



Santa Cruz County Board of Education • 400 Encinal Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 • Tel (831) 466-5900 • www.santacruzcoe.org

Mr. Ed Acosta • Dr. Stacey Kyle • Mr. Greg Larson • Ms. Sue Roth
Mr. Abel Sanchez • Mr. Bruce Van Allen • Ms. Rachel Williams

Student Trustee: Vicente Guillen Martinez and Ash Immoor

RESOLUTION #26-03 RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a time for us to continue our collective journey honoring and deepening our knowledge of the history and contributions of Black Americans and people of African descent that have been marginalized from mainstream curricula and discussions because of our country's legacy of slavery, and institutional and structural racism; and

WHEREAS, the Black History Month 2026 theme, "A Century of Black History Commemorations," marks the 100th anniversary of the first Black History Week in 1926 and explores the ongoing significance and impact of these annual celebrations; and

WHEREAS, Africans were forcibly brought to American shores to be enslaved as early as the 17th century; and

WHEREAS, Black Americans have subsequently faced injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, racist attacks, discrimination and denial of basic, fundamental rights; and

WHEREAS, in spite of these injustices, many of which continue to exist today, Black Americans have made significant contributions to the economic, educational, cultural, political, artistic, literary, scientific and technological advancements of the United States; and

WHEREAS, National African American History Month, also known as Black History Month, had its origins in 1915 when historian and author Dr. Carter G. Woodson founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month in February celebrates the contributions that Black Americans have made to American history in their struggles for freedom and equality and deepens our understanding of our Nation's history; and

WHEREAS, Presidents Ford, Carter, Reagan, Clinton, Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have issued Presidential messages and proclamations recognizing the significance of National African American History Month by urging all Americans to recognize the important contributions made by African Americans to American life and culture; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress has similarly passed laws and adopted resolutions since 1986 to recognize the significance of contributions made by Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, The Library of Congress, National Archives and Records Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Gallery of Art, National Park Service, Smithsonian Institution, and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum join in paying tribute to the generations of African Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve full citizenship in American society; and

WHEREAS, former Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools Michael Watkins became the first Black County Superintendent in California history following his election in 2006; and

WHEREAS, Black history is still being made today in Santa Cruz County, with the naming of UCSC's John Lewis College and the election of Justin Cummings as the first Black Santa Cruz County Supervisor; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (Santa Cruz COE) facilitates the Countywide Black Student Union, a student-led group with the mission of creating a safe space for Black students and their allies to connect, build relationships, create community, and to develop and promote cultural awareness; and

WHEREAS, each spring, the Countywide Black Student Union helps organize a countywide Black Grad event to affirm and celebrate Black excellence in academics and to provide a ceremonial complement to high school graduation ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Cruz COE and the Santa Cruz County Board of Education are committed to valuing diversity and believe deeply that equity, respect, and justice are central to the character of who we are, to the health of our democracy, and to the well-being of our world; and

WHEREAS, at the Santa Cruz COE, it is our hope that during this month of recognition and celebration of Black Americans and their contributions made to this country, we will work to disrupt manifestations of anti-Black sentiments in our communities and our schools;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools hereby recognize and support National African American History Month in February 2026 by encouraging public officials, educators, librarians, and school communities to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Santa Cruz County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools hereby support school districts in their efforts to commemorate National Black History Month by providing instructional resources, relevant research, and exemplary or promising practices throughout the year to make a significant impact on the lives and futures of Black American students.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Santa Cruz County Board of Education, County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this 15th day of January, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES: **Kyle, Larson, Roth, Sanchez, Van Allen, Williams**

NAYS: **None**

ABSENT: **Acosta**

ABSTAIN: **None**

Rachel Williams

Rachel Williams, Board President
Santa Cruz County Board of Education

Faris Sabbah

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