Black Residents Flee Chicago As Experts Say Chances For Success Diminish
Longtime Black residents are leaving Chicago in droves, according to experts. Here's why.

The Windy City isn't providing the opportunities longtime Black residents need to succeed, so they're leaving in droves, according to experts.

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New census data revealed that Cook County’s Black population has declined for a seventh consecutive year.

“People associate with being successful and having a higher quality of life in areas that exist outside of Chicago. Whether that be in the suburbs or in other cities,” said Darnell Shields, executive director of community organization Austin Coming Together.
Gentrification is one of the main forces behind the exodus. Cook County’s Black population diminished by 1.15 percent last year, representing a decline of more than 14,000 Black residents. Meanwhile, more than 16,000 new residents of diverse backgrounds have replaced them since 2010.

Finding affordable housing is a major challenge, according to a report from DePaul University’s Institute for Housing Studies. About 182,000 people who need low-cost housing are struggling to find a place to live in Cook County.

Employment experts blame the loss of job opportunities on the poor education system, which has long plagued Chicago public schools.

“The population loss story is largely about lower income and younger African-American families and their challenges to find affordable housing and connections to the job market,” Alden Loury, the director of