Resolution 26-38
Declaring Annually the Month of November as Indigenous Peoples Heritage Month

WHEREAS, in 1990, the United States Congress passed Public Law 101-343, which authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the month of November as "National Native American Heritage Month" and Congress chose the month of November to recognize the Native Americans as this month concluded the traditional harvest season and was generally a time of thanksgiving and celebration for indigenous people;

WHEREAS, we take a moment to recognize that the City of San Leandro sits within the traditional homeland of the Halkin (Jalquin) – a Chochenyo Ohlone and Bay Miwok-speaking people. This ancient place, which is also named Halkin, has been settled, nurtured, and loved since time immemorial by the Halkin people. Because of the strength and determination of their ancestors and elders, the Halkin people continue to live and thrive in contemporary San Leandro and the surrounding area in an uninterrupted manner,

WHEREAS, we recognize their deep, living presence, and we give gratitude for the opportunity to gather and live on this beautiful land. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we acknowledge and make visible the City of San Leandro's relationship to the Indigenous people of this beloved place

WHEREAS, as of 2022, the U.S. Census estimates there were approximately 4.3 million people identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native alone, representing about 1.3 percent of the U.S. population;

WHEREAS, in the 2024–25 school year, 24,822 Native American (American Indian / Alaska Native) students comprised about 0.4 percent of California's ≈ 5.8 million public school students; and many Latinx and African American students have Indigenous ancestral roots;

WHEREAS, in the mid-1700s, there were at least 10,000 Indigenous people coexisting in about 40 distinct tribal groups between Big Sur and the San Francisco Bay Area - whom today are referred to as "Ohlone" - they spoke dozens of unique languages, harvested acorns, wove beautiful baskets, and built shell mounds;

WHEREAS, almost all of the Ohlone died as a result of state-sponsored bounties, wars of colonization, forced servitude, and exposure to new diseases, followed by despondency and malnutrition in the decades following the establishment of the California Missions;

WHEREAS, the San Leandro Unified School District recognizes the bravery and resilience of the Ohlone people and their descendants, celebrates the Ohlone as a living people and supports their efforts to revitalize and maintain language and culture;

WHEREAS, in the 1700s, prior to the arrival of the Spanish, Mexicans, and Americans, the Ohlone cared for the natural resources, taught the explorers what foods were safe to eat, and were then enslaved to build the Spanish Missions all over California, including the missions in Sonoma, San Rafael, San Francisco, and Santa Clara;

WHEREAS, Indigenous People of the Americas are the original inhabitants of the lands that now constitute the United States, Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean;

WHEREAS, Indigenous peoples have made essential and enduring contributions to our Nation, even as the United States was built upon lands taken from Indigenous nations;

WHEREAS, the people of the United States should be reminded of the assistance given to the early European visitors to North America by the ancestors of today's Indigenous peoples, including knowledge and training provided to the pilgrims in survival, hunting, and cultivation, and fertilization of indigenous crops;

WHEREAS, Indigenous peoples have always had a deep respect for the land. There was a love for every form of life, and they did not kill anything they could not use. They did not kill an animal or a fish for the sport of it. Fishing and hunting were a way to survive. Indigenous peoples lived in harmony with nature and did not abuse the natural world.
Indigenous peoples were ecologists long before the term was ever used; and

WHEREAS, many of the foods we eat today were first grown by Indigenous peoples, such as white and sweet potatoes, beans, corn, chocolate, cotton, peanuts, pumpkins, tomatoes, tobacco, squash, peppers, nuts, melons, and sunflower seeds, rubber, and gum. Plants were also used for dyes, medicines, soap, clothes, shelters, and baskets. They also helped the European settlers survive in the New World by sharing farming methods with them;

WHEREAS, many Native Americans served in the United States military during World War I, World War II, and other campaigns. Even though many of them were not granted citizenship until 1924, more than 8,000 Native Americans volunteered to serve during World War I and well over 24,000 served during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous peoples have made and continue to make valuable contributions nationally and internationally in the areas of art, music, government, law, education, science, labor, literature, media, medicine, military, religion, technology, sports, and theater, which are recognized annually during Indigenous Peoples History Month.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the San Leandro Unified School District shall annually recognize the month of November as Indigenous Peoples Heritage Month, and schools shall promote appropriate instructional activities and engage in celebrations of Northern, Southern, and Central Native American heritage to recognize our current Native American students, families, and communities, contemporary issues and culture, as well as their histories, and significant contributions in California, the United States and the world.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Education of the San Leandro Unified School District, County of Alameda, State of California, this 13th day of October,2026

Jackie C. Perl, Board President

Sonal Patel, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent