



Resolution No. 2020/21-05
Date: July 22, 2020

Rename James Monroe Elementary School as George Ortiz Elementary School

WHEREAS, on June 10th, 2020 the Santa Rosa City Schools Board of Education put out a public statement to our beloved community declaring that we stand firmly and in solidarity with our Black community with a commitment to name and respond to the injustices that create alienation and separation; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe Elementary School, located at 2567 Marlow Road in Santa Rosa, California, is named after James Monroe, the fifth President of the United States; and

WHEREAS, James Monroe was a slave owner, including during his term as President; and

WHEREAS, the institution of slavery was an evil practice that uprooted and enslaved Africans from their homelands, subjugating them and their children into forced labor, inflicting physical and psychological harm, dehumanizing and treating them as property – a practice that will forever stain this nation; and

WHEREAS, the institution of slavery played a key role in the foundation of the systemic racism that plagues our nation to this day; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Rosa City Schools District is committed towards implementing an Ethnic Studies curriculum, with a pedagogy that humanizes all people by honoring the cultural wealth of historically underserved groups; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz was a relentless civic titan who was widely regarded as the patron of Latinx empowerment and community pride in Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz grew up the son of a migrant farmworker and as a child also worked in the fields himself; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz served as a Cryptographer in the Signal Corps of the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz attended Fresno State College on a track scholarship, earned a degree in Social Science with a minor in psychology, and then took a job as social worker in Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz worked nights teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and Citizenship classes; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz co-founded Latinos Unidos del Condado de Sonoma, a non-profit scholarship and cultural organization, through which thousands of scholarships have been given to Latinx students in Sonoma County; and

WHEREAS, George Ortiz co-founded the non-profit social service, anti-poverty agency, first called North Bay Human Development Corporation and now known as California Human Development (CHD) – an agency whose efforts today through six divisions of service, give 25,000 people a year in 31 northern California counties a hand up in pursuit of the American Dream.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Santa Rosa City Schools District Board of Education renames James Monroe Elementary School as George Ortiz Elementary School;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the governing board of education directs the superintendent to ensure all signs and materials reflect this name change.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of the Santa Rosa City Schools District, Sonoma County, California, on July 22, 2020 at a duly noticed, regularly scheduled meeting by the following vote:

AYES: NOS: ABSTAIN: ABSENT:

Alegría De La Cruz, Clerk of the Board