

**San José State University
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192**

**SS-S26-2, Sense of the Senate Resolution
Taking Pride and Celebrating SJSU's Multilingual Richness and
Advocating for its Increased Visibility and Recognition in
Campus Life**

Legislative History: On May 4, 2026, the Academic Senate approved the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senators Chander, Gambarin, Kataoka, and Munoz-Munoz.

Whereas, California is **proud of a long-cherished history and legacy** of rich cultural and linguistic diversity; and

Whereas, Title VI of the **Civil Rights** Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics such as national origin, to which language is deeply linked as a primary indexical characteristic of one's country of origin (DOJ, 2025); and

Whereas, Many SJSU students assist their family members who are **Emergent Bilinguals**, thus actively protecting their basic **human rights**; and

Whereas, on March 1, 2025, President Trump signed an Executive Order designating English as the official language of the United States (White House), a decision that dismisses the rich multilingual background of Americans from the past 250 years; and

Whereas, there are **robust oppositions** against the Executive Order expressed by scholarly organizations such as the Linguistic Society of America (LSA, 2025), TESOL International Association (TESOL, 2025), Modern Language Association (MLA, 2025), Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL, 2025), and National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE, 2025); and

Whereas, California, a state whose first constitution was bilingual, is signaling a multilingual trajectory in its **policies** (e.g., CA Seal of Biliteracy, Proposition 58, Global CA 2030) as a manifestation of the people's will to serve its inherently multilingual population, including over a million Emergent Bilinguals in its PreK-12 public school system; and

Whereas, SJSU is an empowering institution that drives inclusion and embraces talent from diverse cultures (SJSU, 2025), where language plays an integral part as a primary tool of communication, expression, innovation, and creativity; and

Whereas, SJSU aspires to cultivate “equity-minded social impact, global innovation, and community engagement” (SJSU, 2025) in **Santa Clara County** - one of the most diverse counties in the nation, where over 100 languages and dialects are spoken (County of Santa Clara, 2025); and

Whereas one’s individual and **social identity and sense of belonging** within a community are inevitably influenced by how one’s language is viewed and accepted by the community; and

Whereas, promoting multilingualism at the university fosters **inclusivity** and enables all members of the campus community to express themselves authentically, thereby affirming their sense of belonging and strengthening our shared community; and

Whereas, multilingualism at San José State University has often been unrecognized and overlooked, rendering the linguistic diversity of our campus community largely **invisible** within institutional practices and campus culture; and

Whereas: Research demonstrates that multilingualism enhances executive function, attention regulation, and mental flexibility through constant management of multiple linguistic systems, which strengthens **cognitive** control networks and brain plasticity (Bialystok et al., 2012); and

Whereas: Multilingualism naturally enhances **cultural competency** through exposure to diverse cultural perspectives, increases empathy and perspective-taking abilities, and strengthens interpersonal skills by fostering more attuned interpretation of social dynamics (Paap, 2019); and

Whereas: Multilingual university students who hold growth-oriented mindsets demonstrate **superior academic achievement** in language learning, with multilingualism providing cognitive and affective advantages that support diverse learning outcomes across educational contexts (Calafato & Simmonds, 2023); and

Whereas: Multilingual university students demonstrate 30% higher likelihood of international role assignments and 20% advantage in early managerial advancement, with **specialized opportunities** in healthcare, education, business, and translation fields serving diverse populations (Churkina et al., 2023); therefore, be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate (the Senate) recognizes multilingualism as a vital institutional asset that revitalizes learning, enriches our diverse campus identity, and enhances teaching, research, and community engagement across all dimensions of our collective SJSU experience; and

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate recognizes multilingualism in all aspects of the campus experience—academic, administrative, and social—as a vital component of equity, inclusion, and community engagement; and

Resolved: That the Senate endorses collecting language data from all students, staff, and faculty members by way of, for example, a questionnaire for incoming freshman students and new employees; and

Resolved: That the Senate affirms the merits of implementing multilingual signage in appropriate campus locations to visibly honor linguistic diversity, foster inclusive belonging, and enrich the linguistic landscape that reflects our multicultural community's identities and languages; and

Resolved: That the Senate encourages educational, social, and institutional activities that highlight and celebrate our university's rich linguistic legacy and the humanities of our campus members.

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