

[SFUSD-Wide Climate Action Day]

Resolution in support of a San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)-wide climate action day to expand youth climate literacy and action.

WHEREAS, Climate change threatens San Francisco youth in the short- and long-term; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco is already experiencing heightened intensity and frequency of extreme weather events exacerbated by higher global temperatures, including heat waves, air pollution from wildfires, and flooding¹; and

WHEREAS, Young people are particularly vulnerable to the physical and mental health effects of climate change such as heat stroke, lung disease, respiratory infections, and climate anxiety²; and

WHEREAS, SFUSD aims to graduate students who are prepared “to thrive in the 21st century” and learning about the causes and threats of climate change and strategies to take action is critical for preparing students to face one of the biggest threats to young people in the 21st century³; and

WHEREAS, Understanding the relationship between humans and the environment equips youth with the knowledge and tools to address climate change and environmental justice issues in their communities; and

WHEREAS, While SFUSD has implemented environmental science initiatives across grade levels, including environmental-focused Career, Technical, and

¹ David Ackerly et al., “California’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment: San Francisco Bay Area Region Report” (University of California, Berkley, 2018).

² “Climate Change and Children’s Health | US EPA,” US EPA, January 14, 2025.

³ San Francisco Unified School District, “SFUSD Vision 2025: Reimagining Public Education in San Francisco for a New Generation,” June 2014.

Educational Pathways at six high schools, these efforts must be expanded to ensure that all students graduate as climate-literate citizens⁴; and

WHEREAS, In 2024-2025, the Youth Commission conducted a survey about climate education with over 400 responses in which SFUSD students expressed interest in climate curriculum that extends to subjects beyond science and explores climate change beyond classrooms through interactive field trips and internships; and

WHEREAS, The Youth Commission has consistently supported climate efforts in their annual Budget & Policy Priority Report, most recently writing recommendations to expand electrification, climate resilience, and climate literacy in the 2025-2026/2026-2027 Budget & Policy Priority Report with input from the San Francisco Environmental Department (SFE) and SFUSD climate educators⁵; and

WHEREAS, The primary long-term recommendation in the recent Budget & Policy Report about climate literacy is to create a district-wide day of climate action, building on SFE's annual Climate Action Youth Summit; and

WHEREAS, On April 18, 2025, SFE held their second Climate Action Youth Summit that brought together 3,000 attendees across San Francisco themed around "Climate Action Across Careers" with student and adult-led showcases highlighting the range of careers that connect to climate action⁶; and

WHEREAS, This year's summit featured double the number of youth-led action projects, including students at Jefferson Elementary School who audited 85 pounds of

⁴ "SFUSD Teaches Environmental Literacy and Climate Justice to All K-12 Students | SFUSD," SFUSD, April 15, 2022.

⁵ "San Francisco Youth Commission 2024-2025 Budget & Policy Priorities: Fiscal Year 2024-2025 | 2026-2027," March 3, 2025.

⁶ "Second Annual Climate Action Youth Summit Champions Climate Action in Every Career," SF Environment, April 18, 2025.

trash, students from the ACCESS program who led interactive waste-sorting stations, and students from SOTA who led a sustainable fashion show⁷; and

WHEREAS, Establishing a district-wide day of climate action would further expand the impact of this summit by enabling all SFUSD students to participate in climate action as a part of their regular school day; and

WHEREAS, Other cities are exploring similar ways to expand climate literacy, including New York City, which holds four annual district-wide climate action days where every school engages in climate-themed field trips, lessons, and community action projects⁸; and

WHEREAS, This year's district-wide climate action days in New York City themed around waste, energy, health, and water were a major success with teachers reporting over 170 success stories, including Green Careers guest speakers, beach clean-ups, creation of rainwater capture systems, sorting of cafeteria waste, environmental documentary screenings, and a climate action STEAM fair – with many of these actions led by students for other students⁹; and

WHEREAS, The SFUSD district-wide day of climate action would be developed by SFUSD students, teachers, SFE, and the San Francisco Youth Commission; and therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission strongly supports the creation of a City-wide youth climate action day that involves all SFUSD schools across

⁷ Catherine O'Connor, Mary. Sorting out plastic waste at a San Francisco school," KALW, January 27, 2025; "Second Annual Climate Action Youth Summit Champions Climate Action in Every Career," SF Environment, April 18, 2025.

⁸ "Climate Action Days," NYC Public Schools.

⁹ "Climate Action Hub," Office of Energy & Sustainability: NYC Public Schools Sustainability Hub.

1 grades to participate in activities such as field trips, community action, guest speakers,
2 etc. that encourage climate literacy; and be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission urges the
4 Mayor and Board of Supervisors to urge SFUSD and SFE to support a district-wide
5 climate action day; and be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission staff shall
7 transmit copies of this resolution to the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, SFE, San
8 Francisco Commission on the Environment, and the San Francisco Board of Education.