

**SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING CÉSAR CHÁVEZ DAY

WHEREAS César Estrada Chávez was born March 31, 1927, on a small farm near Yuma, Arizona, and was raised by migrant farm workers; and

WHEREAS Chávez left school after eighth grade to labor in the fields and vineyards to help support his family; and

WHEREAS After experiencing years of discrimination and unfair working conditions, Chávez joined the Community Service Organization in 1952, a prominent Latino civil rights group that organized Chicanos to vote, and battled racial and economic discrimination; and

WHEREAS In 1962, César Chávez resigned his position with the Community Services Organization to embark on a bold new undertaking to form a farmworkers' union. He was joined by Dolores Huerta, and together they became the architects of the National Farm Worker's Union, the forerunner to the present United Farm Workers (UFW); and

WHEREAS Chávez traveled to many California migrant farm communities organizing a strong nucleus of dedicated farm worker members; and

WHEREAS In 1965, César Chávez led a strike of California grape pickers to demand higher wages and urged all Americans to boycott table grapes as a show of support. The strike included a 340-mile march from Delano to Sacramento in 1966 in which thousands of farmworkers and supporters marched in solidarity; and

WHEREAS César Chávez preached nonviolence to the strikers even as they were physically abused by many of those opposed to the grape boycott. In 1968, he began a Ghandi-like fast to call attention to the migrant workers' cause. His fast increased public awareness of the conditions under which farmworkers labored. In 1973, the UFW organized a strike for higher wages and better working conditions from lettuce growers, and, after many battles, an agreement was finally reached in 1977 that gave the UFW the sole right to organize farmworkers; and

WHEREAS Chávez and the organization he founded, the UFW, achieved the following:

- The first collective bargaining agreement between farm workers and growers in the continental United States; and
- The first union contracts requiring rest periods, clean drinking water, hand washing facilities, and protective clothing against pesticide exposure; and
- The first ban on pesticide spraying while workers were in the fields; and
- The first ban on DDT and other dangerous pesticides; and
- The first and only performing pension plan for retired farm workers; and
- The first union contracts regulating safety and sanitary conditions in farm labor camps and banning discrimination in employment and sexual harassment of female workers; and
- Abolished use of the infamous "short-handed hoe" that crippled generations of farm workers; and
- Extended to farm workers state coverage under unemployment, disability, and workers' compensation;

WHEREAS In the year 2000, the California Legislature enacted Senate Bill 984 (Chapter 213 of the Statutes of 2000) to create an annual state holiday on César Chávez's birthday. This

holiday provides all Californians the opportunity to learn from and celebrate the legacy of this great man; and

WHEREAS Chávez influenced and inspired millions of Americans of all nationalities to seek social justice and civil rights for the poor and disenfranchised in our society; and

WHEREAS in 1990, 300 Santa Monica High School students supported Chávez in a peaceful demonstration in front of the Loews Hotel to protest the use of harmful pesticides;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education does hereby adopt this Resolution to honor a man, who devoted his life to improving the working conditions, safety, and dignity of so many, by recognizing March 31, 2017, as the anniversary of the birth of César Chávez. The Board calls upon all schools and justice-minded people of the community, to honor the legacy of César Chávez as a symbol of hope and justice to all persons.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 7th day of March 2019 by the following vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:

Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein
Board President

Dr. Ben Drati
Superintendent