



## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH AND WELCOMING WEEK PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS** Salem-Keizer Public Schools recognizes that the Hispanic and Latino/a/x people and cultural heritage contribute to our nation's success in extraordinary ways – they are integral to our economy and success; they are essential workers in the agricultural industry and work force; they serve in the military, they serve as educators, and they are part of all our schools and community; and

**WHEREAS** the Latino/a/x heritage of the United States extends over five centuries; and

**WHEREAS** Indigenous cultures were established in this region before Oregon obtained statehood; and

**WHEREAS** Spaniard and Mexican cultures were established in this region before Oregon obtained statehood; and

**WHEREAS** the United States has a centuries-old tradition of welcoming immigrants, which has given us a tremendous advantage over the rest of the world, and our school board affirms that tradition; and

**WHEREAS** the Salem-Keizer Hispanic and Latino/a/x community has the same dreams, values, trials, and triumphs as all people, and they show the same grit and determination that have carried us forward for centuries; and

**WHEREAS** 40 percent of our students and 14 percent of our staff identify as Hispanic or and Latino/a/x; and

**WHEREAS** the school board is committed to creating pathways to grow opportunities for Hispanic and Latino/a/x employees to have more equitable representation; and

**WHEREAS** the school board supports providing opportunities for our Hispanic and Latino/a/x students to partner and celebrate their cultures through MEChA, the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán club, whose motto is “unity makes strength,” and other Latino/a/x clubs and activities; and

**WHEREAS** our schools honor and preserve the linguistic and cultural assets of students through bilingual and dual language programs, and our Heritage Spanish and Advanced Placement Spanish courses. These contribute to producing students who are prepared for the Oregon Biliteracy Certificate, a highly sought-after job quality, as well as honoring and enriching the diverse backgrounds of our students from Spanish-speaking households. These programs also provide the same opportunities to non-Spanish speaking students from diverse backgrounds, which contributes further to a positive, integrated multicultural multilingual school community; and

**WHEREAS** our community is strengthened by the support and advocacy from Latino/a/x based community organizations and partners like the Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality, Mano a Mano Family Center, Latinos Unidos Siempre, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN), Causa, Instituto de Cultura Oregoniana (ICO), Interface Network, Casa de la Cultura Tlanese, Enlace, groups promoting understanding of Indigenous Mesoamerican cultures, and FACES of America; and

**WHEREAS** inclusion is a core value of our district, and the school board has a responsibility to oppose the historical systemic racism toward Hispanic, Latino/a/x and immigrant people in Oregon, which perpetuates high rates of educational inequities, poverty and income inequality, and disproportionate health outcomes, all of which exacerbate social and economic crises; and

**WHEREAS** the school board has affirmed its position of being a safe and welcoming school district; and

**WHEREAS** at no time in our community's history has the need to work together been more necessary, and it is important that residents of Salem and Keizer join in a spirit of welcoming and inclusiveness to embrace the talents and contributions of all residents, specifically Hispanic and Latino/a/x members of our community; and

**WHEREAS** the school board commits to creating successful educational outcomes for our Hispanic, Latino/a/x and immigrant students;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Salem-Keizer School District Board of Directors proclaims September 15 to October 15 to be Hispanic Heritage Month and September 13 to 22 to be Welcoming Week and encourages all members of our community to join in celebrating our Hispanic, Latino/a/x and immigrant students and families.

Osvaldo F. Avila, Chairperson, Board of Directors  
Salem-Keizer Public Schools

9/14/21

Date