

San Mateo Union High School District
Proclamation Recognizing September 15, 2026, - October 15, 2026
as Latino(a) Heritage Month

WHEREAS, September 15 through October 15 is nationally recognized as Hispanic Heritage Month, a time to honor the histories, cultures, experiences, and contributions of people whose families and ancestors come from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America; and

WHEREAS, the San Mateo Union High School District (SMUHSD) recognizes this observance as Latino(a) Heritage Month, reflecting the District's use of the term "Latino(a)" to recognize the diverse peoples, cultures, identities, and histories of individuals with roots throughout Latin America and the Caribbean; and

WHEREAS, language used to describe identity and heritage continues to evolve, with terms such as Latine, and Latinx emerging as ways some individuals and communities seek to recognize and affirm identities beyond traditional gendered language; and

WHEREAS, the Latino(a) community encompasses a rich diversity of racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and national identities, Afro-Latinos, Asian Latinos, and people of European and mixed ancestry, and Puerto Ricans, whose heritage and contributions are an integral part of the history and fabric of the United States; and whose histories and experiences have shaped communities throughout the Americas; and

WHEREAS, the observance begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and includes the independence days of Mexico on September 16, Chile on September 18, and Belize on September 21, providing an opportunity to recognize the distinct histories, cultures, and traditions of nations and communities across the Americas and the Caribbean; and

WHEREAS, SMUHSD schools participate in celebrations throughout the month to uplift our Latino(a) students and celebrate the independence days of the countries of their birth. Celebrations include singing the national anthems of birth countries, events supported by parent groups such as the Organización de Padres Latinos (OPLA), a Ritmo Latino Dance, performances by Grupo Folklorico, La Raza and more; and

WHEREAS, Latinos comprise one of the largest and most diverse communities in the United States, with California being home to the nation's largest Latino(a) population, and Latino(a) residents comprising approximately one-quarter of San Mateo County's population and 35 percent of SMUHSD's students; and

WHEREAS, generations of Latino(a) Americans have made significant contributions to the United States, California, and the Bay Area as educators, artists, scientists, entrepreneurs, public servants, health care professionals, community leaders, members of the Armed Forces, and in countless other fields; and

WHEREAS, Latino(a) families and community members have enriched San Mateo County through their unique and diverse cultures, traditions, languages, experiences, and contributions, strengthening the social, economic, and cultural fabric of our communities; and

WHEREAS, SMUHSD celebrates, uplifts and protects members of our Latino(a) community who have immigrated to San Mateo County adapting to a new culture, language, and diverse customs and sharing their resilience and flexibility that strengthen our community; and

WHEREAS, SMUHSD is enriched by the contributions and perspectives of Latino(a) students, families, educators, staff, and community members across our ten schools, and recognizes the many ways in which they contribute to the vitality and success of our District; and

WHEREAS, Latino(a) Heritage Month provides an opportunity for our schools and community to learn from the diverse histories and experiences of Latino(a) peoples, celebrate their accomplishments and contributions, and foster greater understanding, belonging, and appreciation across our school communities; and

WHEREAS, SMUHSD recognizes its responsibility to ensure that students see their histories, cultures, and communities reflected in what they learn and in the people and stories celebrated throughout the school year;

WHEREAS, The Latino(a) community is an expansive and diverse web of hundreds of communities, from California to Patagonia, each with their own distinct cultures, traditions, languages, and customs. Despite these differences, the broader Latino(a) community shares interconnected histories, traditions, values, and experiences that create a rich tapestry of cultures and peoples. The unity of the Latino(a) community is not found through uniformity, but through their distinctions, shared histories, and interconnected heritage. The SMUHSD celebrates this diversity among students, while recognizing the shared heritage that unites the Latino(a) community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the San Mateo Union High School District hereby recognizes September 15 through October 15, 2026, as Latino(a) Heritage Month and encourages our schools and communities to celebrate and honor the rich diversity of Latino(a) peoples, histories, cultures, and contributions throughout this observance and throughout the school year.

SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Passed and adopted on this 9th day of September, 2026



Superintendent

Teri Chavez

President, Board of Trustees