

1 [Supporting the San Francisco Unified School District’s Disability Awareness Efforts]

2

3 **Resolution Commending the Initiatives The San Francisco Unified School District**
4 **(SFUSD) has Taken to Increase Disability Awareness and Encouraging the District’s**
5 **Efforts in the Promotion and Outreach for these Programs.**

6

7 WHEREAS, People with disabilities face negative attitudes, limited physical access, limited
8 access to communication and/or resources, and other barriers to rights as individuals (Brown,
9 1995;¹ Gilson & Depoy, 2000);² and

10 WHEREAS, Hidden or invisible disabilities are not readily apparent to the general
11 population; and

12 WHEREAS, Hidden or invisible disabilities include learning disabilities, attention deficit
13 disorder, mental illness, brain injuries, epilepsy, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, cancer, chronic health
14 pain, AIDS, and others; and

15 WHEREAS, People with disabilities make up the largest minority group in America,³ and
16 continue to face discrimination and negative stereotypes; and

17 WHEREAS, Approximately 56.7 million people (18.7 percent) in the United States has a
18 disability;⁴ and

19 WHEREAS, As of 2010, the SFUSD serves 6,296 students with disabilities (PreK-12), which
20 is 11% of the total district population,⁵ and

21

22 ¹ Brown, S. E. (1995). *Disability culture/rights/pride paradigm*. Las Cruces, NM: Institute on Disability
Culture.

23 ² Gilson, S. F., & Depoy, E. (2000). Multiculturalism and disability: A critical perspective. *Disability &*
Society, 15(2), 207-218.

24 ³ "Disability Stats and Facts." *The Social Justice Movement of the 21st Century...Building a Bridge Between*
Disability and Community. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Feb. 2014.

25 ⁴ Brault, Matthew V. *Americans With Disabilities 2010*. Rep. N.p.: US Census, n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2014.
<<http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p70-131.pdf>>.

1 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has demonstrated in many
2 ways their willingness to make their learning environments as inclusive as they can for all students;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The SFUSD provides a Resource Page⁶ on their website for its schools to refer
5 to when administrators or teachers are interested in utilizing best practices for inclusion; and

6 WHEREAS, The SFUSD collaborates with the City's Department of Children, Youth, and
7 their Families (DCYF) and the non-profit organization, Support for Families with Disabilities, to
8 provide workshops to after-school program leaders, site coordinators, and students on supporting
9 students with disabilities through professional development days;⁷ and

10 WHEREAS, The SFUSD is in the process of implementing and expanding "Behavioral
11 Response to Intervention (RTI)" strategies which include Restorative Practices, Trauma Sensitivity,
12 Cultural Competency, De-escalation Strategies, and Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies; and

13 WHEREAS, RTI is part of the District's "Six Strategies for Success;" and,

14 WHEREAS, All SFUSD schools develop school wide behavior matrices by identifying what it
15 means to "Be Safe," "Be Respectful," and "Be Responsible," in all physical spaces within the
16 schools' facility; and

17 WHEREAS, The SFUSD's "Second Step" program teaches students from preschool to grade
18 8 core social-emotional skills such as empathy, emotion management, problem solving, self-
19 regulation, executive function skills, and skills for learning; and

20

21 ⁵ *An Audit of Programs & Services for Students with Disabilities in the San Francisco Unified School*
22 *District*. Rep. Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative Education Development Center, Inc., Sept. -
23 Oct. 2010. Web. 24 Feb. 2014. <[http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/about-SFUSD/files/audit-
24 programs-students-with-disabilities.pdf](http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/about-SFUSD/files/audit-programs-students-with-disabilities.pdf)>.

25 ⁶ San Francisco Unified School District. "Resources." *SFUSD: Resources*. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Mar. 2014.
<<http://www.sfusd.edu/en/programs/special-education/inclusive-schools/inclusive-schools-resources.html>>.

⁷ Salvador Lopez Barr, Student Advisory Council Coordinator. "SFUSD's Disability Awareness Programs/Cuicrículums." Memorandum to the Youth Commission & Student Advisory Council, Joint Committee. Wednesday, May 14th, 2014.

1 WHEREAS, The SFUSD’s “Rethink Curriculum” provides caregivers, teachers, and parents
2 training to engage a child’s fundamental skills such as making eye contact, requesting items,
3 answering questions, following instructions, playing with other children, engaging in conversation,
4 and understanding the emotions of others; and

5 WHEREAS, The SFUSD’s “Beyond Differences Program” is being piloted at Aptos Middle
6 School and trains students on how to create safe and inclusive learning environments for their
7 peers; and

8 WHEREAS, The SFUSD’s “Best Buddies Program” at Balboa, Lowell, Washington, Mission,
9 and Everett public schools fosters one-to-one friendships between students with and without
10 intellectual and developmental disabilities with the goal of breaking through social barriers for
11 students with disabilities; and

12 WHEREAS, The SFUSD’s “Peer Resources” program empowers youth to engage with one
13 another to create a positive school climate, and to change the system so that there is justice for all
14 students; and

15 WHEREAS, The SFUSD’s “Wellness Center” program promotes respect for all students
16 including those with different sexual orientations and those with disabilities, such as physical
17 limitations and learning differences; and

18 WHEREAS, The efforts mentioned above support the mission of the SFUSD, “to provide
19 each student with an equal opportunity to succeed by promoting intellectual growth, creativity, self-
20 discipline, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, democratic responsibility, economic competence, and
21 physical and mental health so that each student can achieve his or her maximum potential;”⁸ and

22
23
24

25 ⁸ “Mission Statement” SFUSD:Overview. San Francisco Unified School District, n.d. Web Accessed March 11, 2014, <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/overview.html>.

1 WHEREAS, The SF Youth Commission’s Education, Health, and Wellness Committee
2 distributed an informal survey about disability awareness and people with disabilities to 85 SFUSD
3 high school students; and

4 WHEREAS, Their findings show that 46% of the students would like to learn more about
5 special education, and only 17% of the students consider themselves very familiar with special
6 education; and

7 WHEREAS, Giving the youth the opportunity to understand disability will allow them to see
8 disability more positively, which will allow them to create change in the world around them; and

9 WHEREAS, Youth will be the leaders of the future and will be the ones who will create a San
10 Francisco where all people are respected and valued for their individual abilities and strength; now,
11 therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission appreciates and commends the San Francisco
13 Unified School District’s commitment to inclusion and support for all students who all have different
14 learning styles, learning speeds, a range of mental, intellectual, and developmental abilities;

15 RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission encourages the school district to further promote,
16 publicize, and implement programs that build understanding, acceptance, and friendship between
17 students with disabilities and students in general education; and be it finally

18 RESOLVED, That the Youth Commission urges the school district to expand and
19 prioritize already existing programs and curriculum that directly engages youth, creates youth
20 leaders in Special Education, educates general education students about disabilities and
21 increases inclusion in all schools.

22
23
24
25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25



Nicholas Persky
2013-2014 Youth Commission Chair
Adopted by Youth Commission June 16th, 2014