

1 [Support for Increasing funding for Wellness Centers in San Francisco Public Schools]
2 **Resolution urging the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the**
3 **San Francisco Unified School District to increasing funding for wellness**
4 **programs, resources, outreach, and education in San Francisco public schools,**
5 **including more professional development for school staff on wellness practices**
6 **and frameworks such as healing-centered care, and youth-anchored Peer-to-Peer**
7 **Counseling**

8 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Wellness Initiative was launched to improve the
9 health and well-being of all San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) students;
10 and,

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

14 WHEREAS, In the 2006-2007 Youth Commission Budget and Policy Priorities
15 Report, the Youth Commission advocated for the expansion and funding of SFUSD
16 wellness centers to the city's middle and high schools, as well as the preservation of
17 mental health programs and the use of add-backs to hire more wellness center staff in
18 the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Youth Commission Budget and Policy Priorities Reports;
19 and,

20 WHEREAS, A 2020 KidsData survey found that 30.2% of Black SFUSD students
21 in grades 7, 9, and 11 experienced depression-related feelings, along with 29.7% of
22 Hispanic/Latino students, and 22.4% of Asian students; and,

1 WHEREAS, These disparities only increased with the COVID-19 pandemic in
2 2020; and,

3 WHEREAS, Pandemic school closures deprived students from seeing
4 classmates, and being a part of organizations, teams, and programs which offered them
5 joy and purpose; and,

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

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

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

15 WHEREAS, A 2020 survey published by K12 Dive reports that Black students
16 are the least likely to report having a trusted adult at school and the most likely to claim
17 that their school mental health professional cannot understand their situation due to
18 racial or ethnic differences; and,

19 WHEREAS, The Chinese Progressive Association's 2017 survey (of nearly 1000
20 SFUSD students) found that the SFUSD wellness centers currently do not meet the
21 cultural and linguistic needs of its students and families; and,

22 WHEREAS, According to the Chinese Progressive Association's 2017 survey,
23 students often do not want their parents to know they are meeting with a school

1 counselor, and are concerned that school staff will treat them differently or provide them
2 with fewer opportunities at school; and,

3 WHEREAS, The Chinese Progressive Association’s 2017 survey showed that
4 36% of lesbian and gay students reported that concerns about family and friends finding
5 out about their mental health issues barred them from accessing the wellness centers;
6 and,

7 WHEREAS, Peer-to-peer counseling is a form of support that involves trained
8 students providing counseling and assistance to their peers within the school
9 community; and,

10 WHEREAS, Peer-to-peer counseling programs have shown to be effective in
11 promoting mental health, reducing stigma, and providing accessible support to students
12 facing various challenges; and,

13 WHEREAS, Implementing youth-anchored peer-to-peer counseling in San
14 Francisco public schools can enhance the mental health support available to students,
15 particularly those who may feel more comfortable seeking help from their peers; and,

16 WHEREAS, Peer-to-peer counseling programs can foster a sense of connection,
17 empathy, and understanding among students, leading to a more inclusive and
18 supportive school environment; and,

19 WHEREAS, Healing-centered care is an essential framework that prioritizes the
20 holistic well-being of individuals, acknowledging their experiences and trauma, and
21 fostering resilience and growth through culturally competent and community-oriented
22 approaches; and,

1 WHEREAS, Healing-centered care emphasizes the importance of creating safe
2 and supportive spaces for students, promoting emotional and mental well-being, and
3 addressing systemic inequities that impact the health of marginalized communities; and,

4 WHEREAS, Integrating healing-centered care into wellness programs in San
5 Francisco public schools can lead to more effective and culturally responsive mental
6 health support for students, particularly those from underserved and diverse
7 backgrounds; and,

8 WHEREAS, there is a significant issue of staff turnover at San Francisco Public
9 schools, with positions being underpaid and overworked, negatively impacting the
10 stability and continuity of wellness programs and services provided to SFUSD students;
11 and,

12 WHEREAS, retaining experienced and qualified staff is crucial for the effective
13 implementation and long-term success of wellness centers in SFUSD schools; and,

14 WHEREAS, addressing the issue of underpaid and overworked positions is
15 essential for creating a healthier and more supportive environment for both staff and
16 students; and,

17 WHEREAS, investing in staff well-being and providing competitive compensation
18 will attract and retain dedicated professionals committed to supporting the mental and
19 physical health needs of SFUSD students and therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Mayor of
21 San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the San Francisco Unified
22 School District to increase existing funding for wellness programs, resources, outreach,
23 and education in San Francisco public schools, including professional development for

1 school staff on wellness practices and frameworks such as healing-centered care and
2 youth-anchored peer-to-peer counseling; and be it

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

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the
8 Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of
9 Education to expand access to wellness centers to all SFUSD schools, including middle
10 and high schools; and be it

11 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the
12 Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of
13 Education to research the disparity between schools in access to wellness programs
14 and resources, with the goal of reducing inequity across San Francisco public schools;
15 and be it

16 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the
17 Mayor of San Francisco and Board of Supervisors to collaborate with the Board of
18 Education to address the issue of high staff turnover in San Francisco Public Schools,
19 particularly in wellness centers, by advocating for increased compensation and
20 improved working conditions for school staff, recognizing that these positions are
21 currently underpaid and overworked; and be it

1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That Youth Commission staff are directed to transmit
2 copies of this resolution to the Office of the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, Department of
3 Children, Youth, and Their Families, and the Board of Education.