

**San Mateo Union High School District
Proclamation Recognizing June 19, 2025
As Juneteenth**

WHEREAS, after the Union Army captured New Orleans in 1862, slave owners in Confederate states migrated to Texas with more than 150,000 enslaved Black persons. For three years, even after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved Black Americans in Texas remained in brutal bondage, immorally and illegally deprived of their freedom and basic dignity; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865 — over two years after President Lincoln declared all enslaved persons free — Union Army troops marched to Galveston, Texas, to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation and free the last enslaved Black Americans in Texas; and

WHEREAS, those who were freed from bondage celebrated their long-overdue emancipation on June 19. Today, our Nation commemorates Juneteenth: a chance to celebrate human freedom, reflect on the grievous and ongoing legacy of slavery, and rededicate ourselves to rooting out the systemic racism that continues to plague our society as we strive to deliver the full promise of America to every American; and

WHEREAS, the post-emancipation period known as Reconstruction (from 1865-1877) marked an era of great hope, uncertainty, and struggle for the nation as a whole. Formerly enslaved people immediately sought to reunify families, establish schools, run for political office, push radical legislation and sue slaveholders for compensation; and

WHEREAS, the joyous commemorations that began in Texas spread around the nation, with cities and communities in California joining in celebration of this milestone in the ongoing American journey toward freedom for all; and

WHEREAS, since 2003, the State of California has celebrated Juneteenth as a day to honor and reflect on the significant contributions of Black Americans to our nation; and

WHEREAS, Opal Lee - the 94-year-old activist known as the “grandmother of Juneteenth” pushed for years for June 19 to become a national holiday, which included walking 1,400 miles from Fort Worth, Texas, to Washington, D.C., at 90 years old in 2016 to bring awareness of America’s other independence day; and

WHEREAS, President Joe Biden signed a bill in 2021 making Juneteenth a Federal Holiday; and

WHEREAS, we are often reminded that the poisonous ideology of racism has not yet been defeated. Juneteenth is a day to reflect on both bondage and freedom — a day of both pain and purpose. It is, in equal measure, a remembrance of both the long, hard night of slavery and subjugation, as well as a celebration of the promise of a brighter morning to come; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that while we as a District we have made progress, we must continue to make advancements in fully actualizing the ideals reflected in our Equity Mission to: “continually disrupt and eliminate institutional biases and barriers to ensure that all students have the skills and knowledge to thrive physically, emotionally and academically” and in our Equity Vision where: “All students will learn in a safe, inclusive and equitable environment that validates, respects and honors their unique backgrounds, interests and identities.” and;

WHEREAS, On Juneteenth, we remember our extraordinary capacity to heal, to hope, and to emerge from our worst moments as a stronger, freer, and more just Nation. It is also a day to celebrate the power and resilience of Black Americans, who have endured generations of oppression in the ongoing journey toward equal justice, equal dignity, equal rights, and equal opportunity in America; and

WHEREAS, We urge members of our community to reflect on the ongoing cause of freedom for Black Americans. As we honor Juneteenth, let the members of our District including educators, students and community members renew our commitment to use our power to stamp out racism in our communities and institutions and help secure freedom for all; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the San Mateo Union High School District does hereby declare June 19, 2025, as “Juneteenth National Freedom Day: A Day of Observance.”

SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Passed and adopted on the 22nd day of May, 2025.



Superintendent

Robert Griffin

President, Board of Trustees