Resolution in Support of Increasing Existing Funding for Wellness Programs, Resources, Outreach, and Education in San Francisco Public High Schools Including More Professional Development for School Staff on Wellness Practices and Frameworks Such as Healing-Centered Care, and Youth-Anchored Peer-to-Peer Counseling

WHEREAS, The San Francisco Wellness Initiative was launched to improve the health and well-being of all SFUSD students; and,

WHEREAS, Wellness centers were implemented in SFUSD schools to provide mental and physical health care services available to all SFUSD students, therefore enhancing students' feelings of safety and belonging; and,

WHEREAS, In the 2006-2007 Youth Commission Budget and Policy Priority Proposals, the Youth Commission consistently advocated for the expansion and funding of SFUSD wellness centers to the City's Middle and High Schools, as well as the preservation of mental health programs and the use of add-backs to hire more wellness center staff in the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Youth Commission Budget and Policy Priority Proposals; and,

WHEREAS, A KidsData survey found that 30.2% of Black SFUSD students in grades 7, 9, and 11 experienced depression-related feelings, along with 29.7% of Hispanic/Latino students, and 22.4% of Asian students; and,
RESOLUTION NO. 2223-AL-01

WHEREAS, these issues increased and disparities, only increased with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the pandemic school closures deprived students from seeing classmates, and being a part of organizations, teams, and programs which offered them joy and purpose; and,

WHEREAS, Following the pandemic, SFUSD committed to supporting students' mental health and wellness, as well as increasing access to health and wellness services for middle school students; and,

WHEREAS, The Youth Commission recognizes the need for a larger investment in mental health services coming out of the pandemic; and,

WHEREAS, Many SFUSD students presently do not have access to wellness centers for a variety of reasons, including a lack of diverse representation and a disconnect between services and students, as students do not feel comfortable accessing the wellness centers; and

WHEREAS, A survey published by K12 Dive reports that Black students are the least likely to report having a trusted adult at school and the most likely to claim that their school mental health professional cannot understand their situation due to racial or ethnic differences; and,

8 Youth Commission. Hearing on the City's reimbursement practices and maximizing funding for mental health services from State and Federal programs, including, but not limited to, Mental Health Medi-Cal administrative activities, and requesting the Department of Public Health, Human Services Agency, Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, Juvenile Probation Department, San Francisco Unified School District, and community-based mental health providers to report. (2021, February 26). Retrieved February 19, 2023, from https://sfgov.org/youthcommission/sites/default/files/210042%20Youth%20Commission%202021-RBM-09.pdf
WHEREAS, The Chinese Progressive Association’s 2017 survey (of nearly 1000 SFUSD students) found that the SFUSD wellness centers currently do not meet the cultural and linguistic needs of its students and families12; and,

WHEREAS, Students do not want their parents to know they are meeting with a school counselor, and are concerned that school staff will treat them differently or provide them with fewer opportunities at school13; and,

WHEREAS, The Chinese Progressive Association’s 2017 survey showed that 36% of lesbian and gay students reported that concerns about family and friends finding out about their mental health issues barred them from accessing the wellness centers.14

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of Education to increase existing funding for wellness programs, resources, outreach, and education in San Francisco public schools, including professional development for school staff on wellness practices and frameworks such as healing-centered care and youth-anchored peer-to-peer counseling; and,

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of Education to ensure a more culturally and linguistically appropriate wellness center staff and services; and,

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of Education to

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expand access to wellness centers to all SFUSD schools, including middle and high
schools; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission
urges the Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the
Board of Education to research the disparity between schools in access to wellness
programs and resources, with the goal of reducing inequity across San Francisco public
schools.