School Board Approves Resolution Honors Cesar E. Chavez  
A Passionate Advocate for Farm Workers

LOS ANGELES – Honoring the life and legacy of a true American hero, Cesar E. Chavez, a passionate advocate for poor farmworkers, the Los Angeles School Board today unanimously approved a resolution commemorating his birthday on March 31.

Sponsored by Board Vice President Dr. George J. McKenna III, as well as Board Members Mónica García, Mónica Ratliff and Dr. Ref Rodriguez, the measure recommends teachers explore his achievements and encourages students to perform community service on Cesar E> Chavez Day. In observance of his birthday, all Los Angeles Unified schools will be closed on Monday, March 28, the day after Spring Break ends, with the exception of Bell Senior High School, which operates on a multi-track, year-round calendar.

“Cesar Chavez, a warrior for farmworkers, fought for justice and equality for all,” said Board Vice President Dr. George J. McKenna III. “His legacy is a better California, and a better America.”

L.A. Unified continues to honor the memory of Chavez with student led National Day of Service activities, such as painting murals and school beautification projects, including naming a school in San Fernando, Cesar E. Chavez Learning Academies, which opened in 2011.

“It is our mission in Los Angeles to nurture service-oriented leaders on their path to graduation,” said Board Member García. “We celebrate Cesar Chavez’s legacy, and will continue to use the principles of non-violence, organization, and justice to get to 100 percent graduation.”

In 1962, Chavez co-founded the United Farm Workers Union to contest poor treatment of workers in the fields. He also sought to empower those workers by organizing the first union to acquire labor contracts for farm workers in the grape fields.

“It is vital that we honor historical leaders who have made transformative impacts in our communities,” said Board Member Rodriguez. “Today, we are joining President Obama in declaring March 31st as Cesar Chavez Day. I am so proud of this District for moving toward unity, social justice, and equity.”

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Chavez changed the attitudes of workers in the fields, and the nation by leading them to live the La Causa slogan, “Si Se Puede,” which translates to, “Yes I Can,” by empowering all to fight for civil rights and to strive for justice for all minorities.

“Cesar Chavez's unabating passion for social justice changed our world for the better,” said Board Member Mónica Ratliff. “He is a model for all of us. I commend Board Member García for bringing this resolution to the board and encouraging all of us to reflect on the life, work, and legacy of Cesar Chavez and take action.”

In February 2000, Board members supported California State Senate Bill 984, which established the birthday of Cesar Chavez as a state holiday. The bill became law in August 2001.

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