MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Education

From: Joshua P. Starr, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: American Indian Heritage Day and Month—November 2014

WHEREAS, During the past century, efforts to establish a Native American Heritage Day have led to the celebration of an American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS, Early advocates for an official day of recognition eagerly urged organizations, states, and the United States Government to officially designate a day to celebrate the traditions, cultures, histories, and contributions of American Indian people; and

WHEREAS, One advocate, the Reverend Red Fox James, thought to be a member of the Blackfeet Nation, rode by horseback from state to state and obtained the support of 24 state governments, which he presented to the White House in 1915; and

WHEREAS, While no official national day was declared following James’ efforts, in 1916 the Governor of New York declared the second Saturday in May as American Indian Day, the first ever official celebration; and

WHEREAS, The strength of culture and community come from myriad voices; American Indians serve as doctors, athletes, artists, leaders of nations, leaders of business, active duty soldiers, military veterans, elders, teachers, and government employees; and

WHEREAS, The American Indian has strengthened our communities through education and business development, opened the doors to opportunity, and contributed to a brighter future in Montgomery County and our nation; now therefore be it

Resolved, That on behalf of the Board of Education, the superintendent of schools, and the staff members, students, and families of Montgomery County Public Schools, hereby declare November to be observed as “American Indian Heritage Month”; and be it further

Resolved, That Friday, November 28, 2014, be observed as “American Indian Heritage Day.”

JPS:KAS:emb