

April 16, 2024

APPROVED: DD:br

Board Meeting – April 16, 2024

Item VI. Consent Calendar Recommendations

H. Adoption of Board Resolution No. 54 to Recognize National Mental Health Month, May 2024

The Superintendent recommends that the County Board adopt Resolution No. 54 as part of the regular County Board meeting on April 16, 2024; and further declares May 2024 as Mental Health Awareness Month to increase public understanding of the importance of mental illness and to promote early identification and treatment of mental illness; and encourage education communities to help raise awareness of mental health and the need to protect students' mental health and wellbeing.

Resolution No. 54 is attached.

Next Steps:

- LACOE Communications to send out updates to Los Angeles County LEAs to encourage districts, schools, and community organizations to observe this month by raising awareness about the importance of mental health with appropriate programs, activities, and resources.
- LACOE's Mental Health and School Counseling (MHSC) Unit supports and recognizes the importance of building awareness around mental health wellness and addressing mental health stigma and literacy. Throughout the month of May, numerous training opportunities will be shared through LACOE communications.

BOARD RESOLUTION

No. 54: 2023-24

National Mental Health Month, May 2024

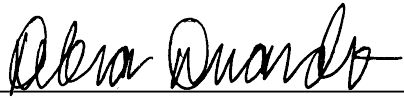
- WHEREAS** mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being; and
- WHEREAS** behavioral health disorders, including major depression, schizophrenia, panic disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorders affect many children and youth every year, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or economic status; and
- WHEREAS** federal statistics show that one in 10 children has a serious mental health condition, but only a third will receive any care at all — with even fewer receiving appropriate care; and
- WHEREAS** a focus on promotion, prevention and early intervention could greatly reduce the number of children experiencing serious mental health condition; and
- WHEREAS** children, youth and adults can recover from mental illness and lead full, productive lives in the community; and
- WHEREAS** students were experiencing widespread mental-health distress long before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, with youth suicide on the rise and the second leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds; and
- WHEREAS** the pandemic made matters worse; in recent surveys, students reported that COVID-19 impacted their lives through increased isolation, loneliness, stress and sadness; school districts across the nation have been reporting alarming spikes in both suicides and attempts at self-harm; and
- WHEREAS** mental health professionals in schools support students' emotional and academic wellbeing; they are best positioned to help students grapple with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and to deliver the necessary mental health supports and services to students; and
- WHEREAS** every person and community can make a difference in helping end the silence and stigma that for too long has surrounded mental illness and discouraged people from getting help; and
- WHEREAS** public education and civic activities can encourage mental health and help improve the lives of individuals and families affected by mental health; and
- WHEREAS** LACOE joins the national movement to raise awareness about mental health, fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families; and

WHEREAS LACOE supports the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in helping amplify the message of “You Are Not Alone” and will use this time to focus on the healing value of connecting in safe ways, prioritizing mental health and acknowledging that it’s okay to not be okay; and

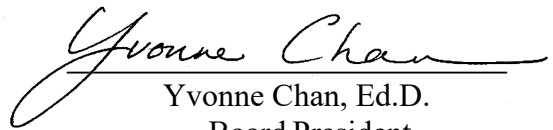
WHEREAS a key LACOE priority is the physical and mental wellbeing of students. LACOE’s chief of wellbeing and support services oversees programs that focus on student mental health. LACOE also expanded the Employee Assistance Services for Education (EASE) program, which provides counseling for school employees; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Los Angeles County Board of Education and the Los Angeles County Office of Education Superintendent declare May 2024 as Mental Health Awareness Month to increase public understanding of the importance of mental illness and to promote early identification and treatment of mental illness; and encourage education communities to help raise awareness of mental health and the need to protect students’ mental health and wellbeing.

ADOPTED this 16th day of April 2024, by the Los Angeles County Board of Education in Downey, California.



Debra Duardo, M.S.W., Ed.D.
Superintendent



Yvonne Chan, Ed.D.
Board President