

**SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
RESOLUTION NUMBER 01-2020-2021**

**RESOLUTION DENOUNCING RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND  
AFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO ETHNIC AND GENDER STUDIES**

**WHEREAS**, the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District (“District”) is committed to maintaining a safe and positive school environment where all students, staff, parents/guardians and community members are treated equally, with respect and dignity;

**WHEREAS**, the District believes that diversity, equity, and inclusion among the District’s community of students, staff, parents/guardians, and community members is integral to the success of the District’s vision, mission, and goals;

**WHEREAS**, the District prohibits unlawful discrimination, including discrimination against an individual or group based on race, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, immigration status, ethnic group identification, ethnicity, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information; a perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics;

**WHEREAS**, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions, including individual racism, which is internalized or interpersonal, and systemic racism, which is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity, and assigning value based on an individual’s appearance;

**WHEREAS**, structural racism has carried out systematic discrimination and oppression throughout history in the institutional policies and practices of the society that include the enslavement of Black Americans, Japanese internment camps, forced displacement, forced separation, threat of and actual deportation of Latinx families, confiscation of sacred land and genocide of indigenous people, unlawful use of black bodies for medical experimentation, forced sterilization of people of color, laws forbidding literacy among those enslaved, punishment for speaking their native language, laws denying the practice of traditional rituals; mass detainment and imprisonment of Black and Brown individuals, police brutality and use of deadly force, and other countless forms of structural racism, all represent racialized trauma and terror and result in long term mental, emotional and physical health implications for the survivors , their families, the community at large, and subsequent generations;

**WHEREAS**, structural racism causes persistent racial discrimination in housing, education, employment, transportation, and criminal justice, and unfairly disadvantages communities of color, thereby depleting the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources;

**WHEREAS**, the recent unconscionable and senseless killings of Black individuals in the United States and recent increase in reports of racist hate crimes and racial incidents nationwide, remind us of the persistent racism and social injustice in our society;

**WHEREAS**, the District believes that silence and inaction only serve to perpetuate such injustice, bias, and racism and the District stands with Black communities to combat all forms of racism, both institutional and individual;

**WHEREAS**, the District remains committed to fostering systems and communities anchored in equity, dignity, love, compassion and kindness;

**WHEREAS**, the District affirms its commitment to ensuring the safety, positive mental and emotional health, well-being, and high academic achievement of its Black students and students from other marginalized communities by working with community members to address the traumas caused by systemic racism;

**WHEREAS**, the District expects District and school site leaders to continuously examine the District's policies and practices in light of the District's beliefs and commitments and to work together to deploy resources and create conditions under which each school, each staff member, and each and every student will have the opportunity to achieve at high levels;

**WHEREAS**, the District recognizes cultural competence is necessary to identify implicit bias, macro-and micro-aggressions, presumptions of privilege and entitlement and systems of oppression;

**WHEREAS**, the District desires to improve the public education experience for the District's Black students, and all students of color, by recognizing and confronting all forms of racism and social injustice;

**WHEREAS**, the District seeks to provide a well-rounded and quality education that exposes students to cultures that are crucial to understanding our nation, past and present, and that helps our students to appreciate the rich histories and cultural contributions of their own communities, by teaching a curriculum that is inclusive of, and responsive to, all our cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds;

**WHEREAS**, at a time when the national climate drives divisiveness and fear of otherness, Ethnic and Gender Studies can play a critical role in increasing social awareness and understanding, and honors the human experience and the intersectionality of all students that we serve;

**WHEREAS**, a 2016 study by Stanford University found that taking an ethnic studies course led to better grades, especially in math and science, and also increased attendance among high school students at risk of dropping out;

**WHEREAS**, Ethnic and Gender Studies also promote social-emotional learning, and help students and communities to recognize and celebrate their diversity. The National Education Association found that “there is considerable research evidence that well-designed and well-taught ethnic studies curricula have positive academic and social outcomes for students;” and

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the District reaffirms its commitments to fighting racism, in all of its forms, through a safe, equitable, and high-quality education for all students, and an inclusive working environment for all employees;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the District will continue to expand its course offerings with a focus on social justice and multiculturalism and develop a five-year strategic plan to make Ethnic and Gender Studies a required component of graduation, starting with the graduating class of 2025, ensuring that all students are provided with equitable access to an Ethnic and Gender studies course prior to the completion of high school;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the District is committed to ensuring that all staff are culturally proficient and will continue to provide and expand on its cultural competence training for all District employees;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the District vows to make decisions with a deliberate awareness of historic and systemic impediments to learning faced by students of color and/or diverse cultural, linguistic or socio-economic backgrounds;

**FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board of Education will revisit the aforementioned action items through regular reports by District staff.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Trustees of the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, Santa Maria, California at a public meeting thereof duly called and held on July 14, 2020 by the following vote:

AYES: Lopez, Garvin, Karamitsos, Perez, Palera

NOES: N/A

ABSENT: N/A

ABSTAIN: N/A

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President/Clerk/Secretary of the Board of Education  
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District