

Chapter No. 2029

13/HR07/R2123

85-19F

***HOUSE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 72***

Originated in House



Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 72

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING AND CONGRATULATING THE 165TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND TRAINING PROVIDED TO MISSISSIPPI'S BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENT POPULATION.

WHEREAS, the Mississippi School for the Blind, which was officially established on March 2, 1848, with the passage of legislation, a \$2,500.00 appropriation and the original Mississippi Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, celebrates the most auspicious occasion of its 165th anniversary on March 2, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the beginnings of the Mississippi School for the Blind took form in 1846, when James Champlain, a blind philanthropist, appealed to the Mississippi Legislature for funds to establish an institution for the blind, and was urged initially to seek private funds first, which he did, and which gave birth to an organized school on North Street in Jackson in March 1847; and

WHEREAS, the history of the school has been an integral part of Mississippi's history, including school buildings being seized

for use as a hospital by the Confederate Army and students being moved to a facility in Monticello, Mississippi, before the Legislature appropriated funds to move students back to the Jefferson Street location in Jackson in 1863; and

WHEREAS, in 1875, William Johnson of Vicksburg donated \$5,000.00 to the institution, which was used to purchase 14 acres of land on North State Street in Jackson, where the school operated from 1882 until 1950; and

WHEREAS, in 1924, the name of the institution was changed to its current name, the Mississippi School for the Blind; and

WHEREAS, in 1929, the Mississippi Commission for the Blind established a temporary school for Black, blind children at the Piney Woods Country Life School in Rankin County; and

WHEREAS, in 1948, a new school for White students was completed on Eastover Drive in northeast Jackson, and a new school for Black students was completed on Capers Street in West Jackson in 1951; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, segregation of students disappeared with the training of all elementary students on the Eastover campus, all upper level students on the Capers campus and the initiation of the Preschool/Homebound Program; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, all students were moved to the Eastover campus and the school received accreditation from the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired (NAC); and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Mississippi School for the Blind was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and received an "AA" rating from the Commission on School Accreditation; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, the Jackson Central Lions Club Low Vision Clinic was established on the campus to provide free low vision evaluations and training for eligible visually impaired children; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Mississippi Instructional Resources Center for the Visually Impaired (MIRCVI) was established; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, the Legislature approved funds to construct new facilities for the school on land located on the south side of Eastover Drive; and

WHEREAS, in 1998, Mississippi School for the Blind took occupancy of eight new buildings located on the south side of Eastover Drive and its academic complex in December 1999; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the school completed the Quality Assurance Review process to maintain accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, an accreditation that has been maintained since 1984; and

WHEREAS, the tenth oldest school for the blind in the country, Mississippi School for the Blind has continued throughout its 165-year history to expand its curriculum options, course

offerings, activities and relevant training to meet the individual needs of students and required standards; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi School for the Blind has as its mission to promote a strong foundation for learning and independence by providing specialized adapted services and materials to enhance maximum potential for students with visual impairments or blindness; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the Mississippi School for the Blind began a yearlong celebration in honor of the school's 165th-year anniversary featuring the debut of the school's marching band in November, gaining national recognition as only the second school for the blind in the country to feature a marching band; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to compel and encourage all Mississippians to join in related activities and initiatives to help raise awareness of the role this special school has in the continuum of service for blind and visually impaired students in Mississippi during this yearlong observance:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commemorate and congratulate the 165th anniversary of the Mississippi School for the Blind, acknowledge the exceptional services and educational opportunities and training provided to Mississippi's blind and visually impaired student population, and designate March 4, 2013, as Mississippi

School for the Blind Awareness Day and the month of March 2013 as Blind and Visually Impaired Awareness Month.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to the Superintendent of the Mississippi School for the Blind, the State Superintendent of Public Education and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
February 26, 2013



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
March 15, 2013



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

