



# Inquiry into hate in the pandemic: Hearing transcript

Transcription prepared by BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

**Presentation date:** Nov 30, 2021

**Presenting organizations:** South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS)

**SOICS attendees:** Cherry Fernandez, Elmira Galiyeva, Sugun Kaura

**BCOHRC<sup>1</sup> attendees:** Human Rights Commissioner Kasari Govender, Sarah Khan, Carly Hyman, Meghan Toal

*Please note that third-party personal information has been removed from this transcript.*

**[Introductory comments by Human Rights Commissioner Kasari Govender not included in transcript.]**

**Cherry Fernandez:** Wonderful, thank you. I will start by sharing my screen here. Give me one moment. All right, are you able to see that? Wonderful. OK, so thank you for having us here today. I do want to start by acknowledging our territory. We are also coming from the territory that Meghan is from, so I'd like to acknowledge that as learning partners that we live, work, play on the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of Syilx people of the Okanagan Nation. This land acknowledgement does not replace our obligation to work to decolonize our daily life and practices.

So thank you once again for having us here, my name is Cherry Fernandez. I am the executive director of the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services. I'm joined by my colleagues Sugun and Elmira. So the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services, or SOICS for short, we do have a long name, we cover the South Okanagan Similkameen Region. So that's from Summerland down to the border of Osoyoos, and then out west to Princeton. This region is home to about 80,000 people, and these are small and rural communities anywhere from about 200 in one community to about 34,000 in Penticton.

And each year we serve clients that come from about 111 countries and territories. And they speak 89 languages, so it's quite diverse. However, unlike Vancouver, we don't see those larger ethnic

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<sup>1</sup> BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

groups because we are more spread out, we're rural, but the diversity is here, it exists. Our organization is an immigrant serving organization providing settlement services, and as you can see on the screen these are some of our core services that we provide support for to permanent residents, naturalized Canadians, temporary foreign workers and postsecondary international students.

And on April 4th, 2020, the immigrant serving sector was deemed an essential service industry. This is near the start of the pandemic. For that, it meant that we had to quickly transition. While we had always intended to expand our services online, we had planned to do it over a two year period. Instead, like many around the world we found ourselves having to do this within a shorter two week period. In quickly transitioning we had to provide orientation and training to new technologies so that we can connect with their clients and they with us using online platforms.

We hosted online one-on-one homework club for newcomer families that were adjusting to the Canadian systems, but now in addition to that having to do home based learning. We offered intergenerational programming to mitigate the isolation that many seniors, youth and children were experiencing as a result of the pandemic. And in a year of a lot of racial tensions we found ways to celebrate the diversity of our region with our very first OneWorld Festival, or virtual OneWorld Festival.

Despite the slowing of Canada's population because of travel restrictions, we learned new ways to interact and connect with newcomers in our region, increasing our accessibility. And as you can see in this chart here, from the first year to the second we doubled the number of services that we provided. And then from last year until this year, in just over six months we once again doubled those services, really showing the need in the fact that we were able to increase that accessibility.

One of the reasons that emerged is the fact that we were seeing more racism as a result of the pandemic. We had a number of high profile incidents in the Okanagan, such as the racially motivated games that were seen in the healthcare system, the Nazi salutes that happened during a Black Lives Matter protest, and the violence that occurred during a wellness check. Closer to home in the South Okanagan, we had residents experience racially motivated graffiti and vandalism. The Syilx Indian Band suffered racial graffiti and slurs on sacred sites of their pictographs, and immigrant business owners faced a number of bullying and hate within their communities.

As I mentioned earlier, we have provided the OneWorld Festival on an annual basis. It really was about promoting the diversity and inclusion within our region to increase the awareness that we do have diversity here and to build that sense of belonging within our communities. Last year we provided our first virtual OneWorld Festival because our team saw that need in a year where there was a lot of negative things that they were seeing both online and from our clients, and as an organization as a whole.

However, we are also very much aware that there is a gap. While we celebrate the diversity, it doesn't address the racism directly. One of the ways that we did this was near the start of the pandemic when we started to see that increase of discrimination we wanted to bring forward immigrant voices. We wanted to share those contributions. And we wanted to show that there is strength when we're in this together. So without any experience, our team and our youth crew,



which you'll hear about a little bit later, put together this video that we call One Community, OneWorld. And I'm just going to switch screens and share that with you now. Excuse me, sorry.

[Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cwHsfFBelk>]

**Video Speaker 1:** I understand your uncertainty, confusion, fear. I am [inaudible].

**Video Speaker 2:** East Indian [censored]. [crosstalk].

**Video Speaker 3:** You don't know a damn thing. Go back to China where you belong.

**Video Speaker 4:** Go back to your [censored] country.

**Video Speaker 1:** I understand your isolation.

**Video Speaker 5:** Because of my experience.

**Video Speaker 6:** My accent.

**Video Speaker 7:** My culture.

**Video Speaker 8:** It is diverse.

**Video Speaker 9:** I am your neighbour.

**Video Speaker 10:** I care for you when you are sick.

**Video Speaker 11:** I care for you when you are sick.

**Video Speaker 12:** I give back to the community.

**Video Speaker 13:** I give back to the community.

**Video Speaker 14:** I ensure your home, workplace, care centre is clean and safe.

**Video Speaker 15:** I grow your food.

**Video Speaker 16:** I bring your food to you.

**Video Speaker 17:** I am a teacher.

**Video Speaker 18:** I am a teacher.

**Video Speaker 19:** I am a teacher.

**Video Speaker 20:** I create jobs.

**Video Speaker 21:** I create jobs.



**Video Speaker 8:** I am a life saver.

**Video Speaker 14:** I am Penticton.

**Video Speaker 21:** I am Keremeos.

**Video Speaker 22:** I am Osoyoos.

**Video Speaker 23:** I am Summerland.

**Video Speaker 15:** I am Princeton.

**Video Speaker 13:** I am Oliver.

**Video Speaker 1:** Remember, when the outdoor play and laughter returns, when the noise of life again becomes a part of our everyday life, when you can once again go outside and enjoy the sun on your face.

**Video Speaker 24:** Remember.

**Video Speaker 8:** We are one community.

**Video Speaker 1:** To every essential worker, caregiver, volunteer and labourer, to those that do their part every day in times of crisis, thank you.

**Video Speakers:** Thank you.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Excuse me. Over the last few years, we've actually participated in quite a few dialogues, but something that we've had a lot of difficulty with is despite hearing incidences of racism and people's lived experience, there is still that persistent idea that it doesn't exist in our region. That it is one isolated incident, or that someone's trying to create a bad reputation. It continues to persist, and one of those problems is because there's a lack of data. Sugun will speak to that a bit later.

And so our team really came together to think about, well, what can we be doing? And so we'd like to share some of those projects in programming with you right now. I'll share my screen once again. Excuse me. There we go.

**Elmira Galiyeva:** Hi everyone, this this is my part, a small bit. My name is Elmira and I'm a coordinator of the local immigration partnership in South Okanagan Similkameen, and I'm sure you're familiar with LIPS, we call them. There are about 70 of us across the country. So it's a partnership table that brings together local governments, school boards, businesses, residents, community organizations, and together we develop a strategy for successful immigrant integration through collaboration, by working together.

So I just wanted to highlight a couple of projects that we're working on. One is called Community Champions. So this is a media campaign, we partner with local media to publish stories about newcomers in the region. And we're specifically focusing on immigrant entrepreneurs because we



have two goals: first, to raise awareness about our diversity and their contributions, but also about who they are, their cultural journeys, their values. And we're trying to help the local community understand that there is so much that unites us.

So again, as Cherry mentioned, it's one of the projects that contributes to awareness building. And another part of that is to support local businesses, because it's been very tough for them specifically during the pandemic, because it was hard for all small businesses, but for immigrant businesses especially because they don't have as strong networks as Canadian born, I guess, owned businesses. All these stories, I think we have around 20 right now, became a part of the compilation that was included in the unBox Project. And we'll talk a little bit about that later. Sugun, I think, will mention that.

Another project I wanted to highlight that I think is important for this kind of work is called Workplace Equity and Inclusion. This project unites employers who are interested in creating more welcoming and inclusive workplaces. It's in the pilot stage, so we have five employers right now. We've created a community of practice where we share our experiences and kind of learning from each other and doing the little things that hopefully will contribute to big outcomes in the future.

We're using a broader definition of diversity, so besides immigrants we of course include the Indigenous community, people that have disabilities, LGBTQ2S+, seniors and women. So people who experience barriers to employment. Next slide, Cherry. We're hoping that as a result of this project we'll have increased diversity and inclusion in the region and better outcomes for employers and employees that experience barriers.

And this project is very recent. We've partnered with the other local immigration partnerships across the country and organized a national Workplace Inclusion Forum in October, and it was a great success. It was very hard to manage across different time zones and different provinces, but we were able to put it together. And all the recordings are now available on the Workplace Inclusion website, and we're hoping to do it annually now. Thank you.

**Sugun Kaura:** Hi, good morning everyone. My name is Sugun Kaura and I work at SOICS as the Diversity and Inclusion Settlement Worker. So the next project that SOICS has, or one of the major projects with youth involved, is OneWorld Youth Crew. This is a volunteer youth led group of youth aged between 15 to 24 where they try and raise awareness about diversity and inclusion in order to make the South Okanagan Similkameen a more welcoming community.

So this group includes immigrants, youth that are from immigrant groups, Indigenous Canadian born volunteers. And as said, it's a youth group of which helps to develop, build, design and implement own projects that are directly and indirectly benefiting the greater community. Through this experiential learning, they the youth break barriers, learn from local Indigenous communities and newcomers, and by volunteering their time they develop leadership skills and advocacy skills. Overall, this program fosters connections within the community and professional networks. Next slide, please.

So projects that the youth has undertaken would be, one of the major thing was that there was increased graffiti that was observed by the youth crew. So they developed a project that we call as the Project Randall. This is SOICS' vandalism reporting tool that helps to report harmful and



discriminating graffiti in our community. They also developed a video to showcase how this tool works and we can share the link later.

Then since this group is a group of artistic people, so they also initiated a few murals in the community that promote diversity, inclusion. And one of them is the one that you see at the corner that has feather with... Yes, that's the one that Cherry is pointing on. So this is an Okanagan inspired mural celebrating the land, and this one is specially for bringing education on the first female Indigenous officer in the Canadian military. This is the latest mural that we install.

And then if you see there are other photos where they are seen making other murals, one we have in our office as well. And that again celebrates diversity and inclusion and makes it look bright in the time of the pandemic when we needed it the most. This brought brightness and colour and made sure that we knew that there's diversity in our community.

They also work on intergenerational programming that Cherry touched upon in the beginning of the presentation. So this would essentially be to combat the isolation that the seniors felt during the pandemic, as well as they work with the homework club, which addresses the vulnerability of the newcomer families which are adapting to the Canadian system and are challenged with home based learning as the result of the pandemic. So they help with that as well. Next slide, please.

So as a Diversity and Inclusion Settlement Worker, a major part of my role involves around the Respect Network. The Respect Network, or the South Okanagan Similkameen Respect Network, is a network of community stakeholders working against racism, hate crime, led by SOICS. It is a part of the provincial strategy supporting anti-racism initiatives.

So since SOICS has this mission to build welcoming and inclusive communities and we know now that racism does exist in the South Okanagan Similkameen, so this group of members which includes the RCMP, the community agencies, educational institutes, the school district, the municipalities and other local residents who are invested in fighting or addressing racism and discrimination.

So this group has also developed a Community Protocol, which is basically a living document that talks about how we can respond to acts of racism, hate and discrimination in the community. And it's a living document, so every time we interact, meet as a group, we talk about incidents that have happened in the community and how we can react, and how we can respond to those acts. Next slide, please.

So a few of the initiatives by the Respect Network. First and foremost, since in our position at SOICS we interact with immigrants who have lived experiences with racism. So there have been incidences and numerous times when they have come to our settlement team and talked about the experiences that they had with harassment, with discrimination, with racism. Those were the anecdotal evidences that we had, but there was no data to back that evidence that racism does exist in the South Okanagan Similkameen.

So as the Respect Network we thought that we should conduct a survey to get that data to substantiate or to back that anecdotal evidence that we already had through our clients. So in early 2021 we conducted a racism survey where we ask them about, where this things, about how safe



they felt in the community, their belonging, and essentially how they have been facing racism at all as a witness or as a victim themselves. We received about 430, more than 430 responded to the survey, and we're still working on data visualization and analyzing that data so that we can share it with the wider community and show that racism does exist in the community with the data backing that thought.

And then we collaborated with Kelowna Community Resources and UBC Okanagan on a United Against Discrimination Reporting Portal, so that that gives an opportunity to anyone who's just maybe a victim or witness to racism, hate, they can report on a website that we can share the link on the chat to later. And you can see that there's a screenshot of the portal.

So they have this opportunity to report any incident that they have witnessed or they were victims of, and it also gives an opportunity to anyone like us in the settlement service industry to file a report on their behalf. And the most important part is that it is an anonymous form or reporting portal where they don't have to declare their identity. And till the time they don't want to really report it to the RCMP or they're seeking for other resources of support for them.

The next thing that the Respect Network worked as a team was on developing a handbook, an anti-racism resource handbook, and you see that screenshot up there. It's a small take-home notebook of resources that gives anyone who wants to learn about how to be an anti-racist, how to stand up against discrimination and racism use this. And it is a very local resource in terms of it has local resources of whom they can approach, it talks about various definitions, and it also has various links and resources to research more about anti-racism work.

And it's the part of the unBox campaign that Cherry will talk, and we've heard this name through [inaudible] so we will talk about it more. And that's also one of our public campaigns that we worked on, and we are still working with other community partners on future public campaigns. And Cherry will talk about the partnerships that we have. So I'll pass it on to Cherry now. Thank you.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Sure. And so when we're dealing with racism, because it's in every sector, whether it's social or professional, we really do need to build those collaborations. The first that we had was through our Thompson Okanagan region. There is that Respect Network where we share different initiatives, what works in our communities, what didn't work, and what to expect, because in some cases there is that backlash.

Sugun had spoken about the survey. In that survey, the primary question was, "Have you experienced racism? Have you experienced or witnessed racism?" And in just asking that question, our organization received threats, calls, emails as a result. So having that group to share that experience and to share how we responded, what was working, is really valuable because we're sharing those lessons learned so we can always improve and do better.

And then more locally within our region, we have community partners that we work to raise awareness, to provide anti racism training. Right now we are working with School District 67 and providing a series on anti-racism to hopefully encourage more conversation and to learn more, encourage people to learn more.



Now the other one that I want to share with you is a collaboration that resulted with... It was a collaboration of SOICS and the local libraries, the Penticton Public Library and the Okanagan Regional Libraries. So we piloted this project in Penticton, Summerland and Osoyoos, and it is inspired by a project that we saw coming out of Alberta. And what it is, it's unBox. You see it there in the corner, and you can't quite see it because of my filter, but let me see if I can.

So it's this here. And what it is is a self-paced box, and you identify, I want to be a part of this. When you open it up, it takes you through a series of steps to first take a look at our own privilege, our own biases, and then look at the wider community to basically take an audit. To learn more about the diversity that is here. To look at it through a different lens of, would I feel safe here? Is this area or is this place inclusive? Is it an equitable workplace?

So it really takes participants through that, and it can be done individually or as a family unit or group. And once again it is self-paced, and it goes everywhere where it's more heavier with those audits and looking at our own privilege to something that's a little bit more family friendly and kind of hoping to share those commonalities by going through children's games, for example. And there's a number of different things there that really share the stories of immigrant stories, like Elmira talked about with the community champions as well as from our local Indigenous community.

And the handbook, which you saw in a earlier slide right here... Oh, right here, is also included there, because what we found is that there's a lot of overwhelm. There is a lot of training out there. There is a lot of information, but we don't know where to start. And it's through maybe hundreds of emails, different websites. So what we tried to do is to bring it all together in one handbook where everyone can take a look at it and say, OK, I'm interested on, what does it mean to be an ally? Where do I go for that information? Or, I've experienced this, what are my avenues to share my experience and to seek help if I want to go further with it?

**Elmira Galiyeva:** Cherry, sorry to interrupt you, but we were given a five minute warning about five minutes ago, so we need to kind of wrap up.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Sure. OK.

**Elmira Galiyeva:** Just to give you heads up

**Cherry Fernandez:** OK. So basically in everything that we do, diversity, the promotion of diversity inclusion, equity, it's really inherent in all of our services. Whether settlement services our local immigration partnership or OneWorld Youth Crew or the respect Network. But as I mentioned earlier, there is still that persistent misconception that it doesn't exist in our region. And as a result we came up with another video that I will share with you in just a moment.

And it really forced me, and it was part of my learning, when **[third party personal information removed]** at two years old started to interact with kids her age at daycare centres, and this little girl who could understand and speak in two languages suddenly became very quiet. **[third party personal information removed]** thought that was part of the normal learning where she was starting to become more independent and learn that she's separate from **[third party personal information removed]**. But **[third party personal information removed]** learned a few months later,





when she quietly asked “[third party personal information removed] do you like being brown?” that there was something more going on.

And it also forced me to look at my privilege. Because I am a person of colour in a leadership position in an organization dedicated to building more inclusive and welcoming communities. Yet I had never shared my experience with racism. I never spoke about it. Instead, I would joke when people asked what it was like growing up here.

So one of the big things that we like to speak to our partners is that it's a process of learning. And so I'm going to stop sharing the screen and share that video, and one other thing I'd like to mention about it is that all the comments that you hear are specifically from our region. It was very important that we brought that voice here.

**Sarah Khan:** Cherry?

**Cherry Fernandez:** Mm-hmm?

**Sarah Khan:** Sorry to interrupt. This is a wonderful presentation, and we're wondering if we might be able to watch the video a bit later if we have time, because the Commissioner has a number of questions for you while we still have you.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Sure.

**Sarah Khan:** Would that be OK?

**Cherry Fernandez:** Of course.

**Sarah Khan:** Because we really enjoyed the first video and we would really like to watch the second one, but we thought in the interest of time if we could move on to some questions.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Yeah, that's OK.

**Sarah Khan:** Yeah?

**Cherry Fernandez:** Yeah, of course.

**Sarah Khan:** OK. Kasari would you like to go first or should I go?

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** I'm happy to jump in. I'm a little bit distracted by the very cute hummingbird that just landed right outside my window here, despite the pouring rain. Thank you all so much for that presentation, it kind of, I think, blew all of us away in terms of the breadth of the programming and services that you offer, so I will try to keep my questions somewhat contained.

For all of the programs that you talked about, you talked about all the kind of multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion programming, and then all of your anti-racism work. I wondered for both whether you kept any or being able to conduct any evaluation on either of those in terms of what impact they've made on those goals, on inclusion, on anti-racism, and whether you're able to share any of that.



**Cherry Fernandez:** We haven't gone through a formal evaluation yet, I should say, because we're actually in the midst of many of them. But we have definitely seen the impact in terms of the number of people that are reaching out to us, not just our client base but also the community reaching out for support of what they can be doing as well.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Having not done yet the formal evaluation, do you have a sense of which of the many programs, or even videos or little pieces of work all the way to the larger chunks, do you have a sense of which of those you think have been the most successful in your communities?

**Elmira Galiyeva:** I think, Cherry, if I may, I think the videos that we have are producing are really impactful, and they reach a lot of people and we get a lot of calls. The media comes to us. Cherry was tired of interviews. Our OneWorld Festival has a huge spread as well. The unBox project that Cherry talked about is at... We're just completing it, we still doing one in Osoyoos, but from what we've seen so far from the focus group discussions after the project, it had a huge impact on the community. So people came to talk to us about the experiences, and they're like, "Oh, I had no idea about this," or, "It was so eye opening," and, "What can I do to help? Can I be a volunteer?" Or anything like that, right? So it's kind of early stages, but yeah, we definitely see some impact already. Sorry, Cherry.

**Cherry Fernandez:** That's OK, I was just going to mention how recent it is. The unBox was only released in October, November.

**Elmira Galiyeva:** Yes.

**Cherry Fernandez:** So it started September, but we started the conversations October, November and already we are planning for another round of them, larger, in February as a result of that demand. But I think Elmira is right when we talk about the videos, because we have a number of people reaching out, and because they're so easy to share. People realize, oh, OK, they're doing work here. So we actually have people from outside of our region that reach out and ask for supports, which those networks that I was speaking about is fantastic, because then we're able to connect to someone local that they can speak to and get supports from.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** That's great to hear, and I wondered, I don't know if you're planning on putting in written submissions, because we do have an opportunity for community organizations to do that. And I'm not sure if you'll be at the point then that you may have more of your evaluation completed. If you were able to share with us in those written submissions, what would be most helpful piece from my perspective would be hearing what you've learned works and what doesn't.

And what doesn't work just as much, actually. Whether you have a sense what's worked in particular in terms of the very local nature of your work, and then if you have a sense of the scalability of that work. Because I think what we've heard from you is a breadth of projects and initiatives in a way that so far we haven't heard that kind of breadth. A lot of organizations have been more targeted, and I'm curious, from that breadth I think you'll learn so much.

And in our recommendations would be really helpful to hear, again, where you felt like, yeah, we tried this, we don't think it really changed hearts and minds in the end. But this one, yeah it was a



small group, but it got deep. Or whatever the results are would be really helpful. So thank you for that.

On the survey, I wondered if you would be in a Position to share the results with us of that?

**Cherry Fernandez:** Absolutely. Absolutely. We're working with a group from the Respect Network right now to kind of analyze them and get them into usable form, essentially, because there's a lot of information there. But absolutely we'll share that once it's been compiled. Yeah.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** That's great. Thank you. On the reporting portal, do you have a sense of, just ballpark, how many reports you've received through that? And then my second question related to that is, what do you see as the value of anonymous reporting? We've heard a lot from folks who've been part of the Resilience Network or are part of the ORA network and some of the requirements to have reporting mechanisms developed, and we've heard about the pros and cons of that and I'm curious about your feelings about that.

**Cherry Fernandez:** So with the reporting portal, that is also brand new.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** OK.

**Cherry Fernandez:** So we haven't had many through there. However, our survey, that one was done earlier in the year. We had over 400 responses, and that wasn't limited to immigrants. It really was sent out to the broader community. The same was done with this reporting portal in the sense that you don't have to be the one that has experienced directly, you could have been someone that has witnessed it. And that was really important to us as well, is leaving it open in that way.

Sorry, I lost my train of thought. You had another question about that?

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** No problem. Yes, just about what you see as the value of anonymous reporting.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Yes. One of the issues that we consistently run into is that fear from our newcomers. Like I mentioned with the survey, we just asked the question, "Have you experienced racism or witnessed racism?" with that survey, and already we got backlash as a larger organization. So as an individual, there's a lot of fear there to share. So we know this is why it's under reported. So this portal gives them an option to share their experience, to let them know that they have been heard but they don't have to share their information.

And Sugun has worked with a number of our clients who have wanted to get supports and go further but were still afraid to share, so we've had to go to our Respect Network and say, "OK, this is a situation," but we haven't been able, for example, to share the sector. Because we live in smaller communities, people know. The networks are smaller, so there's more likelihood of, "Oh, I know where that's coming from."

So the anonymous piece is really important for many, and then they have that option, if they want to get more assistance they can put a contact information, but it isn't required. And we always say that's why that booklet is so important. As other resources or other avenues to report become



available, we want to give people different options for where they're comfortable. Because for example, the RCMP is not always the first place that many will want to go to because of that comfort level, right? So we want to give as many options to make sure that they get those supports and have that opportunity to share their experience.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** So just so I make sure I'm hearing what you're saying, so you see the value of anonymous reporting as both the value of communicating that someone's been heard, so just that experience of being heard, as well as providing the support services that they need or connecting them to those services.

**Cherry Fernandez:** And in addition to that, because now that portal is there and we're collecting that information, it is all kept confidential, but we're now starting to build that data. We're starting to build that case for what we have heard from our clients in the community. There is now those numbers that are starting to support it.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** OK.

**Cherry Fernandez:** And it's so important. It completely changes how people will look at that, for example.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Cherry Fernandez:** The situation.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** I know we're out of time and we have another group coming in, so I think I'll leave it there other than to say if you are doing written submissions I'd be really interested in those as well as evaluation pieces we talked about. As hearing more about the anti-racism training that you've done within, I think you said school District 67.

And if there's both content and, again, evaluation would be really useful. Again, we don't have time to go into it today, but it would be great for us to hear more about that.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Of course. Yeah, we could share that. And I'm just sharing below the link.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Oh, fantastic.

**Cherry Fernandez:** That video.

**Sarah Khan:** Well, that's great. For the second video.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Yeah.

**Elmira Galiyeva:** And I added a few of the resources that we talked about and read.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Thank you very much.

**Sugun Kaura:** Thank you, everyone.



**Cherry Fernandez:** All right, thank you so much.

**Meghan Toal:** Thank you so much. And I just want to remind, Kasari was referring to the written submissions. The deadline for written submissions and video submissions is March 31st. Just so that you have that on your radar.

And you talked so much about the amazing survey and data collection you've been doing in your region, the inquiry also will have a public survey that is opening up at the end of January, and so we'll be in touch about how we may be able to promote that survey as well. It sounds like you have some buy in around folks actually responding, so we'd love to be able to sort of piggyback on that a little bit as well.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Of course. All right.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Just before I let you go, Sarah was there anything burning on your end?

**Sarah Khan:** The one question I had was, you talked about vandalism incidents, and I was wondering if those are included as part of your survey or portal. And if not whether those are incidents that you could share with this, the locations and dates. That's very important information for us to have also for the inquiry.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Absolutely. So we do have it as part of the portal where someone can say this is the type of discrimination that we've experienced, and this is where. So it is part of the reporting portal, but we can share what we've seen over the last year and a half and where it's increased, and the type as well. And that's something the youth have really been invested in, and we're working now with the municipalities as we get this to give them that information so that they can respond as well.

**Sarah Khan:** Thank you so much. What a wonderful presentation. We really appreciate it.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Great, thank you so much for having us.

**Commissioner Kasari Govender:** Thank you to all of you. Take care.

**Meghan Toal:** Thank you so much.

**Cherry Fernandez:** Bye-bye.

**Meghan Toal:** We'll be in touch, thank you.

**Sarah Khan:** Thank you.

