

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Resolution 19-035 Calling for Climate Change Action to Protect Students and Their Families

WHEREAS, it is important to advocate for climate action leading to climate restoration to curtail one of the greatest threats facing communities throughout the world; and,

WHEREAS, climate change is not a partisan issue and that local, state, and national policies should be guided by the best available science; and,

WHEREAS, there is a broad scientific consensus among climate scientists that human activities, contributing to increases in greenhouse gas emissions, are the dominant cause of climate change. 97% of climate scientists; and,

WHEREAS, children represent a particularly vulnerable group because greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere will continue to accumulate over the coming decades and will profoundly impact our current students throughout their lives, as well as the lives of future generations; and,

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of the climate-related 2017 Tubbs fire which destroyed the homes of more than 1400 students in Sonoma County, the Sonoma County Office of Education has encouraged school districts to engage in non-partisan climate advocacy; more than 50 school boards and student councils in California, Colorado, New York, Virginia, Oregon, New Mexico, Ohio, North Carolina, and Nevada have passed non-partisan climate action resolutions; and

WHEREAS, the California PTA has declared climate change a children's issue; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley School Board recognizes climate change as a generational justice and human rights issue; and,

WHEREAS, climate change is a social justice and equity issue. While climate change impacts all people and disproportionately impacts all young people and future generations, it disproportionately affects people of color and people in

poverty, thereby exacerbating existing inequities and limiting equality of opportunity which is a foundational aspiration for modern America; and

WHEREAS, the global impact, urgency, and magnitude of the challenge of addressing climate change calls for leadership in all sectors of society, all institutions and all elected leaders; and,

WHEREAS, national and state elected leaders working in a bipartisan fashion to enact carbon pricing policies could quickly substantially reduce human-made greenhouse gas emissions; and,

WHEREAS the Berkeley School Board celebrates existing district sustainability initiatives such as the 2018 passage of the Sustainability Plan, which offers a comprehensive and holistic roadmap for the District to reduce the environmental footprint of schools and promote environmental literacy, which we believe are fundamental to a high-quality 21st century education; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley School Board recognizes and understands the significant negative impact that rapid and ongoing climate change has on America's schools, students, and their communities.

LET IT THEREFORE BE RESOLVED THAT, the Berkeley School Board calls on Congress and our State Legislature, in order to restore the climate to protect young people and future generations, to swiftly enact common sense state and national climate policies, such as: revenue-neutral carbon-fee-and-dividend; 100% clean energy transition plans that include safety nets and training for transitioning workers; green infrastructure and technology investments; investments in forestry and regenerative agriculture to drawdown CO2 from the atmosphere and sequester in soils and biomass; and investments in environmental education and other policies that combat this urgent threat to our students and their families.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education directs the district clerk to transmit official copies of this resolution to the following: the Superintendent of Alameda County, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Governor of California, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, State Senator Nancy Skinner, and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks.

Passed and adopted by the Board of Education of the Berkeley Unified School District this 8th Day of May, 2019.

Ty Alper, Director/Clerk
Board of Education
Berkeley Unified School District