

RESOLUTION of the Cañada College Academic Senate to support student success and mental health, to uphold academic freedom in regard to the Gaza-Israel conflict, and to affirm the Associated Students of Cañada College in their call for a ceasefire.

WHEREAS Cañada College regards itself as a “student-centered institution, [putting] the needs of students first”¹ (“College Values”);

WHEREAS in April 2024 the Associated Students of Cañada College (ASCC) issued a statement of Solidarity for the People of Palestine “[demanding] that the administration of our campus breaks its silence on the humanitarian crisis and collective punishment of those in Gaza,” noting that “Israeli forces have murdered over 30,000 Palestinian people since October 7th, almost half of whom were children,” and asserting that they “stand together to amplify and strengthen student voices, condemning any form of racism, Islamophobia, or anti-semitism, while “[acknowledging] the Jewish community’s pain from the October 7, 2023 events and [empathizing] with all people suffering”²;

WHEREAS our college prioritizes social justice and equity, and strives to “provide equitable access and resources to students, staff and faculty, in consideration of all their identities to ensure a community of support and successful educational outcomes,”³ and yet face-to-face personal counseling for Cañada College students remains unavailable three out of seven days per week including many evenings, Fridays, and weekends⁴ while rates of anxiety and depression have increased amongst college students since 2020⁵ ⁶ and since the conflict in Gaza began, according to the ASCC Statement, students have indicated additional stress by “directly [expressing] their pain and anger”⁷;

WHEREAS the San Mateo Community College District’s “Statement on Academic Freedom” asserts that we are “dedicated to maintaining a climate of academic freedom encouraging the sharing and cultivation of a wide variety of viewpoints. Academic freedom expresses our belief in inquiry, informed debate and the search for truth; academic freedom is necessary in order to provide students with a variety of ideas, to encourage them to engage in critical thinking and to help them understand conflicting opinions. Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach, and express ideas, including unpopular or controversial ones, without censorship or political restraint”⁸;

WHEREAS criticizing the policies of governments and their militaries are fundamental democratic rights⁹ ¹⁰, and the 2020 Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (JDA), distinguishes

¹ [Cañada College Mission, Vision, and Values: Student Centered](#)

² [Associated Students of Cañada college statement of solidarity for the people of Palestine](#)

³ [Cañada College Mission, Vision, and Values: Social Justice and Racial Equity](#)

⁴ [Cañada Personal Counseling Center](#)

⁵ [Student mental health is in crisis. Campuses are rethinking their approach](#)

⁶ [Student Mental Health Status Report: Struggles, Stressors and Supports](#)

⁷ [Associated Students of Cañada college statement of solidarity for the people of Palestine](#)

⁸ [Statement on Academic Freedom](#)

⁹ [The Bill of Rights](#)

¹⁰ [BP 2.31 Speech: Time, Place and Manner](#)

such criticism from antisemitism, which is “discrimination, prejudice, hostility or violence against Jews as Jews (or Jewish institutions as Jewish)”¹¹;

WHEREAS the US government is funding and arming the Israeli military^{12 13}, recently passing a bill to provide Israel an additional \$26 billion (including \$9.1 billion for humanitarian needs)¹⁴ and prioritizing U.S. military spending (\$825 billion)¹⁵ over education (\$90.0 billion)¹⁶;

Therefore, be it

RESOLVED that Cañada College Academic Senate work with the college to develop and offer culturally responsive mental health support services for Palestinian, Palestinian-American, and Jewish students, faculty, and staff impacted by the events of October 7th and the ongoing conflict;

RESOLVED that Cañada College Academic Senate affirms our commitment to the protection of academic freedom in online academic environments and on campus, despite calls to censor texts, discussion, and activism around the current conflict in Palestine and Israel;

RESOLVED that Cañada College Academic Senate work with AFT1493 to protect academic and intellectual freedom, including the rights of all faculty, adjunct and full-time, to develop curriculum, educational programming, and resources, and to discuss the current conflict in Palestine and Israel in the classroom, in office hours, in counseling and library sessions, and at all campus activities without being subjected to intimidation, censorship, retaliation, or threat of reduction or termination of employment or assignment;

RESOLVED that for humanitarian reasons and to support the expressed mental health needs of our students, Cañada College Academic Senate calls for an immediate ceasefire and for US taxpayer funds to be used to prevent further loss of life and to be invested in our nation’s educational system to improve mental health services and allow for greater student success.

¹¹ [The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism](#)

¹² [FACT SHEET: Memorandum of Understanding Reached with Israel](#)

¹³ [U.S. floods arms into Israel despite mounting alarm over war's conduct](#)

¹⁴ [US House passes \\$95 billion Ukraine, Israel aid package, sends to Senate](#)

¹⁵ [Department of Defense Releases the President's Fiscal Year 2025 Defense Budget](#)

¹⁶ [U.S. Department of Education Fiscal Year 2024 Budget](#)