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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 200

Offered January 26, 1998

Requesting the Board of Education to study the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a Governor's School for Agriculture.

Patrons—Katzen, Baker, Bloxom, Callahan, Dillard, Dudley, Kilgore, Landes, Tata and Weatherholtz;
Senators: Forbes and Miller, K.G.

Referred to Committee on Agriculture

WHEREAS, the Governor's Schools program, first established in 1973, includes summer residential schools, summer regional schools, and academic year schools and is administered by the Department of Education (Programs for the Gifted) cooperatively with local school divisions, colleges, and universities; and

WHEREAS, summer residential Governor's Schools typically focus on one special area of interest, such as visual and performing arts, humanities, science, technology, or mentorships; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's regional academic year Governor's Schools provide special studies in science, mathematics, technology, and the arts for high school students, with the remainder of the student's instruction provided by the student's home school or by the Governor's School; and

WHEREAS, in 1997-98, the Commonwealth will provide nearly \$6 million in general funds for Governor's Schools, and, while the 1997-98 Appropriation Act stipulates that these payments are not designed to support capital outlay, structural improvements, or fixed equipment costs for existing or proposed magnet schools, they may, however, support the purchase of instructional equipment, contingent upon certification by the Superintendent of Public Instruction that participating school divisions have committed an equal amount; and

WHEREAS, although new Governor's Schools in Northeastern Virginia, the Essex area, and Appomattox are in the planning and approval stages, none of these proposed or existing schools addresses agricultural studies, such as agricultural sciences and technology, business management, and forestry; and

WHEREAS, agriculture remains a significant and vital part of the Commonwealth's economy, and a Governor's School for Agriculture might provide a unique and invaluable educational alternative to effectively prepare students who wish to pursue a career in agricultural sciences; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Board of Education be requested to study the feasibility and appropriateness of establishing a Governor's School for Agriculture. The Board shall consider, among other things, (i) the need for specific agricultural, technical, and professional training and programs and the types of curricula such Governor's School should offer; (ii) the location, governance, and funding of such a school; (iii) creative methods of incorporating the education and experience of farming, forestry, business and other experts in the delivery of instruction; (iv) similar regional or special schools in other states; (v) and such other issues as it deems appropriate.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Board by the Department of Education.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Board for this study, upon request.

The Board of Education shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

INTRODUCED

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