

Resolution



ORDER NO: 2014-0464

DATE: April 8, 2014

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF DALLAS §

BE IT REMEMBERED, at a regular meeting of the Commissioners Court of Dallas County, Texas, held on the 8th day of April, 2014, on motion made by Dr. Theresa M. Daniel, Commissioner of District #1, and seconded by Dr. Elba Garcia, Commissioner of District #4, the following Resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, Dallas County Commissioner Court wishes to observe April as National Autism Awareness Month, a special opportunity to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community and to recognize the Dallas Independent School District and Metrocare Services for their extraordinary commitment to serving those with autism; and

WHEREAS, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological disorder characterized by difficulties in social interaction, verbal & nonverbal communication, and repetitive behaviors. It appears to have its roots in very early brain development. Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States, with one percent of the children population, ages 3-17, having an autism spectrum disorder. The current estimated prevalence is 1 in 88 births. Studies show that autism is four to five times more common among boys than girls; and

WHEREAS, It is reported that 1 to 1.5 million Americans live with an autism spectrum disorder, each individual is unique. Many of those on the autism spectrum have exceptional abilities in visual, music and academics. About 40 percent have average to above average intellectual abilities. Indeed, many persons on the spectrum take deserved pride in their distinctive abilities and "atypical" ways of viewing the world. Others with autism have a significant disability and are unable to live independently; and

WHEREAS, The Autism Society of America estimates that the average per pupil cost for educating a child with autism is over \$18,000. There is an estimated \$36 billion annual cost to provide adult services; and

WHEREAS, In Dallas County, approximately 4,500 children under the age of 18 has an autism spectrum disorder. In the Dallas Independent School District, the number of students with an identified autism spectrum disorder comprises 0.8% of the total student population and 11% of the special education population; and

WHEREAS, Dallas Independent School District serves approximately 1300 students with an autism spectrum disorder. Over 400 are in 52 specially designed & structured classrooms. The Autism Program provides support and instruction for students who are being educated in the general education setting and technical support and training for teachers and other campus staff; and

WHEREAS, Metrocare Services, the Community Mental Health Center for Dallas County, is led by a dedicated, volunteer Board of Trustees who are appointed by Dallas County Commissioner's Court, and as the Center for Children with Autism, Metrocare utilizes the most advanced techniques of Applied Behavioral Analysis to help almost 150 children unlock their full potential while remaining in their communities and schools; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Dallas County Commissioners Court does hereby recognize and commend the Dallas Independent School District for its mission to improve the lives of those students on the autism spectrum by delivering effective instruction and increasing acceptance, respect, and support through their Autism Program; and


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dallas County Commissioners Court does hereby recognize and commend The Center for Children with Autism at Metrocare Services for their efforts to increase the community's awareness of autism spectrum disorder and for the respect, concern plus effectiveness with which they strive to unlock each child's potential; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dallas County Commissioners Court does hereby recognize April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day, and the month of April as National Autism Awareness Month in support of the continued effort to raise awareness and improve services for individuals on the autism spectrum.

DONE IN OPEN COURT this the 8th day of April, 2014.


Clay Lewis Jenkins, County Judge


Dr. Theresa M. Daniel, District 1


Mike Cantrell, District 2


John Wiley Price, District 3


Dr. Elba Garcia, District 4