February 4, 2015

TO: Santa Clara County Board of Education

FROM: Jon R. Gundry
County Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Approval of a Resolution in Support of February 2015 as National African American History Month

SCCOE Associated Goal

Goal 1: Provide support to districts, communities, schools and students

Background

Through the work of Harvard-trained historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the precursor of African American History Month was first celebrated in February 1926 during a week that encompassed the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. His aim was to encourage a greater understanding of the experiences of African Americans, and raise awareness of their contributions throughout the world.

The celebration was expanded to Black History Month in 1976, the nation’s bicentennial. President Gerald R. Ford urged Americans to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

African American History Month commemorates through community activities a more balanced and accurate picture of black history. This year’s theme is “A Century of Black Life, History and Culture.”

Requested Action

Approve the resolution in support of February 2015 as National African American History Month
RESOLUTION
RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2015
AS NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION No.

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education takes pride in joining citizens throughout the country in recognizing February 2015 as National African American History Month; and

WHEREAS, African American History Month is an opportunity to share the historical and present contributions of African Americans, and

WHEREAS, the forerunner of African American History Month began in February 1926 as a supplement to school curriculum through the work of African-American scholar and Harvard-trained historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson. His aim was to encourage a greater awareness and understanding of the African-American experience and contributions throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, the week expanded into Black History Month to commemorate, through community activities, a more balanced and accurate picture of black history, and is celebrated annually throughout the month of February, as it coincides with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education recognizes the significant contributions and considerable advances that African Americans have made, and continue to make in our community, state and the world, in such areas as education, medicine, art, culture, public service, economics and development, politics and human rights; we see the greatness of America in those who have risen above injustice and enriched our society; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Clara County Office of Education in its continued effort to honor African American History Month and to enhance equity and diversity, will make changes in all its language to replace the word "tolerance" with words like "acceptance," "respect," "inclusion" and "appreciation" whenever relating to equity and/or diversity;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools proclaim February 2015 as National African American History Month.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Santa Clara County Board of Education at a meeting held on February 4, 2015 by the following vote:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

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Darcie Green, President     Jon R. Gundry
Santa Clara County Board of Education    County Superintendent of Schools