

Adopted (in Substitute) by the Board of Education at its Regular Meeting of May 28, 2002

Subject: Resolution No. 25-14A6

In Support of Adequate Education Funding and Opposition to the Construction of Another California Prison

- Commissioners Eric Mar, Mark Sanchez, Eddie Y. Chin, Frank Chong,
Dan Kelly, and Jill Wynns

Whereas: California faces a budget shortfall of 23.6 billion and the Governor has proposed cutting \$843.5 million from our schools, but only \$6 million from the state's bloated \$4.6 billion prison budget; and

Whereas: In order for the San Francisco Unified School District to meaningfully close the racial and economic achievement and opportunity gaps and achieve academic excellence for all its students, adequate funding and services are required; and

Whereas: The specific statewide budget cuts are concentrated in programs which serve the State's most vulnerable children; and

Whereas: With per capita crime rates at their lowest level since 1964, California's prison population dropped an average of 725 prisoners per month during the last six months of 2001, while Corrections' (CDC) most recent Population Projections forecast 25,000 fewer prisoners than CDC estimated just one year earlier; and

Whereas: A study by the Justice Policy Institute concluded that "the state should immediately suspend plans to construct the [Delano] prison and utilize the \$335 million for debt reduction or maintenance of other state services;" and

Whereas: The Governor has ordered a hiring freeze and for all state agencies to prepare for 15% budget cuts, and CDC plans to close part or all of one prison due to empty beds; and

Whereas: Despite the declining prison population, empty beds and the budget crisis, the Governor's 2002-03 budget allocates funding toward construction, planning and activation of Delano II; and

Whereas: Construction costs for Delano II are \$43.5 million from the General Fund and \$311.5 million through lease-purchase arrangements; operating costs could reach \$100 million per year, and this funding could be spent more productively on K-12 and higher education, and other programs like the Healthy Start Program, the Healthy Family Program, the Environmental Justice Initiative and Worker Safety Programs; and

Whereas: In an April *Education Week* poll, American voters continue to list education and school funding among their top priorities, despite their concerns about national security and the economy; and

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Whereas: A recent statewide Field Poll found that Californians favor cutting the state's prison budget more than any other state program to balance the budget, and many states are closing prisons, cutting back on expansion, and moving to alternatives; Republican governors in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Florida, Kansas and Utah are all closing prisons and even President Bush has proposed cutting the Federal Bureau of Prisons' construction budget in half from 2002; and

Whereas: Delano II will do nothing to improve the lives of the people of Delano; since the opening of the Delano I prison, the city's unemployment rate has increased, local businesses are suffering and the city's finances are dismal, meanwhile corrections projects that only 72 of the 1600 jobs slated to be created by Delano II will go to residents of Delano while the prison will remove farmland from production, further reducing employment prospects for Delano residents; and

Whereas: Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) options to address the budget crisis could free over 20,000 prison beds and save \$373.5 million and the additional reduction of California's already declining prison population offered by the LAO further supports cancellation of the Delano II prison, saving another \$595 million with debt service.

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the San Francisco Board of Education condemns the construction of another California state prison in Delano and any other prison site; and

Be It Further Resolved: That the Board of Education will write a letter on behalf of the San Francisco Unified School District to the Governor and all members of the Assembly and Senate requesting adequate funding for our schools and demanding the state legislature cancel plans to construct the Delano II prison, or at a minimum, place a one year moratorium on construction during which the Legislature can address the budget crisis and assess the full impact of the drop in the State's crime rate and prison population; and

Further Be It Resolved: That District staff issue an immediate press release, including a copy of this resolution, to our full media list and to the 20 largest school districts in the State.

5/14/02

5/28/02