

2014 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 160

Commending Melissa A. Porfirio.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 5, 2014
Agreed to by the Senate, March 7, 2014

WHEREAS, Melissa A. Porfirio, who teaches first grade at Crestwood Elementary School in Fairfax County, is the 2014 Virginia Teacher of the Year, which is a designation given annually by the Virginia Department of Education and was awarded in October 2013; and

WHEREAS, when Melissa A. Porfirio was named in January 2014 as one of four finalists for the 2014 National Teacher of the Year to be announced in April, Patricia I. Wright, Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction, stated that "she epitomizes the qualities that make Virginia teachers among the nation's best" and "would be an outstanding representative for the nation's teachers"; and

WHEREAS, described as the heart of the Crestwood community by colleagues, Melissa Porfirio brought her experience as a social worker in North Carolina and Washington, D.C., and as an English teacher in South Korea to fully engage the strengths of a community where seventy-two percent of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch and sixty percent have limited English proficiency; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Porfirio believes "Students do not arrive in our classrooms as blank slates for us to just fill up with information. They come to us with hopes and dreams and an inherent excitement for what they want to learn about . . . Through community building and rules and procedures we design as a class, I create an environment that is welcoming and safe, builds confidence, enhances strengths, encourages students to take risks, and exposes them to all of the possibilities that come through learning"; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Porfirio is as passionate about elevating her profession through staff development training in her role as cohort facilitator and committee chair for Responsive Classroom training, helping new teachers achieve success in the classroom as a mentor, and as team leader being respectful of colleagues' differing viewpoints as she encourages everyone to go beyond their best to ensure each child's individual needs are met and they are prepared for second grade; and

WHEREAS, Melissa Porfirio uses her free time to build relationships with the families of her students, attends the pupils' after-school activities, and takes special satisfaction in staying in touch with former students through high school; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Catholic University who received a master's degree from George Mason University, during her eight years at Crestwood Elementary School, Melissa Porfirio through her ability to build strong relationships with her students and her commitment to family outreach has been an inspiration to many as carrying out the highest ideals of being an educator; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Fairfax County teacher Melissa A. Porfirio for being named the 2014 Virginia Teacher of the Year and as a finalist for the 2014 National Teacher of the Year; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Melissa A. Porfirio as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and admiration for her commitment to her students and for being an outstanding role model for all people in the Commonwealth.

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