

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 1997 SESSION

ENROLLED

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 576

*Encouraging local school boards to require the use of multiple criteria in the identification of certain underserved gifted students.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 29, 1997

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 1997

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Educational Needs of Certain Underserved Gifted Students was established pursuant to House Joint Resolution No. 90 (1996), to identify and address the factors which impede the access of gifted minority and low-income students to gifted and talented programs in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee noted that federal and state laws require early identification of gifted students and that an appropriate and differentiated educational program be provided for them; and

WHEREAS, many underserved gifted and talented youth do not conform to the conventional stereotype of "giftedness," and many such youth may languish in classrooms without attention to their educational needs because they often demonstrate poor academic performance, boredom, inattentiveness, and disciplinary problems; and

WHEREAS, this problem is exacerbated for gifted and talented minority and low-income students whose potential and abilities lie dormant due to neglect, inappropriate identification, lack of stimulation, and unequal educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee has found that gifted minority and low-income students are under-represented in gifted education programs across the Commonwealth due, in part, to the use of certain criteria to identify them, low teacher expectations, stereotypical labels, and tracking; and

WHEREAS, the significant under-representation of such students in gifted and talented programs, advanced placement classes, and the governor's schools throughout the state indicate the need to improve the process by which such students are identified; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Plan for the Gifted, the Board of Education's statewide plan for gifted education, recommends the use of multiple criteria to broaden the pool of eligible students; and

WHEREAS, appropriate multiple criteria suggested in the Plan include, among other things, teacher observation, student assessments, family and community referrals, and culturally sensitive rating scales and checklists; and

WHEREAS, students who have been identified for such programs through these means have outstanding academic achievements, many of whom are renowned and distinguished scientists, lawyers, educators, artists, physicians, policy makers, businessmen, Nobel laureates, and esteemed national and world leaders; and

WHEREAS, these students, whose rich and amazing gifts and talents lie dormant and untapped, could very possibly hold the answer to the problems and challenges that await us in the 21st century; and

WHEREAS, deliberate and aggressive efforts to identify these students early in their school careers and to provide them an educational program commensurate with their unique abilities would benefit the Commonwealth and all mankind; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That local school boards be encouraged to require the use of multiple criteria in the identification of certain underserved gifted students; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of Education, the President of the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Director of the Virginia School Boards Association, the Chairman of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents, the President of the Virginia Education Association, and the President of the Virginia Parents and Teachers Association in order that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly in this matter.

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