

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND TRIBAL COMMUNITIES
DURING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY AND NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH**

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION No. 2572-2**

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples' Day is nationally celebrated on the second Monday of October and the month of November is Native American Heritage Month. The Santa Clara County Board of Education is honored to recognize and celebrate local and national Indigenous people and communities, and the significant contributions made to grow the United States (U.S.); and

WHEREAS, former Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 2016 to develop a model curriculum for ethnic studies in high schools that would also include Native American history and culture. To further promote and deepen the lessons of Native American history, former Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 738 in 2017, which required the state's Instructional Quality Commission to create a Native American studies class curriculum for high schools that satisfies the elective course requirements for admission to the University of California and California State Universities; and

WHEREAS, as of 2020, more than 3.5 million people identified as solely American Indian and Alaska Native. Additionally, nearly six million identified themselves as American Indian and Alaska Native and another race group; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous people, in particular the Muwekma Ohlone, Amah Mutsum, and Tamien tribal communities, of the Santa Clara Valley region have distinct, rich cultures binding them to the Earth and all of its inhabitants; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 census data reported Santa Clara County's population of almost two million residents, with 1.2 percent self-identifying as American Indian/Alaskan Natives; and

WHEREAS, the census has historically undercounted the population of American Indian/Alaskan Natives, precisely people living on reservations, likely contributors include biracial individuals identifying only with one group and varying comfort of marginalized populations, these totals do not reflect the entirety of the ethnic group; and

WHEREAS, as of 2024, there are 574 federally recognized American Indian reservations in the U.S. Approximately 87 percent of those who live on the reservations identify as American Indian and Alaska Native only or in combination live outside of tribal areas; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Education reported that in the 2024-25 school year, statewide enrollment of American Indian/Alaskan Native students was 0.4 percent of total enrollment and 0.3 percent in Santa Clara County; and

WHEREAS, locally, we celebrate and honor organizations and individuals preserving and reviving Indigenous cultures and advocating for equity for their communities. Such individuals include Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribal Council, Charlene Nijmeh. Chairwoman Nijmeh is an environmental steward whose focus on ecology and conservation led her to found Green Education Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to educating youth about sustainability; and

WHEREAS, such organizations as The Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), with its five Santa Clara County chapters, are committed to supporting and advancing Native Americans in science, technology engineering, and math (STEM) education and careers. And, the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley, under the leadership of Sonya M. Tetnowski, a Makah Tribal Member, has offered comprehensive health care and wellness services since 1977; and

WHEREAS, the Muwekma Ohlone, Amah Mutsun, and Tamien tribes of the region have suffered severe injustice and dispossession. The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) honors and supports the first people of the region as efforts are made to revive their culture, language, and history; and

WHEREAS, SCCOE is committed to enhancing equity, inclusion, diversity, and partnership and remains dedicated to providing schools and districts with resources and supports to implement the state history social-science standards and civic engagement, and promote understanding of economics, geography, world and U.S. history, and government in schools; and

WHEREAS, the History Social-Science Framework states students should appreciate the diversity of Indigenous people and tribal communities and investigate the history of California and the United States and the ways in which colonialism, the mission system, and forced removal impacted their daily lives; and

WHEREAS, teaching and learning about Indigenous people and tribal communities should be designed to celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and include stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Clara County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools do hereby adopt this resolution to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day in October and November as Native American Heritage Month.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on October 1, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Jessica Speiser, Raeena Lari, Maimona Afzal Berta, Victoria Chon, Jorge Pacheco, Tara Sreekrishnan

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Don Rocha



Maimona Afzal Berta, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education



Dr. David M. Toston, Sr.
County Superintendent of Schools