

2012 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 594

Commending Gesher Jewish Day School.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, May 14, 2012

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School, the only accredited Jewish day school in Northern Virginia, is a private, coeducational day school and offers students in kindergarten through the eighth grade a rigorous dual curriculum of Judaic and general studies; and

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School was founded in 1982 by a group of pioneering parents and visionaries, including Rabbi Sheldon and Shulamith Elster, Rabbi Arnold Fink, and Susan Koss, a creative and enthusiastic teacher; and

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School's mission is to inspire its students to be passionate about learning; practice justice, kindness and respect; and aspire to a life guided by Jewish values, Torah, and community; and

WHEREAS, the first kindergarten class at Gesher Jewish Day School began in 1982 in a local synagogue, the Agudas Achim Congregation, in Alexandria; an additional grade was added each year until 1988, with the first sixth-grade class graduating with pride in 1989; and

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School relocated in 1994 to larger quarters in the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia in Fairfax and, to provide more classroom space, established the Chabad Community Campus in 1998 as a nearby satellite campus with a computer and library facility for the first and second grades; and

WHEREAS, with help from a dedicated community supporter and a grant from the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education, Gesher Jewish Day School added a middle school with a seventh grade in 1999 and an eighth grade the following year; and

WHEREAS, priding itself on being a place where every child can shine and emphasizing a warm, nurturing atmosphere, Gesher Jewish Day School proudly serves Jewish families from many congregations with diverse approaches to Jewish life throughout Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School is accredited by the Virginia Association of Independent Schools and is proud of the individualized attention and special programs it offers its students, characterized by small class sizes, typically limited to 16 students, with an average student-to-teacher ratio of 9:1; and

WHEREAS, Gesher Jewish Day School is governed by a board of directors composed of parents and community members with a strong parent-teacher organization that helps to maintain a flexible, supportive, and student-centered learning environment; and

WHEREAS, in order to continue to develop and grow and meet its dynamic academic mission, in 2002 Gesher Jewish Day School purchased a beautiful 28-acre property, located six miles west of its main campus, where it relocated in 2007; and

WHEREAS, the new Gesher Jewish Day School campus is situated on a large partially wooded suburban property with playgrounds, fields, and other athletic facilities and a building that seeks to connect to the land of Israel with a facade that copies the color and feel of the architecture of Jerusalem; and

WHEREAS, the cornerstone of the building design is the 180-seat Beit Midrash, a round, light-filled space for T'fillot and Judaic learning that opens into a beautiful Israeli-style courtyard; and

WHEREAS, the facility includes state-of-the-art classrooms, a technology center, a complete library, common areas for special studies, office space, a stage, a gymnasium, and a science center; and

WHEREAS, the middle school is housed in a separate wing of the new facility with dedicated space for the unique needs of middle school students, including science labs, special study space, and separate computer facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Gesher Jewish Day School has been named a Virginia Naturally School by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries each year since 2008; and

WHEREAS, the Gesher Jewish Day School is one of only 266 schools nationwide to achieve Gold Level Status in the 2012 MATHCOUNTS Club Program; and

WHEREAS, the Gesher Jewish Day School has been named a "Top 100 School" for the State of Virginia in the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth Talent Search every year since 2009; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Gesher Jewish Day School hereby be commended on the occasion of its 30th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the board of directors of Gesher Jewish Day School at its May 20, 2012, "Guardian

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of the Bridge Gala" as an expression of the House of Delegates' best wishes for the school's continued success.