

## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 358

*Commemorating the 60th anniversary of the closing of Prince Edward County Public Schools.*

Agreed to by the Senate, February 18, 2019  
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 19, 2019

WHEREAS, the *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* case was one of the five cases represented in the *Brown v. Board of Education* lawsuit for school desegregation; and

WHEREAS, the first public schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia to be integrated were in Norfolk and Arlington in February 1959; and

WHEREAS, the federal courts ordered Prince Edward County to integrate its public school system in the summer of 1959; and

WHEREAS, on September 10, 1959, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors voted not to fund the public schools for the 1959-1960 school year; and

WHEREAS, the public schools in Prince Edward County would continue to be closed for a five-year period from 1959 to 1964, longer than anywhere in the country; and

WHEREAS, more than 3,000 students were displaced during the school closings; and

WHEREAS, public funds from the county were used to open a private school for white students to attend; and

WHEREAS, the African American students had to attend schools in other localities, create makeshift local options, or go without education for any number of years; and

WHEREAS, the 1964 Supreme Court decision in *Griffin v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* prevents other school divisions across the country from closing public schools and diverting funds to all private schools; and

WHEREAS, 2019 marks the 60th anniversary of the closing of the Prince Edward County Public Schools, and the Commonwealth honors those students who had their educations severely impacted during the achievement of school integration; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the 60th anniversary of the closing of Prince Edward County Public Schools be commemorated in 2019; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the Robert Russa Moton Museum requesting that the museum further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.