

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Religious Freedom Day, 2016

**WHEREAS**, the right to religious freedom is a pillar of American society; and

**WHEREAS**, our Founding Fathers knew the importance of freedom of religion for a stable democracy, and our Constitution protects the free exercise of religion; and

**WHEREAS**, January 16th celebrates the anniversary of the 1786 Virginia Statute on Religious Freedom that restrained the practice of taxing people to pay for the support of the local clergy, and protected the civil rights of people to express their religious beliefs without suffering discrimination. This statute serves as the model for protecting religious freedom as evidence in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, each year the President of the United States declares January 16th to be "Religious Freedom Day," and calls upon Americans to "observe this day through appropriate events and activities in homes, schools, and places of worship"; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Department of Education has developed guidelines clarifying the freedom of religious expression in public schools and requested that schools inform educators, students, and parents of these liberties, and

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that, the Orange County Board of Education acknowledges January 16, 2016 as Religious Freedom Day in the United States of America; and

**FURTHER**, the Orange County Board of Education encourages all Americans to reflect on the great blessing of religious liberty; preserve this freedom for future generations; and commemorate this day with appropriate events and activities in their schools, places of worship, neighborhoods, and homes; and

**FURTHER**, the Orange County Board of Education encourages all schools in Orange County to promote clarity and respect for the individual's religious freedom by providing its staff and students with information on freedom of religious expression in our schools.

AYES: *Bedell, Lindholm, Hammond*

NOES: *0*

ABSENT: *Williams*

ABSTAINED: *Boyd*

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ORANGE

I, **Robert Hammond**, President to 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 16<sup>th</sup> day of December 2015.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 16th day of December 2015.

*Robert M. Hammond*  
Robert Hammond, President  
Orange County Board of Education