

Ms. Newbill, Mr. Schmerelson, Ms. Griego – Celebration of Black History Month 2025 (Res-043-24/25) (Noticed January 14, 2025)

Whereas, Black History Month, or National African American History Month, is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing the central role of African Americans in United States history;

Whereas, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a Harvard trained historian, like W.E.B. DuBois before him, believed that truth would not be denied and that reason would prevail over prejudice, and as a result announced “Negro History Week” in 1925 to raise awareness of the contributions of African Americans;

Whereas, It is commonly stated that Dr. Carter G. Woodson selected February as the month to host “Negro History Week” because it encompasses the birthdays of two great Americans who played a prominent role in shaping black history, namely Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, whose birthdays are February 12th and 14th respectively;

Whereas, Dr. Carter G. Woodson envisioned the study and celebration of Black people as a race, and emphasized the contributions of countless Black men and women to the advancement of human civilization;

Whereas, Since 1976, the commemoration was extended from a week-long event to the entire month of February;

Whereas, Every United States President has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month and other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history;

Whereas, Established by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in 1915, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) strives to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history, and culture to the global community.

Whereas, The 2025 theme for Black History Month established by the ASALH is “African Americans and Labor”;

Whereas, Labor of all kinds - free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – is central to Black history and culture;

Whereas, Black labor has been instrumental in shaping lives, cultures, and histories of Black people and the societies in which they live from the era of slavery to present day;

Whereas, During enslavement, Black labor built the foundations of this country;

Whereas, After the Civil War, ex-slaves had to adjust to freedom and a new labor system as the country transitioned from an agricultural based economy to an industrial one;

Whereas, The formation of trade unions increased during Reconstruction, but often excluded African Americans, therefore Black workers began to organize on their own;

Whereas, African Americans made significant gains in industrial employment, particularly in the steel, automobile, shipbuilding, and meatpacking industries due to the labor shortage created by World War I;

Whereas, Progressive race leaders like Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, A. Philip Randolph and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. saw unions as essential to Black workers achieving equality;

Whereas, In 1925 A. Philip Randolph began his fight to gain recognition of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters by the Pullman Car Company, the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and the U.S. government, and 2025 marks the 100-year anniversary of the creation of Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids;

Whereas, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was speaking in support of the “I Am a Man” strike of black Memphis sanitation workers when he was assassinated in 1968;

Whereas, There are over 21 million African Americans in the United States labor force today and account for approximately 13 percent of the US work force;

Whereas, African Americans make up especially large shares of employees in certain occupations, including postal service clerks, transit and intercity bus drivers, nursing assistants, security guards and gambling surveillance officers, and home health aides;

Whereas, Black workers generally earn less than U.S. workers overall and the unemployment rate for Black Americans is the highest of any racial or ethnic group and roughly double the rate for the U.S. overall;

Whereas, Black workers are the most likely to say they’ve experienced discrimination at work because of their race or ethnicity;

Whereas, Black History Month aims to mitigate the persistent and ongoing failure to acknowledge the contributions of Black Culture, Black Inventors, Black Artists, Black Artisans, Black Advocacy Black Leaders, Black Civic Engagement, and Black workers to American history and society;

[Whereas, Since 2013, Black Lives Matter has worked inside and outside of the system to heal the past, reimagine the present, and invest in the future of Black lives through policy change, investment in our communities, and a commitment to arts and culture.](#)

Whereas, Black people continually remain optimistic and confident about the path ahead while leading the courageous, yet hard fought fights for the rights, liberties, and freedoms that many marginalized communities are now beneficiaries; and

Whereas, Our democracy's founding ideals were exclusionary when they were written, but Black Americans have continuously fought to make them true; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District recognizes February as National Black History Month;

Resolved further, That the Board acknowledges that all people of the United States are beneficiaries of the wealth of history given to all by Black Culture, Black Inventors, Black Artists, Black Artisans, Black Advocacy Black Leaders, Black Civic Engagement, and Black workers;

Resolved, further, That the Board ~~embeds~~ commits to the ~~study~~ inclusion of Black History and Black Labor into the core curriculum, including, but not limited to ~~of its~~ Ethnic Studies, African American History ~~courses~~, and African American Literature, as well as encourages strong integration across coursework in History, English Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, and Arts so that this critical learning lives in the minds of our students beyond the month of February;

Resolved further, That the Board direct the Superintendent to expand upon the District's existing efforts, such as the Black Student Achievement Plan, to continue to identify strategies and tactics to align resources targeted toward eliminating anti-racist educational practices and closing the gap of academic achievement outcomes for Black Students;

Resolved further, That the District will continue to address challenges unique to Black students and families through curriculum, lessons, activities, webinars, and events and recognize the Black Lives Matter at Schools Week of Action (February 3 -7, 2025), which is designed to uplift our intergenerational principles of honoring the legacy of those who paved the way and empower youth voices to lead the changes today; and, be it finally

Resolved, That the Superintendent will work with educators, librarians, all the schools of the District, and our wider community to recognize and celebrate this month, and throughout the academic year, with culturally relevant and appropriate curriculum, programs, ceremonies, and activities that generate in-depth discussion of the complex factual history of the United States and the legacy of Black Americans, including labor.