



El Monte Union High School District

Community Committed to College and Career

PRESS RELEASE

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El Monte Union Board of Trustees Votes to Reduce Use of Styrofoam Products

Districtwide reduction of polystyrene to go into effect Jan. 1, 2020

EL MONTE – The El Monte Union Board of Trustees at its Aug. 7 meeting unanimously voted to reduce and use of polystyrene, a synthetic resin known by the brand name Styrofoam, from its campuses and administrative offices effective Jan. 1, 2020.

The product, which has been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as the fifth largest source of hazardous waste, comes in various forms, including coffee cups, coolers, cushioning material in packaging and lunch trays. Polystyrene is not recyclable, takes at least 500 years to decompose, and is a main pollutant of urban areas, oceans, bays and other U.S. water sources.

Under the [resolution](#), the District, excluding the Nutrition Services Department, is prohibited from purchasing, using and distributing polystyrene products in business or school activities; the District will seek more environmentally-friendly alternative alternatives to school polystyrene lunch trays. Faculty, staff and students will also be encouraged to reduce use of the foam product in favor of those that can be recycled or composted.

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to express our District’s deep commitment to ensuring we do our part to reduce our carbon footprint and set an example to our students, families and community that fostering a clean, healthy and safe environment is vital to the sustainability of our planet,” Superintendent Dr. Edward Zuniga said. “I want to thank our Board leadership for taking this step to promote cleaner waters, streets and communities for our students and District community.”

El Monte Union is a Green Ribbon School and Energy Star leader, recognized by both the state and U.S. Department of Education for its pioneering efforts to maintain safe learning environments through environmental conservation efforts. El Monte Union has installed electric car charging stations at all of its comprehensive high schools and District Office. The majority of campuses also have new solar panel carports, which are expected to generate over 60% of the District’s annual energy needs.

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The vision of the El Monte Union High School District is to empower and motivate our students to be resilient, college and career ready, lifelong learners and contributing members of our global society.