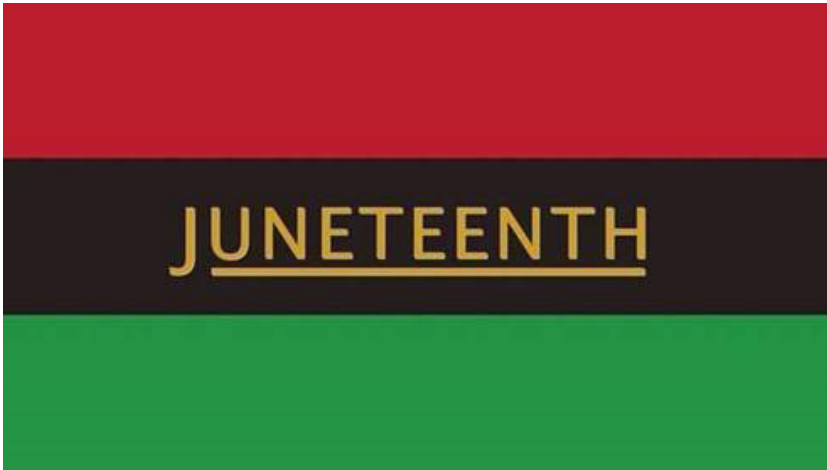

RITE NOW @ ROP



On June 19th, 1865, Union Soldiers entered Texas and announced the following:

“The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired laborer.”

This stunning announcement, made two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation, finally brought an end to legalized slavery in the United States. The celebration of this monumental day, known as Juneteenth, is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the end of enslavement.

The staff and students at Hope Forest Academy expanded the traditional Juneteenth day of festivities to a weeklong celebration that included events in multiple program areas. In the classroom, students learned not just about historical events but also contemporary issues facing African Americans. Pro-social activities were held throughout the week including fun staff-student competitions and a Soul Food Lunch on Wednesday. Events culminated on Friday with a student and staff Town Hall discussion that examined the cultural significance of Juneteenth in today’s society and what it means to each of Hope Forest Academy’s young men. The Town Hall was followed by each student presenting their rendering of the flag of an African county and facts about their county of choice. The African flag project combined creativity, education, and presentation skills in a fun, celebratory setting.
