June 18, 2020

20-173 DECLARING JUNE 19TH, THE DATE ON WHICH THE NEWS OF THE END OF SLAVERY REACHED THE SOUTHWESTERN STATES, ('JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY') A PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOLIDAY

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REPORT: News of the end of slavery did not reach the frontier areas of the United States, in particular the State of Texas and the other Southwestern States, until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2 years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863;

On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, with news that the Civil War had ended and the enslaved were free;

African Americans who had been slaves in the southwest celebrated June 19, commonly known as "Juneteenth Independence Day," as inspiration and encouragement for future generations;

Juneteenth Independence Day has been observed for more than 150 years and is now celebrated across the U.S. as a special day of observance in recognition of the emancipation of Black Americans.

We are committed as a community college to the understanding and practice of anti-racism in all areas of the institution, be it:

RECOMMENDATION: That the Portland Community College Board of Directors:

- designates June 19, 2020 and henceforth as a "Juneteenth Independence Day" College holiday;
- recognizes the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day to the United States and to the founding documents that shaped our nation;
- supports the continued recognition of Juneteenth Independence Day as an opportunity for the college community to learn more about the history of Black people in the United States and in Oregon and to better understand the ways in which racism is part of this history and heritage in our country and in our state.