

Whereas, The Los Angeles Unified School District exists to provide every child in Los Angeles with a high-quality education and believes that the educational success of a child should never be dictated or hindered by inequitable access to basic health services, including vision and dental care;

Whereas, The lived experience of our most vulnerable students demonstrates the reality of these critical inequities and the grave impact that an untreated toothache or inability to see the board in class can have on a student's ability to learn;

Whereas, While various District efforts and partnerships have helped us counter some of this inequity by providing vision and dental screenings to thousands of District students annually, there is still a large unmet need as 84 percent of our student population is living in poverty and the number of children in the United States living without health insurance has been on the rise since 2017;

Whereas, The District emphatically strives to ensure the ability of all students to focus on learning and grow up healthy, and supports opportunities to increase equitable access and make it easier for underserved students to benefit from this important care at no cost;

Whereas, In the 2018-19 school year alone, almost 50,000 students who failed a preliminary no-cost vision screening did not receive a follow-up exam, thereby potentially not receiving needed glasses because of missing paperwork;

Whereas, In the current climate instigated by the current Federal administration's cruel and inhumane immigration policies and practices, some of our most vulnerable families are more reluctant to provide personal information to any institutions for fear of repercussions; this may include the District, despite the District's wholehearted efforts to ensure that families and students feel supported and protected in our schools and in communicating with the District;

Whereas, California Senate Bill (SB) 379, signed into law in 2017, helped to streamline family consent for children to receive oral health assessments at school sites, stating that "if a school or school district hosts a free oral health assessment event at which licensed dentists or other licensed or registered dental health professionals perform school site assessments of pupils enrolled in the school, a pupil shall be given an oral health assessment unless the parent or legal guardian of the pupil has opted out of the school site assessment";

Whereas, This law permits "opt-out" consent for oral health assessments, ~~which are typically more invasive than eye exams and the potential outfitting of glasses;~~ yet the District has not implemented a policy to enable oral health services for our students through existing partnerships via this mechanism;

Whereas, The District affirms the constitutional rights of parents to make decisions about their children's medical care, while also recognizing that California public schools are legally required to provide vision screenings in elementary school or upon first enrollment, and if we are then able to facilitate the necessary follow-up care with the proper health professionals, we can do more to ensure that no child who needs glasses has to live without glasses; and

Whereas, School districts in California, such as Compton Unified, Inglewood Unified, Pasadena Unified, Lawndale Elementary, Lennox School District, Lynwood Unified, Paramount Unified,

New Haven Unified, San Leandro Unified, Natomas Unified, Alum Rock Unified, Redwood City, Monterey Peninsula Unified, Mountain View-Whisman School District, and Newark Unified have all implemented successful “opt-out” consent programs for student eye exams; now, therefore, be it

~~Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District directs the Superintendent to develop and implement an “opt-out” consent program, effective January 1, 2020, wherein more students can have access to no-cost vision and dental exams by health professionals.~~

~~Resolved, That by the start of the 2020-21 school year, the District will implement a program and strategy to ensure the maximum number of students annually: receive 1) no-cost dental screenings, and 2) vision examinations and—if needed—prescription glasses that may be utilized by families from qualified providers, unless their parent or guardian opts out after express advance notice; and, be it finally~~

~~Resolved, That the District shall support any future legislation aimed at streamlining student access to basic health services.~~

~~Resolved, That the District directs the Superintendent to work with the Office of Government Relations, the Office of Student Health and Human Services, The Los Angeles Trust for Children’s Health, the State Department of Education, and the State Legislative bodies to pursue any future legislation to permit districts to implement health services programs, as well as to receive necessary funding for providing basic health services needed to improve educational outcomes.~~