



RESOLUTION #21-23
IN SUPPORT OF STUDENT AND SCHOOL CLIMATE ACTION

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education recognizes and honors the foresight of the young generation and their valid apprehension of a future drastically diminished by climate change from the world adults today enjoy; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education is on record encouraging national, state, and local action to mitigate climate impacts and to implement responses for coping with climate change effects already impacting school communities including in Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education encourages all schools to incorporate climate awareness and information in educational opportunities at all grade levels; and

WHEREAS, student awareness of the causes and impacts of climate change may encompass environmental, scientific, cultural, and economic subject matter; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education believes that students, schools, and the broader society would benefit from deep inclusion of climate-related inquiry in subjects covered in school curricula; and

WHEREAS, students in local schools wish to engage in society's process of reducing its climate impacts, and to have their voices heard regarding the pace and extent of changes needed; and

WHEREAS, both students and adults concerned about climate change have recognized that climate impacts, as well as some proposed responses to climate change, have a disproportionate negative impact on the lives of poor and disenfranchised communities, including in Santa Cruz County; and

WHEREAS, in recent years student leadership has emerged with a sense of urgency over the need for people and institutions in all sectors of society to accelerate actions to reduce climate impacts and injustices; and

WHEREAS, students, on their own initiative, have adopted climate justice walkouts and other peaceful actions as a way that their voices and their desires for meaningful action can be heard and recognized, overcoming a history of ignoring or discounting the views of young people; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education wishes to see local schools support the initiative and commitment of students to participate in solutions to climate change, with the maximum value for education, including social and emotional aspects of growing up facing the climate crisis, along with the scientific, socio-economic, and cultural dimensions of climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education believes that the best educational environment is achieved when students feel supported by their teachers and school staff, and when students' own motivation is the basis for their learning process; and

WHEREAS, students are showing leadership world-wide in expressing the urgency for climate action; and

WHEREAS, students in Santa Cruz County are organizing activities for Friday, October 29, 2021, in solidarity with similar activism around the world;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Santa Cruz County Board of Education hereby resolves to encourage local schools and the broader educational community to adopt a supportive stance toward student climate action, and to seek ways to incorporate educational goals and requirements to complement student initiatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education encourages local schools to avoid confrontation or discouragement of peaceful student activism, while maintaining educational progress and safety for all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education encourages local school administrations to support their teachers in finding constructive educational opportunities for students motivated to activism, including field trips open to all ages and grade levels;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education encourages local school administrations to assure that students are not penalized or discouraged from participation in peaceful climate activism, including climate justice walkouts and other activities they may initiate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education encourages local teachers and administrators to maintain clear and neutral communications with students' parents and guardians covering permissions to leave school in peaceful organized actions, procedures for joining fields trips related to climate change, and assurance that students of all backgrounds, socio-economic status, and age/grade level are allowed and encouraged to participate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education strongly discourages actions by local school administrators, staff, or teachers to dissuade or discourage parents/guardians from supporting their students in school-centered activities around climate change, and instead encourages the educational community to welcome and integrate family involvement in deriving the maximum possible academic and social-emotional growth from students' desires to make a difference for the world's climate.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Santa Cruz County Board of Education, County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this 21st day of October 2021, by the following vote:

AYES: Acosta, Alto, Nichols, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Filicetti

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:



Rose Filicetti, Board President
Santa Cruz County Board of Education



Dr. Faris M. Sabbah, Secretary
Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools