

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

BLACK APRIL MEMORIAL MONTH – APRIL 2015

**WHEREAS**, April 30, 2015, marks the fortieth anniversary of the Fall of Saigon, which concluded the Vietnam War; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States of America sent more than 3.4 million troops to Southeast Asia and nearly 2.6 million of those went to Vietnam in order to defend South Vietnam from communism, with more than 300,000 Americans wounded and more than 58,000 Americans killed in the Vietnam War, during which time hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese troops and civilians were killed and well over a million Vietnamese were wounded; and

**WHEREAS**, the Fall of Saigon forced millions of Vietnamese to flee their homeland in order to escape the perils of the totalitarian regime of Communist Vietnam, with half settling in the United States; and even years after the Fall of Saigon, hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese fled Communist rule, with many drawn to the promise of freedom and a Constitutional Republic in the United States, with more settling in Orange County than anywhere else in the world; and

**WHEREAS**, Communism is an odious ideology that has been a scourge to humanity, with Nazi Germany killing just a fraction of the number of people murdered by Communist regimes, and all freedom-loving peoples condemn this ideology of death and instead celebrate the culture of life held dear by the United States and other like-minded governments; and

**WHEREAS**, Communist Vietnam and other like-minded regimes oppress their citizens by imprisoning people who simply wish to exercise their right to life, to worship openly, to protest against the government, to speak and publish their opinions, to earn a living, to be spared from child labor, and to be free of torture; and

**WHEREAS**, all Americans and all free peoples around the world pray for the liberation of the people of Vietnam, China, Cuba, North Korea, and Laos from the tyranny of Communism; and

**WHEREAS**, Vietnamese Americans know all too well what happens in a nation without freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression, and all Americans are grateful to live in a free society where we each have these inalienable rights and civil liberties, where educators are respected and independent, and where our students are taught about freedom and a Constitutional Republic – not in a country where the people are oppressed by a regime that has little respect for human rights; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County is home to the largest concentration of Vietnamese people in any place in the world other than Vietnam itself, and Garden Grove, Westminster, Santa Ana, and Anaheim are four of the eight cities with the most Vietnamese Americans, rivaling San Jose, Houston, San Diego, and Los Angeles; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County schools are a burgeoning place for Vietnamese education, as the Huntington Beach Union High School District began offering Vietnamese language courses in 1999 and Garden Grove Unified School District did so in 2002, the Westminster School District will become the first in California and fourth in the nation to offer Vietnamese immersion education this fall, and the California State University, Fullerton, is developing the country's first Bachelor of Arts degree in Vietnamese, which will include language, culture, and history courses; and

**WHEREAS**, Orange County schools, and particularly history classes, are a most fitting place in which to teach young people about Black April, a major turning point in both American and Vietnamese history;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Orange County Board of Education hereby proclaims April 2015 as Black April Memorial Month, asks all Americans to reflect on this watershed moment in the intertwined histories of the United States and Vietnam, and encourages educators, students, and families to commemorate this month with appropriate lectures, lessons, and ceremonies throughout Orange County and the United States.

**AYES:** *Bedell, Hammond, Lindholm, Williams*

**ABSENT:**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ORANGE

*ABSTAIN-Boyd*

I, **DR. KEN L. WILLIAMS**, President of the Board of Education of Orange County, California, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly adopted by the said Board at a regular meeting thereof held on the fifteenth day of April 2015 and passed by a vote of 4-0.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this fifteenth day of April 2015.

Resolution #12-15

*Ken Williams, Jr. DO*  
Dr. Ken L. Williams, President  
Orange County Board of Education