

Berkeley Unified School District  
Resolution 24-017  
Declaring January Disability Awareness and History Month

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Unified School District during the 2022-2023 school year served approximately 1,623 students formally identified with disabilities or requiring accommodations (about 13% of total student population), along with others who may identify as having a disability without an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan; and

WHEREAS, disability is part of being human, and almost everyone will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life; and

WHEREAS, there are diverse meanings and experiences of disability, both visible and invisible; and

WHEREAS, we value what is important to individuals with disabilities and their families who are striving for their best lives, to have uncompromised health and safety, and opportunities for friendship, recreation and lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS, BUSD is proud of the full spectrum of its diversity, encompassing differences in race, culture, language, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic status, political or academic interests, and many other dimensions; and

WHEREAS, BUSD recognizes that ableism is a core barrier to equity and inclusion and that all members of the BUSD community have a role to play in creating an inclusive society. As defined in the book, *We Move Together*, ableism is a form of discrimination that “wrongly considers only some bodies, minds, and behaviors to be normal, worthy, and valuable...Ableism creates barriers for disabled people, making it hard to meet friends, learn at school, find a place to live, get a job, and participate in community events;” and

WHEREAS, BUSD embraces intersectionality as a dynamic within the disability community whereby identities are informed by simultaneous experiences which include marginalization and oppression across various domains; and

WHEREAS, BUSD recognizes that our students with disabilities are general education students, and that every educational, operational, and budget decision we make begins with the belief that students with disabilities have a right to and have the ability to learn alongside their nondisabled peers and must be provided equitable and meaningful opportunities to learn and grow; and

WHEREAS, BUSD holds high expectations of individuals with disabilities and recognizes they have the capacity to contribute positively to their communities and learning experiences. BUSD

is committed to readiness for college and other kinds of post-secondary learning, vocations, and self-determined living so that students graduating from BUSD realize our District's mission to achieve academic excellence and make positive contributions to the world; and

WHEREAS, BUSD believes that everyone should learn about disability as a fundamental facet of human diversity. Disability has its own histor(ies) and culture(s) which deserve to be studied in their own right, and therefore, should be integrated into the general education curriculum; and

WHEREAS there are a variety of celebrations and nationally recognized disability awareness campaigns throughout the year, January holds particular significance in Berkeley as January 28 is the birthday of Ed Roberts, who began the disability rights movement at UC Berkeley leading to curb cuts nationwide and the development of centers for independent living; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, BUSD recognizes January as Disability Awareness & History Month across the District in support of educating youth with and without disabilities on the many contributions individuals with disabilities have made throughout US history; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, BUSD will encourage conversations, presentations, and projects relating to and enhancing the experiences of individuals with disabilities, disrupting ableism, and promoting inclusion and belonging in January and throughout the year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BUSD will promote resources to support instruction on the complexity of disability, disability history, the experiences of individuals with disabilities, and the disability rights movement both locally and nationally to increase inclusion and belonging both in school and in our community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, BUSD will continue to commit to supporting students and employees with disabilities with the resources and tools needed to succeed within BUSD, including identified accommodations, early appropriate intervention and designated support services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District will present on special education programming on an annual basis,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be distributed to and communicated by all school sites and be given a prominent place on the District's website.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Education of the Berkeley Unified School District, this 6th day of December 2023, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN: