

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 257

By Harrison

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Shasha Laster on her selection as Teacher of the Year at Surgoinsville Elementary School.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those outstanding teachers who have devoted their careers to providing the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Shasha Laster is one such estimable educator who has distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Laster was recently selected Teacher of the Year by Surgoinsville Elementary School, an honor most befitting her outstanding tenure as a teacher as it recognizes the positive influence she has had on so many young lives; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Laster began her college career at Walters State Community College in 1996 before transferring to East Tennessee State University, from which she earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education, and she earned a master's degree in education from Tusculum College in 2006; and

WHEREAS, employed by Hawkins County Schools since 2001, Shasha Laster has served with acumen and alacrity as a first grade teacher at Surgoinsville Elementary School for ten exemplary years, having previously briefly served in an interim first grade teaching position at Joseph Rogers Primary School in early 2001; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure at Surgoinsville, she has served in several leadership positions: she completed the Mentor Teaching Program in 2004 and became a mentor to a first-year teacher at the school from 2004-05, and she also mentored a student teacher in 2009; she served as the Title I Coordinator for the 2007-08 school year; and, in the summer of 2008, she was one of two first grade teachers chosen to complete the language arts pacing guide throughout the county; and

WHEREAS, her other leadership positions at the school include serving as the first grade representative for the Title I Committee, Finance Committee, and the Leadership Team since 2007, she currently serves as the first grade team leader for the school, and she is attending a leadership training class, which she will complete in May 2011; and

WHEREAS, Shasha Laster is an extremely talented and compassionate educator who works assiduously to motivate her students to reach their full potential, both as scholars and as citizens; and

WHEREAS, she has graciously donated her time and energies to numerous scholastic efforts, including serving as a member of the Hawkins County Education Association, the National Education Association, and the Tennessee Education Association; and

WHEREAS, each year, Ms. Laster's class participates in programs that introduce the students to many people who provide services to the community, such as paramedics, police officers, fire fighters, and dental hygienists; since 2009, her class has written letters of appreciation to local board members, bus drivers, cafeteria employees, and the principal and support staff; and, also in 2009, her class collected and donated food items to a local food bank; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her current selection as a Teacher of the Year, Ms. Laster was also a recipient of the People's Choice Teacher of the Year award in 2005, which was hosted by the Rogersville Review; and

WHEREAS, active in her community, Shasha Laster enjoys volunteering with her family; beginning in 2007, she and her family collected and donated food to a local food pantry through the Boy Scouts of America; she has made yearly donations to the Shepherd's Center; for the past three years, she has participated in a back-to-school program through her church, in which she donated backpacks filled with school items; and she helps members of the community with personal needs, household items, food, and other assorted items; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Laster truly serves as an inspiration to her colleagues and students alike, and her friendship and counsel are highly valued by those who are fortunate to know her; and

WHEREAS, Shasha Laster epitomizes the ideal of the dedicated teacher who is wholly committed to the highest ideals of public service and quality education for all, and she should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Shasha Laster on being chosen as Teacher of the Year at Surgoinsville Elementary School, commend her exceptional service to the children of Tennessee, salute her professional expertise and personal excellence, and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.