

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 553

By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to recognize Nick Darnell for his honorable and astute service as a member of the State Board of Education.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable educational professionals who have dedicated themselves to improving lives of students and teachers throughout Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Nick Darnell is one such individual, who has estimably served as a member of the State Board of Education representing the 1st Congressional District for the past five years, during which time he has been integral to many of the board's key accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, an educator with twelve years of classroom experience, he was appointed to his position on the State Board of Education in 2018 by Governor Bill Haslam, who, three years prior, had named Mr. Darnell to the first Governor's Teacher Cabinet, in which position he advised the governor and the Commissioner of Education for three years; and

WHEREAS, he has also served as a learning leader for Hamblen County, providing facilitation for Professional Learning Communities, leading professional development, and mentoring fellow teachers, and in 2015, he was selected as the East Ridge Middle School, Hamblen County Schools, and First Tennessee Core Region middle school teacher of the year; and

WHEREAS, during his five-year tenure on the State Board of Education, Nick Darnell has played an important role in licensure flexibility, which has helped more individuals enter the profession at a time when schools are in dire need of teachers; he also had the novel responsibility of adapting to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, working with the board to support districts, schools, and students during that tumultuous time; and

WHEREAS, his other contributions as a member of the State Board of Education include bringing an "in the field" perspective to other members, removing teachers who bring shame to the profession, and providing the best education possible to Tennessee's students; he also voted to approve an increase in the minimum salary schedule for teachers to \$40,000, which will undoubtedly help recruit quality candidates into the profession; and

WHEREAS, a native of Greeneville, Mr. Darnell holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education from Tusculum College and master's and education specialist degrees from East Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Darnell currently serves as the principal at East Ridge Middle School; he resides in Morristown with his wife, Emily, and their daughters, Madeline and Charlotte; and

WHEREAS, throughout his exemplary tenure on the State Board of Education, Mr. Darnell has carried out his responsibilities with diligence and integrity; and

WHEREAS, a strong advocate for the citizens of the 1st Congressional District, Nick Darnell has compiled a singular record of success during his exemplary career in education, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Nick Darnell for his honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as a member of the State Board of Education, extending our best wishes for every continued success in his 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 and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.