



GRAND LODGE
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF CALIFORNIA
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Grand Master
Arthur L. Salazar Jr.

GRAND MASTER'S PROCLAMATION REAFFIRMING SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Whereas support of public schools is enshrined in the California Masonic Code as one of our key values; and

Whereas California Masons have for more than a century supported public education through the observance of Public Schools Month and its related programs and initiatives; and

Whereas California Masons and lodges continue to lend their support to public schools through donations of time, money, and supplies;

As grand master, I proclaim our support of public schools to be reaffirmed throughout the year.

For more than 100 years, California Masons have heartily supported public schools. Spurred by the belief that every member of our community is entitled to a free, robust education, Masons have played a central role in forming and supporting the system of public education in California and beyond. Among our members who have had a hand in its development are John Swett, a member of Phoenix Lodge No. 144 and California's "father of public education," who as superintendent of public instruction in 1863 transformed the school system and introduced a completely tuition-free model of education; and Past Grand Master Earl Warren (1936), who as chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court wrote the unanimous decision ending segregation in public schools.

Today, our public schools system in dire need of support. California ranks 38th in the nation in per-pupil spending; meanwhile, our schools are suffering an acute teacher shortage, especially in special education. Nearly one in four students is considered chronically absent and test scores are below national standards in both English and math. As a result, it is up to organizations like the Masons of California to help close gaps in funding, technology, and materials that our schools require to thrive.

Masons have a special opportunity to make an impact in the lives of teachers, administrators, and students by giving their time, expertise, and dollars to help improve our public schools. I therefore call on California Masons lend recommit themselves to their public schools through various lodge programs as well as personal volunteerism—including engaging in elected positions like local school boards—to ensure the preservation of the liberal arts and sciences that we, as Masons, study in our pursuit of enlightenment and self-improvement.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Grand Master Arthur Salazar

Attest:

Grand Secretary Allan L. Casalou