

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING AUTISM AWARENESS DAY AND MONTH

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

RESOLUTION No. 2436-1

WHEREAS, the month of April is Autism Awareness Month and April 2nd is recognized as World Autism Day - both bring awareness to the immense need for equitable and diverse educational opportunities for all youth; and

WHEREAS, this recognition, founded by The Autism Society, began in 1972 and was called, “National Autistic Children’s Week”. On April 2, 2008, the United Nations recognized it as World Autism Day to raise awareness of the need to improve many facets of life to be more inclusive and equitable, specifically for people with autism spectrum disorder and other disabilities; and

WHEREAS, *Autism Parenting Magazine* has noted the contributions and talents of notable historical figures who identify as being on the autism spectrum, including: Greta Thunberg, an 18-year-old Swedish environmental activist who is the public face of the school climate strike movement; actor, director, and film producer, Sir Anthony Hopkins; and, Pokemon creator and founder of the gaming company Game Freak, Satoshi Tajiri; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in every 44 children in the United States has been identified as having autism spectrum disorder. Males are more than four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder than females. Autism spectrum disorder affects people from all socioeconomic and ethnic groups, but marginalized groups are more likely to receive a diagnosis later; and

WHEREAS, according to [Kids Data](#), in Santa Clara County, approximately 20 out of every 1,000 youth in Santa Clara County have autism spectrum disorder; and

WHEREAS, in Santa Clara County, there are resources for families with children who have autism spectrum disorder including Parents Helping Parents, a resource for supporting and educating families of children with autism spectrum disorder; and the San Andreas Regional Center, which provides service coordination to assist families with seeking out care for their children; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) leads the Inclusion Collaborative to promote equity, inclusion, and high-quality learning environments for individuals with disabilities in communities throughout the State of California and provides educators, parents, and community partners - including the newly opened Pediatric Diagnostic Services Center (PDSC) - with training, information and technical assistance to support the individual learning needs of students from the early years through age 24; and

WHEREAS, the Inclusion Collaborative’s Warmline supports families, teachers, and anyone who works with children. The Warmline offers guidance and screening for youth ages 0-22, with or without disabilities, coaching and resource finding in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. On average, the Warmline received 290 calls per month, with over 3,134 calls in 2023 including over 389 referrals from outside agencies; and

WHEREAS, On November 15, 2023, the Santa Clara County Board of Education (SCCBOE) approved a “Resolution Recognizing National Special Education Day” affirming the commitment of the County Superintendent of Schools and the SCCBOE to ensuring student access to equitable special education services as well as protection of their dignity and safety; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools and the SCCBOE support inclusive learning environments that promote strong physical and mental health outcomes for all students, including through the integration of social-emotional learning; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools and the SCCBOE recognize the value and importance of professional development and the need for equitable state and federal funding to schools for the provision of professional development for staff and educational services for students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, fully funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) would provide schools with the resources needed to ensure all children and youth with disabilities including autism spectrum disorder receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), unlocking the full potential of the law. The bill proposed by Senator Chris Van Hollen and Representative Jared Huffman would put the IDEA grants to state programs on a 10-year glide path to full funding. Currently, the federal share of funding is 14 percent; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools and the Santa Clara County Board of Education recognize that student success is possible when we serve the “whole child” by promoting inclusion and equity for students of all abilities in all schools and communities and urge State and Federal leaders to enhance funding for the provision of special education services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools do hereby adopt this resolution recognizing April as Autism Awareness Month and April 2 as Autism Awareness Day.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on March 6, 2024, by the following vote:

AYES: President Berta and Trustees Chon, Di Salvo, Lari, Mah, and Sreekrishnan

NOES: none

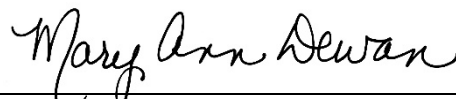
ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none

NOT PRESENT AT VOTE: Vice President Rocha



Maimona Afzal Berta, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools