

Resolution 2324R-001

By Director Gokalgandhi

WHEREAS, In March 2020, the Board adopted Resolution 1920R-011 to establish a Comprehensive Health Initiative to address the mental health complexities of students in a multi-faceted approach; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic brought the relationship between work and employee well-being into clearer focus; and

WHEREAS, A study by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) showed that long working hours led to 745,000 deaths for stroke and heart disease in 2016, a 29% increase since 2000, attributed to working at least 55 hours a week; and

WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Surgeon General, 76% of U.S. workers reported at least one symptom of a mental health condition; 84% of survey respondents said that their workplace conditions had contributed to at least one mental health challenge; and 81% of workers reported that they will be looking for workplaces that support mental health in the future; and

WHEREAS, The 2022 Alight International Workforce and Well-Being Mindset study, three quarters of U.S. employees report moderate to high stress levels, which haven't subsided even as the pandemic has slowed; and

WHEREAS, Many companies are increasingly prioritizing mental health, but fewer than half of employees surveyed by Alight feel that their employer cares about their well-being and that the burden of getting well is on the individual employee; and

WHEREAS, While the district has offered an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Wellness on Site benefits to employees for some time, we must consider how else we can cultivate a culture where the well-being of employees is central to our employment policies; and

WHEREAS, Many employees in the district have not used their earned vacation time benefit to the extent that their vacation time accumulates to a point where an employee is no longer earning it; and

WHEREAS, This unused vacation time creates a significant financial liability for the district and the Administration has requested Board approval to offer compensation in lieu of using this time for vacation, most recently in November 2022; and

WHEREAS, Compensating employees for time off not taken defeats the whole purpose of a vacation benefit, which is to allow time for rest, relaxation, tending to personal matters, and simply taking a break from work routines; and

WHEREAS, With employees prioritizing workplaces that support mental health, implementing practices that show a desire to improve employee well-being by reducing stress and burnout may also help attract and retain employees and improve employee morale; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the district end the practice of periodic compensation for unused vacation time and, instead, implement a mandatory, paid week of vacation; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That Central Office be closed for one full week in July so that all Central Office employees can have the week off; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Administration bring a minimum of two recommendations for implementation to the Board by the October 2023 Board cycle.

Introduced July 27, 2023