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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 258

Offered February 2, 2006

Commending Virginia school boards that employ mathematics specialists in order to increase student achievement by increasing the quality of mathematics instruction.

Patron—Howell, W.J.

WHEREAS, Virginia is a leader among the states in the use of mathematics specialists in elementary and middle schools; and

WHEREAS, several Virginia institutions of higher learning are implementing mathematics specialist preparation programs and research activities funded by grants from the National Science Foundation and from the federal Mathematics and Science Partnership program through the Virginia Department of Education; and

WHEREAS, school divisions involved in training and employing mathematics specialists through federal grants include Alexandria, Arlington, Culpeper, Fairfax County, Hampton, Hanover, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Richmond City, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Virginia Beach; and

WHEREAS, additional Virginia school boards have recognized the value of mathematics specialists and have taken the initiative to employ them to help elevate both teacher and student performance; and

WHEREAS, participating teachers in these divisions indicate that such programs increase their mathematics content knowledge significantly and build their confidence and excitement for teaching; and

WHEREAS, Norfolk Public Schools, whose school board has an established policy of employing mathematics specialists, recently was awarded the 2005 Broad Prize for Urban Education for having made "remarkable progress in the past four years, demonstrating not only high achievement by all student groups, but also greater improvement than similar districts in the state," including increasing the percentages of elementary students reaching proficiency in math by 14 points and middle school students by 23 points; and

WHEREAS, mathematics specialists work to improve student achievement in mathematics by enhancing the instructional capabilities and content knowledge of elementary and middle school teachers through professional development, coaching, and classroom activities; and

WHEREAS, schools, in order to be fully accredited, and students, in order to graduate, must meet achievement expectations in mathematics established in the Virginia Standards of Accreditation; and

WHEREAS, the state and local school divisions must meet steadily increasing student passing rates on mathematics assessments, reaching a 100% passing rate by the 2013-2014 school year, as stipulated by accountability requirements in the federal *No Child Left Behind Act*; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend and congratulate Virginia school boards that employ mathematics specialists in order to increase student achievement by increasing the quality of mathematics instruction; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition, requesting that it further distribute copies of this resolution to the respective school boards as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration and support for their commendable initiatives directed at improving both instruction and achievement in mathematics.

INTRODUCED

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