



Santa Barbara County Education Office

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Resolution The Civic Mission of Schools

Whereas preparing each generation to understand and support democratic principles is the responsibility of all of our institutions and was a primary reason for the creation of public schools;

Whereas our citizens have overwhelmingly agreed over the course of 33 years of Gallup polling that “educating young people for responsible citizenship” should be the primary purpose of our schools;

Whereas research demonstrates that our schools are an effective place to provide instruction in and opportunities for the application of democratic principles and that early adolescence is a particularly critical time for civic education;

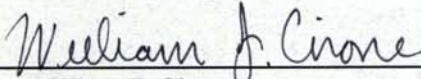
Whereas the democratic principles that underlie our society, the structure and functions of government, and the rights, responsibilities and participation of citizens should be a continual and meaningful part of instruction throughout every child’s education;

Whereas the importance of students’ grasp of the concepts of civic responsibility and respect for others cannot be underestimated;

Whereas the history social science framework and state law now guiding California schools in this area require only a single semester-long course in government in the twelfth grade and do not provide systematic or sustained attention to civic education K-12;

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Santa Barbara County Education Office urges the state board of education and all local school governing bodies to examine current practice and develop plans to increase and broaden emphasis on principles and practices of democracy in the schools of this state.

Adopted by the Santa Barbara County Office of Education on February 3, 2005.



William J. Cirone
Superintendent of Schools
Santa Barbara County Education Office