



SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item 9.1

Meeting Date: November 16, 2023

Subject: Approve Resolution No. 3367: Recognition of November 2023 as California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month

- Information Item Only
- Approval on Consent Agenda
- Conference (for discussion only)
- Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
- Conference/Action
- Action
- Public Hearing

Division: Superintendent's Office

Recommendation: Approve Resolution No. 3367: Recognition of November 2023 as California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month.

Background/Rationale: November 2023 has been designated as California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month. The Resolution recognizes the significant contributions that Californians of Sikh heritage have made to the state and seeks to afford all Californians the opportunity to understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared principles of Sikh Americans.

Financial Considerations: N/A

LCAP Goal(s): Family and Community Engagement.

Documents Attached:

1. Resolution No. 3367

Estimated Time of Presentation: 5 minutes

Submitted by: Board Member Jasjit Singh

Approved by: Lisa Allen, Interim Superintendent

**SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

RESOLUTION NO. 3367

**A RESOLUTION TO PROCLAIM NOVEMBER AS SIKH AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION
MONTH BY SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, November marks the birth of the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Sikhs around the world commemorate November by initiating Nagar Kirtans, holding Akhand Paths (a non-stop reading of Guru Granth Sahib Ji), and continue the tradition started by Guru Nanak Dev Ji of Langar; and,

WHEREAS, Langar is the foundational Sikh revolutionary space and where Sikhs come together to discuss the revolutionary ideas of the house of Nanak; it's a safe space for all the oppressed people of the world, to share a meal with the Khalsa and learn about our revolutionary struggle so that they too can take part; and,

WHEREAS, Sikhs have been living in the United States for more than 120 years; and,

WHEREAS, during the early 20th century, thousands of Sikh Americans worked on farms, in lumber mills, on the railroads, and in mines throughout California and the continental US; and,

WHEREAS, the Sikh faith is the fifth largest religion in the world, and today, there are more than 30 million Sikhs worldwide, and an estimated 750,000 Sikh Americans, with nearly 500,000 living in California, and a majority of whom call the Valley home; and,

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans pursue diverse professions and make rich contributions to the political, social, cultural, and economic vibrancy of the United States, including significant contributions to agriculture, information technology, small businesses, the hotel industry, trucking, health, technology; and,

WHEREAS, Sikh Americans distinguished themselves by fostering respect among all people through faith and service, as well as a commitment to truth and justice; and,

WHEREAS, on October 14, 1912, the first Sikh Gurdwara in the United States, Gurdwara Sahib Sikh Temple, was founded by Professor Teja Singh of the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society, in Stockton, CA; and,

WHEREAS, Sikh Gurdwaras have been a beacon for the local community through their fostering of selfless service and community building; and,

WHEREAS, there are parks named in honor of the Sikh Community in California such as Jaswant Singh Khalra Park in Fresno, Singh and Kaur Park in Elk Grove, and Singh Park in Livingston; and,

WHEREAS, the largest Nagar Kirtan in the United States takes place in November of every year, in Yuba City, CA; and,

WHEREAS, the Sikh genocide began on November 1, 1984, systemic and orchestrated genocidal violence was perpetrated against Sikhs by the government of India in November 1984 in the capital territory of Delhi, the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Maharashtra, and the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir; and,

WHEREAS, the Sikh genocide lasted three days, and over 30,000 Sikhs were brutally murdered, or died in their homes; and,

WHEREAS, in June 2023, the California Legislature, unanimously passed Resolution Bill AJR2 condemning the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide; and,

WHEREAS, many Sikhs made the United States their home after escaping persecution and after facing a genocide in 1984, and Sikhs continue to build new roots; and,

WHEREAS, innocent Sikhs in India and around the world, such as Jagtar Singh Johal, are unlawfully abducted, faced with unlawful detention, tortured, and have their human rights trampled upon under draconian and fascist laws in India; and,

WHEREAS, Sikhs around the world will continue to stand up for justice and raise issues such as #SikhGenocide1984, #FreeJaggiNow; and,

WHEREAS, the Sacramento City Unified School District is amongst the most diverse districts in California and the United States, is committed to educating our communities about the world's religions, the value of diversity, acceptance, and a culture of mutual understanding; and,

WHEREAS, today the Sacramento City Unified School District seeks to further the diversity of its community and afford all residents the opportunity to better understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared experiences of Sikh Americans; and,

WHEREAS, recognizing the state-sponsored violence that targeted Sikhs across India in 1984 is an important and historic step towards justice, accountability, and reconciliation, which should be an example to other governments; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento City Unified School District condemns the November 1984 anti-Sikh violence in India as genocide; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento City Unified School District is encouraged to acknowledge November as Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month and support ethnic studies that recognizes the Sikh community and its history; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento City Unified School District is committed to protecting the rights of Sikh students and Sikh employees to practice their faith with their articles of faith (Kes, Kara, Kanga, Kirpan, and Kachera) intact; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sacramento City Unified School District recognizes November as “Sikh Awareness and Appreciation Month”.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Education on this 16th day of November, 2023, by the following vote:

AYES: _____
NOES: _____
ABSTAIN: _____
ABSENT: _____

Lisa Allen
Secretary of the Board of Education

Chinua Rhodes
President of the Board of Education