



## Supporting Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Families and Communities

“The U.S. Department of Education is urging school officials nationwide to address allegations that Asian students have been discriminated against over fears of the coronavirus, telling them that they are required to address such incidents under civil-rights law.”

-The Wall Street Journal

### Executive Summary

Anti-Asian and racist incidents have increased across the nation, in Central Texas and online. Local Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI) leaders are seeking ways to organize around various educational issues adversely affecting the community in the face of discrimination, harassment and xenophobia associated with myths about the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Office of Equity’s (OE) recommendations to support AAPI leaders with actions that can be taken to support families and communities are based on the district’s emerging equity framework; the existing and ongoing work of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (GACC) workshops and reporting website; AISD policies and practices from SEL, CPI Programs, and Parent Support Programs; reports about the current the lived experiences of refugee families by AISD Language Support Coordinator; current antiracist educational research; and recent national news reports.

### Develop and Implement Research-Based Policies and Practices

- Encourage, support and hold *all* local school districts accountable for the development of policies explicitly prohibiting harassment and discrimination and with implementing antiracist policies.

### Collect, Analyze & Use the Data

- Partner with and support school districts and higher education institutions with the monitoring and reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment against Chinese and Asian immigrants.
- Collaborate with school districts to ensure leaders are aware of the discrimination and provide a website where students, families and staff can report incidents of harassment and discrimination.

### Engage Students, Families, Staff and Communities

- Organize periodic student and family townhall meetings to learn about their lived experiences.

### Austin ISD’s Policy

AISD’s policy prohibiting harassment is the foundation of the district’s practices supporting leadership development and professional learning for cultural proficiency and inclusiveness:

The Austin ISD Harassment policy, FFH(Local) prohibits *offensive or derogatory language directed at another person’s religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening, intimidating, or humiliating conduct; offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property...*

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1146?filename=FFH\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1146?filename=FFH(LOCAL).pdf)

Efforts to ensure educational systems overtly disrupt and eliminate anti-Asian incidents during the pandemic and beyond begin with clear and intentional policies followed by the collection and use of data, engaging the community, educating leaders and staff and holding institutions accountable for the elimination of discriminatory incidents.



- Encourage school districts to organize opportunities for Asian staff and teachers to discuss challenges and issues adversely affecting them in the workplace and the community.
- Meet with refugee families in local shelters to learn about their daily experiences.

### **Educate for Inclusion, Antiracism and Cultural Proficiency**

- Participate in current sessions by the Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce (GAACC) and facilitate more ongoing Bystander and Speak-Up workshops and additional learning experiences for Central Texas educational and non-profit leaders.
- Work with school districts to ensure teachers and staff learn how to disrupt online racism and discrimination that has and is becoming increasingly prevalent.
- Partner with non-profit and districts to plan and facilitate a series of ongoing workshops to educate Central Texas leaders about issues affecting Chinese Americans and the Asian community during and after the pandemic.
- Collaborate with educational leaders to ensure all teachers and staff participate in antiracist training that helps to support student agency.

### **Plan and Collaborate with Organizations for Change**

- Partner with grassroots organizations to hold institutions accountable for educating leaders and staff how to eliminate incidents.
- Support districts with planning and accountability for the elimination of discriminatory incidents with periodic public discussions and reports.

## **REFERENCES & RESOURCES**

- Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council <http://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/>
- As the coronavirus spreads, so does online racism targeting Asians, new research shows The Washington Post <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/04/08/coronavirus-spreads-so-does-online-racism-targeting-asians-new-research-shows/>
- Austin ISD Office of Equity & Inclusion Equity Framework <https://www.austinisd.org/equityoffice>
- Austin ISD Parent Support Programs <https://www.austinisd.org/family-support/parent>
- Austin ISD Social Emotional Learning-Cultural Proficiency Programs <https://www.austinisd.org/cpi>
- Feds Sound Alarm Over Claims of Asian Discrimination in Schools The Wall Street Journal <https://www.wsj.com/articles/feds-sound-alarm-over-claims-of-asian-discrimination-in-schools-11583591069>
- Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce: Help with Racist Incidents <https://www.austinasianchamber.org/help-with-racist-incidents>
- How to Respond to Coronavirus Racism: Teaching Tolerance <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/how-to-respond-to-coronavirus-racism>
- Mayor's Task Force for Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities [https://cityofaustin.github.io/institutional-racism/IRSI\\_Task\\_Force\\_Report-Updated-4-6-17.pdf](https://cityofaustin.github.io/institutional-racism/IRSI_Task_Force_Report-Updated-4-6-17.pdf)
- More than 200 civil rights groups demand Congress publicly reject coronavirus racism <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/amp/ncna1158116>
- Reporting AAPI Hate Crimes: <http://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/stop-aapi-hate/?fbclid=IwAR3JVKIK6InoJIVAS2bruIW7EGoVTSPsbwZxQ16TyRgD4F5VYXI8gTqD0>