



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Inter-Departmental Correspondence
Board of Supervisors



DATE: August 9, 2010
BOARD MEETING DATE: August 24, 2010
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: No
VOTE REQUIRED: Majority

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Rich Gordon
SUBJECT: Resolution from the San Mateo County Youth Commission

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept a Resolution prepared by the Youth Commission resolving to challenge elected officials to maintain education funding.

BACKGROUND:

The San Mateo County Youth Commission has advocated for youth in the since it was created in 1993. The Commission members meet each year to discuss what topics are most affecting youth as a whole and they work to improve conditions.

In 2007, this Board adopted the San Mateo County Children's Bill of Rights, which was crafted by the Youth Commission and presented to the Board. Adopting the Bill of Rights gave the Board and the County a framework within which to work on issues affecting youth in San Mateo County. This framework gave a set of priorities that should be addressed when working with youth.

DISCUSSION:

One of the priorities adopted in the Children's Bill of Rights was that of providing a high quality education to youth in San Mateo County. During this year's term, the Youth Commission worked on a resolution addressing this priority.

The Board is deciding whether or not to accept a resolution that asks for elected officials to reevaluate their views on education. In this reevaluation the Youth Commission specifically asks for elected officials to incorporate more youth feedback, keeping students informed of important educational decisions and explore long term stable funding for education including finding new funding sources.

By accepting this report the Board does not adopt their goals set in it but rather clearly identifies the inspired thought and work that went in to creating this resolution by the Youth Commission.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

SAN MATEO COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION

Resolution on the Status of Education in the State of California
May 27, 2010



Whereas the quality and accessibility of education is being harmed by developments in policy and budget, the Youth Commission observes:

- Decline in quality of public education with the increase in class size and tuition, and the reduction in class availability.
- Discouraged students reflect a decrease in morale; students feel they are not a priority and therefore they are losing hope in their futures.

Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26 reads “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages...”

Whereas the Federal “Race to the Top” program reemphasizes education at the national level to compete on the international stage, and the State of California does not meet basic criteria of educational accomplishment and was rejected for funding the first round.

Whereas the State of California has reiterated its commitment to public education with no regard for public policy. For instance:

- The Master Plan for Higher Education in California finds, “California can and will, as in both the past and present, provide adequate support for an efficient program of public higher education designed to meet... the needs of society.” Universities have become inaccessible, too expensive and too impacted.

Whereas the 2007 Adolescent Report documents the need for ample artistic outlets in schools to help youth develop positive coping strategies for stress and mental health issues. The severe reduction in extracurricular and elective art classes may result in unhealthy youth behavior including drugs, alcohol, and self harm.

Whereas the San Mateo County Children and Youth Bill of Rights emphasizes protection of youth and children by ensuring they have:

- Access to a 21st century education that promotes success in life, in future careers, and a love of life-long learning.
- Positive view of the future.

Be it resolved that the Youth Commission calls for an immediate reemphasis on education including: open feedback for students at meetings, methods informing students about cuts or changes, restoration of extracurricular activities, stable long term plan for funding, and an exploration of new revenue sources by lawmakers. These efforts will renew youth’s faith in the public education system and restore the standard of education for California in the 21st Century.

Be it finally resolved that the San Mateo Board of Supervisors, the San Mateo County Office of Education, the Superintendents of San Mateo County school districts, the State Legislature and the Governor are challenged with the task of evaluating these observations and recommendations for the advancement of our educational system.

Signature

San Mateo County Youth Commission,

