

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 116

By Boyd

A RESOLUTION to recognize Friendship Christian School on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are proud to recognize those long-established institutions that provide exceptional education to the youth of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Friendship Christian School (FCS) is one such exemplary entity that has rendered sterling service to the children of the Lebanon community for half a century; and

WHEREAS, in September 1973, FCS embarked upon its educational journey to provide a balanced holistic education rooted in Christian principles—an education focused on the whole child: mind, body, and soul; and

WHEREAS, FCS was launched as a junior high school encompassing grades seven to nine and fifty-eight students; three years later, the school moved into its current facilities, with its first high school graduating class, the Class of 1977, celebrating its senior year in the newly constructed school building; and

WHEREAS, following the purchase of the Oakland School, the 1977-1978 school year saw the addition of an elementary school serving grades one to six; in 1978, the McFarland family funded the construction of four new classrooms at the Oakland School; and

WHEREAS, a kindergarten class was added in 1979, and, for the next ten years, the school offered a kindergarten through twelfth grade education; a new elementary school building was constructed in 1989, and the school added a pre-kindergarten class; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, a new high school library and six additional classrooms were built; a new middle school was completed in 1995, and, in 1997, the new state-of-the-art Bay Family Sports Complex was constructed; and

WHEREAS, two significant events took place in 1998: the campus was named "The McFarland Campus" in memory of Dr. Sam and Mrs. Gwendolyn McFarland, and a performing arts center was created when the old gym was renovated into a theater with a seating capacity of approximately six hundred, a band room, and a chorus room; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the Chamberlain Coffee House was opened, providing a full-service coffee house and gathering place for the students, faculty, and parents of FCS; and

WHEREAS, FCS opened a new 12,000 square foot building in 2009 to house ten new classrooms for middle school students and in 2011, rolled out campus-wide wireless accessibility as well as Apple iPad and laptop technology to enhance the technological resources available to its students; and

WHEREAS, FCS received its first Apple School of Distinction Award for 2013-2015, one of only 220 schools in the nation to be recognized that term; the school has since won the prestigious award in two more terms, 2015-2017 and 2017-2019; and

WHEREAS, the Commander Tennis Complex was dedicated in February 2016; the six-court tennis complex and lighting were solely funded by the FCS tennis players' parents and tennis alumni; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, FCS focused its efforts on bringing more green technology to the campus, installing energy-efficient computer monitors and expanding its plastics recycling endeavors; and

WHEREAS, a state-of-the-art weather station was installed on the school's campus in May 2019; the station is an excellent enhancement for the science classroom and provides immediate access to weather conditions at all times; and

WHEREAS, FCS augmented its security measures to provide better protection for students and faculty in 2019 and also installed an artificial turf field and playground, which improves the playability of the athletic surface, regardless of weather conditions; and

WHEREAS, with the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, FCS immediately shifted from on-campus learning to at-home distance learning; this rapid transition was possible due to the Apple 1:1 Initiative launched in 2011 and was ultimately proven successful because of the faculty's responsiveness, preparation, and persistence to finish the school year virtually; and

WHEREAS, in the winter of 2021, construction began on a new locker room, dugout, and restrooms for the Lady Commanders' softball program and was completed in time for the 2021 softball season; and

WHEREAS, FCS has won twenty-six state championships in nineteen years: three in baseball, one in boys' basketball, eight team and six individual in bowling, one individual in cross country, four in football, one in softball, and two in volleyball; and

WHEREAS, for twenty years, Friendship Christian School has competed in the Science Olympiad, a twenty-three-event national academic competition; FCS has won the region tournament eleven times, qualified for the state tournament in each year of competition, and won the 2011 Tennessee state tournament; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, 2011, and 2022, FCS has represented Tennessee in the Science Olympiad National Tournament, and each January, FCS hosts the Friendship Christian Invitational, which brings as many as thirty teams from multiple states to Lebanon to compete in the invitational tournament; and

WHEREAS, for many years, Friendship Christian School has created a culture of service; FCS is the largest provider of non-perishable foods to the Lebanon Special School District Family Resource Center, and FCS students plan and host a field day for Wilson County students with special needs in partnership with Wilson County's Whip-Crackin' Rodeo; and

WHEREAS, FCS is active in state and worldwide missions in Sneedville, Lebanon, Nashville, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Haiti, and Nicaragua, leading clean water initiatives by digging wells and installing tanks, pumps, and water purification systems; and

WHEREAS, FCS's female students founded 84 Days, a student-led ministry to provide feminine hygiene products to underprivileged girls so that they can attend school while on their menstrual cycle; each year, FCS donates a tithe of all funds raised during their annual State of Love Campaign to the above mission efforts and other compassionate organizations such as Monroe-Carell Jr. Children's Hospital and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital; and

WHEREAS, for fifty years, FCS has remained steadfast in its commitment to its mission of cultivating strong faith and strong minds in its students, delivering exceptional academics presented through a Christian worldview and embracing a future built on the legacy of the past; and

WHEREAS, it is most fitting that we specially recognize and celebrate this milestone achievement in the history of one of the premier schools in the State of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Friendship Christian School, honor its administration, faculty, staff, and students, both past and present, for their commitment to quality education, and extend our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.

