronger focus on Restorative Justice practices as opposed to a focus on punishment.

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## Relationship Action Team

June 11, 2019

**Vision:** Rockford is a community where everyone feels valued

**Mission:** To radically alter divisive social patterns by building genuine relationships across racial, religious, class, and cultural differences.

### **New Goals as of June 2018:**

- 1) **Partner with the Rockford Public Library Staff Development.** Ann and Dick Rundall established a relationship with Emily Klonicki of the Library which evolved into this library staff training. The relationship action team is taking over drawing on the 29 trained facilitators from last years workshops. There will be teams meeting with library from June 10 until May 18, 2020 on scheduled Monday and Fridays. We had a practice session with library administration on May 23 and a warm-up session with the facilitators on June 5. We began with the library staff on June 10 and it went well and we learned a lot. E.G. The importance of the facilitators breaking the rule and sharing their own story for 3 minutes each to set the tone and the openness we are looking for. The adaptations and questions for the next sessions in July and August will be put together at our Relationship Action Team Tues July 2 at 6pm. We are open to your input.
- 2) **Create partnership with 2 diverse churches.** Begin with 3 leaders from each church meeting together and then together with them creating 3 sessions where their members can enter into facilitated dialogues in groups. We have 2 churches that we are approaching now and plan to accomplish this by June 1, 2020. We are wanting to create a model process that can be used with other diverse faith groups and organizations.
- 3) **Begin to explore offering a training experience with the Oshkosh Training Center.**