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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 903

Offered February 13, 2009

Commending mental health professionals in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

Patron—Amundson

WHEREAS, mental health professionals bring essential skills and services to our young people in the public school system and greatly contribute to the development of academically successful and socially responsible citizens; and

WHEREAS, mental health professionals in Virginia's public schools are integral to the education process and are team players, providing consultation and education services for teachers, parents, and other school staff on mental health issues; and

WHEREAS, emphasizing prevention and early detection of mental health problems, public school psychologists help to develop academic and behavioral interventions for students; and

WHEREAS, committed to keeping students safe, public school psychologists help to implement prevention services, including suicide prevention and violence prevention programs; and

WHEREAS, with a goal of helping students achieve their full potential, public school psychologists evaluate students for a variety of public school programs and services, including special education and gifted programs; and

WHEREAS, mental health professionals in the public schools work to study and understand the cognitive processes children use to learn successfully and to understand and address the social and emotional behaviors of young people in the school environment; and

WHEREAS, the skills and services of mental health professionals in the public schools save taxpayer dollars and allow Virginia's students to continue to benefit from federal programs; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of School Psychologists recommends a ratio of at least one school psychologist for every 1,000 students; Virginia's current ratio is one mental health professional for every 2,265 students, a statistic that the Commonwealth must examine to plan for students' mental health needs in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Academy of School Psychologists' mission is to strengthen the effectiveness of school psychologists in promoting and advocating for the crucial educational and mental health needs of students throughout Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend mental health professionals in the public schools of the Commonwealth on the valuable role they play in the academic success and well-being of Virginia's young people; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Academy of School Psychologists on behalf of all Virginia's public school psychologists as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for their dedication to providing quality mental health services in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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