



## Black History Month Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, February is recognized nationally as **Black History Month**, an annual celebration honoring the life stories, achievements, and enduring contributions of Black, African, and African American people, and recognizing their central role in the history of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, this year marks the **100th anniversary of the commemoration of Black history**, reflecting 50 years as Black History Week and 50 years as Black History Month, underscoring a century-long commitment to recognizing Black history as a central part of the American narrative; and

**WHEREAS**, Black History Month recognizes the rich cultural heritage, triumphs, and adversities that have shaped our nation's past, inform our present, and influence our future. It provides an opportunity to reflect on how the contributions of Black, African, and African American individuals continue to impact our everyday lives; and

**WHEREAS**, the observance, also known as African American History Month, was established through the work of historian **Carter G. Woodson**, often referred to as the "Father of Black History," who sought to broaden national understanding by presenting Black history as a serious and essential area of study; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1976, every President of the United States has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month, and other nations, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also observe a dedicated time to celebrate Black history and culture; and

**WHEREAS**, the **Multnomah Education Service District (MESD) Board of Directors** is guided by the **Blueprint '28**, which centers equity as a core value and establishes three priorities: : Create A High-Quality Learning Experience for All, Operationalize Systems That Engage & Empower Communities, and Build A Culturally Responsive Workforce; and



**WHEREAS**, honoring Black history and uplifting Black voices directly aligns with MESD's Blueprint'28 systemic approach toward equity through creative, responsive, educational, health and technology services for all students regardless of race, ZIP code, ability, identity, or country of origin; and

**WHEREAS**, 16% enrolled students are Black. Students who self-identified as Black also identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, Pacific Islander, White, or multiracial; and

**WHEREAS**, 20% of district leadership (supervisors, managers, principals) have self-identified as Black; and

**WHEREAS**, as of February 2026, 11% of MESD employees identified as Black; and

**WHEREAS**, while Black History Month provides a focused opportunity for learning and reflection, the MESD Board affirms that the study, recognition, and celebration of Black history must be extended beyond a single month and embedded throughout the year as part of the District's strategic plan work;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED**, that the **MESD Board of Directors** hereby recognizes **February as Black History Month**, and reaffirms its commitment to the goals of **Blueprint 28**, encouraging students, staff, families, and community partners to engage in meaningful learning, reflection, and dialogue that honors Black history, celebrates Black excellence, and advances equity, inclusion, and educational justice across the region.

**ADOPTED** this 17th day of February, 2026, by the **MESD Board of Directors**.