



The following is a revised version of the resolution composed for governments presented in the book *Every Parent's Dilemma: Why Do We Ignore Schools That Nurture Children?* By Don Berg (Trafford, 2015).

“Nurturing is the Foundation” Resolution

Version 2.0 (28Nov15)

Whereas, ...

- ... all adults responsible for children must nurture them.
- ... nurturing, in this resolution, means supporting a person (of any age) to satisfy their primary human needs.
- ... people whose primary needs are being thwarted are less able to support others to satisfy their primary needs. (For this reason, in an airplane emergency at high altitude, a parent is required to put on their oxygen mask before putting one on their child.)
- ... primary needs are not derived from any other needs, are universal to all humans, and have non-neutral effects on well-being.
- ... air, water, food, shelter, sleep, relatedness, autonomy, and competence have been shown to be primary needs (as established by peer-reviewed scientific studies published in widely respected journals).
- (...“Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs,” despite being intuitively compelling and gaining widespread fame, is a mixture of primary and derivative needs and, therefore, fails to provide a useful model for the present purpose.)
- ... thwarting the needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence leads to anxiety, depression, and other forms of psychological distress.
- ... anxiety, depression, and other forms of psychological distress are forms of mental ill-being.
- ... ill-being, whether physical or mental, leads to diminished capacity for learning.
- ... supporting people to meet their needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence leads to intrinsic motivation and engagement.
- ... intrinsic motivation and engagement lead to optimal learning and the best possible learning outcomes.
- ... peer-reviewed scientific studies of student populations published in widely respected journals have observed the maintenance of intrinsic motivation or engagement only in schools that make academic instruction optional, not mandatory.

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SCHOOLS OF CONSCIENCE

Building the Nurturing Capacity of K-12 Schools

(continued from other side)

Therefore, we RESOLVE to ...

- ... recognize that nurturing is fundamental to well-being and is the foundation upon which learning is built.
- ... recognize that nurturing is a pervasive responsibility of all adults in organizations that serve children of any age and also a responsibility of all leaders with power over other people.
- ... recognize that both adults and children must be nurtured in order for organizations serving children to be effective and efficient educational organizations.
- ... support nurturing as a necessary precondition for optimal learning and as a logical precedent to all the various purposes of education that optimal learning will serve, the instructional choices that follow from those purposes, and the implementation of those instructional choices.
- ... safeguard nurturing by giving it functional precedence over the pursuit of other valuable educational goals such as possessing basic or advanced knowledge and skills, job readiness, and preparation for college.
- ... assess organizational climate at least twice per year using an instrument that includes measures of psychological well-being and that has been validated through peer-reviewed scientific research, (e.g. the Hope Survey).
- ... establish a pattern of climate data demonstrating that the population of people within our organization maintain their intrinsic motivation and/or engagement for the typical activities they do.
- ... protect the features of our organization that have been shown to be causally related to the support of primary needs, intrinsic motivation, or engagement.

Resolutions are not legally binding, but by coming to agreement as an organization on this resolution, your community will be acknowledging that your moral obligation to nurture covers at least these minimum levels of scientifically validated care. Explicitly accepting that moral obligation and sharing your commitment through membership in Schools Of Conscience will enable us to begin building the political power necessary to enable this moral imperative to eventually become a normal expectation of all organizations. Your community is encouraged to follow up on this resolution with legally binding policies that build on the strengths your community already brings to the tasks of nurturing.

If your organization becomes a member of Schools of Conscience, you will have the opportunity to examine the hidden curriculum of your organization, learn about ways that other organizations fulfill their nurturing duties, and share your strategies, too. We provide members with a menu of public talks and professional development workshops that we can co-host in order to spread the word about nurturing within and beyond your community.

Schools of Conscience has a long term plan that includes the development of an organizational accreditation program (initially focused on K-12 schools) that is focused on a combination of nurturing and holistic sustainability. Your membership dues are the primary means of support we need in order to do our work. Please join today.

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