

**Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District  
Board of Education**

**NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, the Native American experience is central to the American story, being the first people to live on the land we all cherish and having profoundly shaped our country's character and our cultural heritage; and

**WHEREAS**, from generation to generation, Native Americans handed down invaluable cultural knowledge and rich traditions, which continue to thrive in Native American communities across our nation today; and

**WHEREAS**, since the earliest days of our Republic, Native Americans have played a vital role in our country's freedom and security, having served in all branches of America's armed forces; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans are leaders in every aspect of our society – from the classroom, to the boardroom, to the battlefield; and

**WHEREAS**, Native Americans make up the ranks of both our district's certificated and classified staff as well as our student population; and

**WHEREAS**, Native American and Alaska Native tribal governments are an integral part of social, political, and economic fabric of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, Tribal America has brought to this great country certain values and ideas that have become ingrained in the American spirit: the knowledge that humans can thrive and prosper without destroying the natural environment; the understanding that people from different backgrounds, cultures, religions, and traditions can come together to build a great country; and the awareness that diversity can be a source of strength, rather than division; and

**WHEREAS**, while we pay tribute to Native American achievements, we must also acknowledge the parts of our shared history that have been marred by violence and tragic mistreatment; and

**WHEREAS**, for centuries, Native Americans faced cruelty, injustice, and broken promises; and

**WHEREAS**, our tribal communities face stark realities, including disproportionately high rates of poverty, unemployment, crime, and disease; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1914, Red Fox James, a Blackfoot Indian, rode horseback from state to state seeking approval for a day to honor Native Americans as the first Americans; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1915, The American Indian Association called for the observance of, and President Coolidge issued a proclamation for, an American Indian Day; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1990, President Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month," and similar proclamations have been issued since 1994; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2009, President Barack Obama, signed a bipartisan resolution that recognized the sad and painful chapters in our shared history, and remains dedicated to writing

a new chapter in that history by strengthening our government-to-government relationship with tribal nations while enhancing tribal sovereignty and tribal self-determination; and

**WHEREAS**, the new park on Ocean Ave. in the City of Santa Monica was named Tongva Park to honor and highlight the area's original inhabitants, the Tongva people, who have lived in the Los Angeles area for thousands of years and are deeply connected to the original arroyos, native landscape, springs, and the "breath of the ocean" that are symbolically represented in the park; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Malibu—which derived its name from Humaliwu, the original Chumash name for the region—hosts an annual Chumash Day Powwow and Intertribal Gathering to honor the city's original settlers, the Chumash Indians; and

**WHEREAS**, school district across the nation, including our own SMMUSD, can find inspiration and direction in the Great Law of the Iroquois; In every deliberation we should consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations;

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that by celebrating National Native American and Alaska Native Heritage Month, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District joins with all Americans in reaffirming our country's commitment to remember the contributions and honor the unique heritage of our country's first inhabitants.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 7<sup>th</sup> day of November 2019 by the SMMUSD Board of Education by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein  
Board of Education President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Ben Drati  
Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date