



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights and Strategic Education Advocacy

Staff Name and Phone Number: Meira Bowcut 707-565-1851

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, declaring literacy a human right in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

Adopt a Gold Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sonoma, declaring literacy a human right in Sonoma County. The California Constitution guarantees pupils a free public education in Article IX, Section 5. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It states that all students including those with learning disabilities should not be excluded from any school program. The Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights and Strategic Education Advocacy request the Board of Supervisors to proclaim literacy a human right for all in Sonoma County.

Discussion:

The County of Sonoma Commission on Human Rights provides leadership, education, and advocacy to ensure all members of the community, especially those among us who are marginalized, disadvantaged, or whose rights are being violated, enjoy the full range of human rights to which every person is entitled. The Commission on Human Rights partnered with Strategic Education Advocacy to bring awareness of the illiteracy crisis in Sonoma County

that negatively impacts Sonoma County residents of all demographics. This crisis disproportionately impacts BIPOC residents and socioeconomically disadvantaged residents creating barriers to accessing healthcare, human services programs, housing, employment, and food.

According to the Center for American Progress (Alpha Ciallo May 28, 2020), "Adult illiteracy directly affects an individual's employment options, likelihood to live in poverty, likelihood to be incarcerated, access to adequate health care and health outcomes, and life expectancy. Generational illiteracy makes it increasingly difficult to escape these circumstances, and millions of Americans face this reality every day." As referenced by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation <<https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/insidecdcr/2021/09/30/tackling-illiteracy-in-cdcrs-incarcerated-population/>>, and according to the National Adult Literacy Survey, 70% of all incarcerated adults cannot read at a fourth-grade level, "meaning they lack the reading skills to navigate many everyday tasks or hold down anything but lower (paying) jobs." Literacy is a human right that can directly prevent pipelines to prison, poverty, unemployment, houselessness and negative health outcomes and allows for individuals the right to reach their full potential.

Prior Board Actions:

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

N/A

FISCAL SUMMARY

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Gold Resolution

Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A