RESOLUTION AUTISM AWARENESS DAY AND MONTH

SANTA CLARA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
RESOLUTION No: 2316-5

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 (ASD) 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 CDC, about 1 in every 44 children has been identified as having ASD, in the United States. Males are more than four times more likely to be diagnosed with ASD than females. ASD affects all groups of socioeconomic status and ethnic groups, but minority groups are more likely to receive a diagnosed later; and

WHEREAS, according to Kids Data, in Santa Clara County, approximately 20 out of every 1,000 youth in Santa Clara county are youth identified with ASD; and

WHEREAS, in Santa Clara County, there are resources for families with children who have ASD including: Parents Helping Parents, a resource for supporting and educating families with children with ASD; and the San Andreas Regional Center, a service coordinator 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 receives 250 calls a month, with over 3,000 calls in 2022 - over 450 referrals from outside agencies; and
WHEREAS, On November 16, 2022, 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 students receiving 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 receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), unlocking the full potential of the law. A full funding request was submitted in 2021 to the federal legislature. The bill proposed by Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Representative Jared Huffman (D-CA) would put the IDEA grants to state programs on a 10-year glidepath to full funding. Currently the federal share of funding is 14 percent; and

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.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the County Board of Education at a meeting held on March 15, 2023, by the following vote:

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

NOES: none

ABSTAIN: none

ABSENT: none

Victoria Chon, President
Santa Clara County Board of Education

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