

Chapter No. 2013
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***HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 41***

Originated in House  Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 41

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE RESILIENCE OF THE ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS OF CLARA SCHOOL AND THE CONCERTED EFFORTS OF THE CITIZENS OF WAYNE COUNTY TO REBUILD THE SCHOOL IN THE WAKE OF DESTRUCTION BY AN ACT OF ARSON.

WHEREAS, out of the carnage and rubble of destruction of the ashy remains of Clara School, which was burned to the ground in the early morning hours of Sunday, October 28, 2011, by a senseless juvenile act of vandalism, the phoenix's spirit of enduring resilience, perseverance and community unification was birthed in Wayne County, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the oldest school in Wayne County, Clara School, which was established at the turn of the 20th century in a one-room, one-teacher facility more than three decades before the Wayne County Public School System was formed, had become a historical treasure of academia in the county, having once served as the Clara Agricultural High School housing students throughout the South and considered one of the premier agricultural schools in the Southeast; and

WHEREAS, after funds were raised in 1904 to build a new school and a church, W.S. "Uncle Billy" Trigg donated 20 acres of land in 1909 and subsequently thereto plans were finalized to build the Wayne County Agricultural High School, which graduated its first class in 1912; and

WHEREAS, 1938 witnessed the formation of the Wayne County School System which took over the assets of the school and campus before the approval of the 1946 bond issue for a new building that was completed in 1948; and

WHEREAS, 1989 brought about the consolidation of all the high schools into Wayne County High School, and Clara became a K-8 school; and

WHEREAS, cherishing the history entrenched in the walls of the Clara School which now lay in ruin, the Wayne County Community rallied around the students, teachers, administrators and staff to provide the reassurance and moral support that Clara School would again serve as an oasis of academic excellence; and

WHEREAS, since weathering the storm of the initial loss, area churches offered their facilities to hold class and school was conducted in the churches across the street from the main campus for a number of weeks before transitioning to temporary structures and portable trailer classrooms while continuing to use those areas of the school that withstood the fire's fury; and

WHEREAS, through the drastic changes endured to reach classes, bus routes and car pick-up routes, the cafeteria and

other inconveniences, the Clara School professional and student body have battled each new adversity with a determined will to achieve a pinnacle of greatness, as evidenced by the school improving its accountability rating from a "C" to a "B" continuing to be the highest rated school in the district, even while displaced; and

WHEREAS, with construction underway on its new facility, the Clara Whippets eagerly anticipate the return to a new and improved facility expected for completion and occupancy the Spring of 2015 with dogged determination to remain undeterred in their spirit to succeed whatever the obstacle; and

WHEREAS, much credit for leading the charge to acclimate the student body to an unconventional learning environment while maintaining a standard of academic proficiency and efficiency is due in large part to Principal Donna Hopkins, Assistant Principal Sandy Graham and to every teacher, staff personnel, parent and community member who chipped in to make the transition as seamless as possible; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to recognize the diligence of such dedicated individuals who go above and beyond the call of duty to oversee the educational advancement of our children in a quality environment conducive to teaching and learning no matter the level of adversity, as demonstrated by Clara School and the Wayne County Community:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend the resilience of the administration, faculty, staff and students of Clara School and the concerted efforts of the citizens of Wayne County to rebuild the school in the wake of destruction by an act of arson, and extend heartiest wishes for continued success in all of its future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the Wayne County School Board, Clara School Principal Donna Hopkins and Assistant Principal Sandy Graham, the Mayor of Clara and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 11, 2014



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 4, 2014



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE