

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6075

A RESOLUTION congratulating Curtis Middle School for receiving the National Distinguished Title I School Award.

WHEREAS, Curtis Middle School, in Wichita, recently received the National Distinguished Title I School Award based on outstanding performance in closing the achievement gap between low- and high-performing students on state assessment scores over the past four years, from 2009 to 2013; and

WHEREAS, Curtis Middle School is one of two schools in Kansas to receive this award; and

WHEREAS, Curtis Middle School saw improvements in both math and reading in all demographic groups' state assessment scores, including free and reduced lunch students, ELL students, special education students and students of various ethnicities; and

WHEREAS, Curtis' highly-trained teachers and staff are three years ahead in their professional development when compared to other teachers in the district. Staff members are skilled in analyzing student data and how it relates to different strategies used in the classroom. This investment in professional development will help student achievement in the district for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, Curtis Middle School attributes their success in part to receiving a School Improvement Grant for \$5.8 million over three years. Forty-four percent of the grant money was spent on instruction, including funding 12 new teachers to lower class sizes, five instructional coaches and additional staff to allow for 85 minutes of professional development each day for teachers in core curriculum areas. Thirty-three percent of the grant was spent on research-based professional development, and includes five instructional coaches who work with classroom teachers and a professional learning lab which allows teachers to learn new strategies, practice those strategies with their peers prior to teaching in the classroom and receive feedback from instructional coaches. The grant also provided funding for summer learning, including a three-week-long math camp. Ninety percent of students who completed the math camp met learning targets in 10 curriculum areas making at least a half year of academic gains. Curtis Middle School also held a Project-Based Learning Camp for two weeks, which helped students reconnect to school through career interests and technology. Finally, the grant funded three positions who worked with parents on GED and English language skills, writing resumes and citizenship preparation classes; and

WHEREAS, When describing the school's recent recognition, Principal Stephanie Wasko stated, "It's important for them to realize that we're going to give them the same opportunity as any school in the city. I want them to go to college if that's what they choose. I want them to be able to have a career if that's what they choose. I want to make sure that when they leave my doors, that every door to them is still open"; and

WHEREAS, District officials announced the honor during a surprise school assembly, where the Southeast High School pep band played as students filed into the auditorium; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools Bill Faflick attended the assembly to congratulate the students and staff for their hard work. When asked what this remarkable achievement means for Curtis students, he replied, "Every student at Curtis has the opportunity to learn, gain a great education and be prepared for opportunities that are going to come their way": Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we congratulate Curtis Middle School for receiving the National Distinguished Title I School Award. We recognize the hard work of the teachers and staff members at Curtis who have made an impact on Curtis students' education and we thank them for their dedication to teaching and desire for continual improvement.

House Resolution No. 6075 was sponsored by Representatives Jim Ward and Carolyn Bridges.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.