

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 20, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 60

Introduced by Assembly Member Santiago

April 28, 2015

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 60—Relative to education.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 60, as amended, Santiago. Education: students with disabilities.

This measure would recognize the necessity of a more respectful and humanistic view of students with disabilities, and would affirm that state policies and procedures should use People First Language to the greatest extent possible.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, All students deserve to be treated with dignity and
2 respect; and

3 WHEREAS, ~~About 686,000~~ *More than 700,000* students with
4 disabilities receive special education services in California,
5 comprising ~~about~~ *more than* 10 percent of the state's public school
6 enrollment; and

7 WHEREAS, Students with disabilities are sons, daughters,
8 sisters, brothers, friends, and neighbors; and

9 WHEREAS, The contributions of students with disabilities
10 enrich our communities as they live, learn, and share their lives;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The language used to refer to students with
13 disabilities has a profound impact in shaping beliefs and attitudes

1 about these students, driving policies and laws, influencing our
2 feelings and decisions, and affecting students' daily lives; and

3 WHEREAS, Old, inaccurate, and inappropriate descriptors about
4 students with disabilities perpetuate negative stereotypes and
5 attitudinal barriers; and

6 WHEREAS, When we identify or describe students with
7 disabilities primarily in terms of their disability or medical
8 diagnosis, we undervalue and stigmatize them; and

9 WHEREAS, Using thoughtful terminology can foster positive
10 attitudes about students with disabilities; and

11 WHEREAS, One of the major improvements in communicating
12 verbally or in writing with or about students with disabilities is
13 People First Language, which places the person ahead of his or
14 her disability; and

15 WHEREAS, People First Language is an objective form of
16 communication that eliminates generalizations and stereotypes by
17 focusing on the person rather than the disability; and

18 WHEREAS, ~~We~~ *For example, we* do not refer to a child with
19 cancer as a "cancerous child," and similarly, we should not refer
20 to a child with autism as an "autistic child" or a child with epilepsy
21 as "an epileptic child"; and

22 WHEREAS, A recent report of California's Statewide Task
23 Force on Special Education entitled, "One System: Reforming
24 Education to Serve All Students," called for a unified, inclusive
25 educational system that supports all students based on individual
26 needs; and

27 WHEREAS, The manner in which written and verbal policies
28 and communications refer to students with disabilities can further
29 this important state educational goal; and

30 WHEREAS, The California Legislature recognizes the necessity
31 of a more respectful and humanistic view of students with
32 disabilities; now, therefore, be it

33 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
34 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature affirms that state policies
35 and procedures should ~~utilize~~ *use* People First Language to the
36 greatest extent possible, especially those ~~utilized~~ *used* by state and
37 local educational agencies; and be it further

- 1 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
- 2 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

O