

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 26

By Kyle

A RESOLUTION to recognize Lavonne Dennis Thomas on the occasion of her retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those outstanding educators who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry to provide the highest quality education for Tennessee's students; and

WHEREAS, Lavonne Dennis Thomas of the Memphis City Schools System is one such estimable educator, who has distinguished herself as a professional of the greatest dedication, ability, and integrity; and

WHEREAS, after more than twenty-six years of service as a distinguished educator within the Memphis City Schools System, Mrs. Thomas will be taking a much deserved retirement this year; and

WHEREAS, with the importance of education being stressed by her parents early in life, LaVonne Dennis Thomas began striving for this achievement as early as high school, and she graduated from Northside High School in 1974 with an honor's diploma; and

WHEREAS, Lavonne Dennis Thomas embarked upon her career in education in 1979 when she joined Teacher Corps with the Memphis City Schools System, and she was awarded a plaque from the Goodwill's Boys' Club in Memphis, Tennessee, for her outstanding community service completed as part of her training and education with Teacher Corps; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Thomas's participation in the Teacher Corps provided her the opportunity to earn a Master of Education degree after completing the two year federally funded program; and

WHEREAS, she holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from LeMoyne-Owen College, a Master's degree in Elementary Education from Memphis State

University, and has completed 45 hours above her Master of Education degree from Cumberland University and the University of Memphis; and

WHEREAS, a prominent educational leader, Mrs. Thomas was nominated in 1993 and 1994 for the Thanks To Teachers Excellence Award, in 1996 and 1997 she was selected by Frayser Elementary Faculty to receive a Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Teaching, and in 2001 she was Nominated for the Rotary Award for Teacher Excellence; and

WHEREAS, as an outstanding and dedicated role-model, LaVonne Dennis Thomas earned Perfect Attendance Awards in 1999 and in 2000 at Shelby Oaks Elementary School, and she furthermore exemplified her salience as a role-model when she earned the identical award in 2008 at Raleigh-Bartlett Meadows Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Thomas was awarded Reading Scholarships from Headsprout.com for ESL students in 2004 and in 2006, and as a testament to her excellence as an educational provider, she was nominated for the DisneyHand Teacher Award by one of her students; and

WHEREAS, the Memphis City Schools System have recognized and appreciated LaVonne Dennis Thomas's excellence as a first, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teacher, facilitator, mentor, and chairwoman of many committees for young people since she began her career in Memphis City Schools System; and

WHEREAS, this inspiring educator's career has consisted of wonderful, dedicated, and committed service at Douglass Elementary School, Wells Station Elementary School, Frayser Elementary School, Shelby Oaks Elementary School, and Grahamwood Elementary School; in addition, Mrs. LaVonne Dennis Thomas was also an instructional facilitator for over two years at Raleigh-Bartlett Meadows Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Thomas 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, her many accomplishments aside, LaVonne Dennis Thomas enjoys the loving companionship of her husband Floyd Thomas Jr., and they are the proud parents of two sons, Carlos Bynum Thomas, and Stacey Thomas; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Thomas is also the loving and proud grandmother, Katherine Thomas; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. LaVonne Dennis Thomas exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Thomas truly epitomizes 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 SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to LaVonne Dennis Thomas our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in her future endeavors, as we pay tribute to her illustrious career in education.

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