

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 100

By Dickerson

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor University School of Nashville on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly recognize those venerable educational institutions that are celebrating momentous occasions in their long and storied histories; and

WHEREAS, University School of Nashville is one such institution, which, in 2015, will mark its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. For 100 years, this school has offered an unmatched educational experience and fostered the growth and broadening of some of Tennessee's finest minds; and

WHEREAS, established in 1915, University School of Nashville served as Peabody Demonstration School on the campus of George Peabody College for Teachers; and

WHEREAS, to bring life to his vision for a demonstration school, Bruce Payne, President of Peabody College, recruited Dr. Thomas Alexander in 1914 to lead the school; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Alexander, who became known as the "Father of Peabody Demonstration School," wanted to establish a school with excellent educational aims and practices that would provide children with the independence to succeed in a school that, according to him, "would surpass all others"; and

WHEREAS, Peabody Demonstration School opened in the spring of 1915, and held its first classes in the basement of Peabody College's newly constructed Jesup Psychology Laboratory; and

WHEREAS, eight grades, from kindergarten to seventh grade, were organized into four rooms and drew hundreds of students from Nashville's public schools; in the fall of 1916, the grades were expanded to include eighth and ninth grades as well; and

WHEREAS, the number of pupils attending Peabody Demonstration School continued to grow, expanding beyond the means of the college's allotment of classrooms; and

WHEREAS, President Payne dedicated himself to acquiring the funding for construction of a new building to serve the needs of Peabody Demonstration School's students; and

WHEREAS, after ten years of planning, the new building, designed by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, opened in 1925 on Edgehill Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the new four-story brick building provided a state-of-the-art learning environment, including laboratories, an auditorium, the Bruce R. Payne Library, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, rooftop gardens, and four acres of land for playing fields; and

WHEREAS, the school's basement contained the largest and best-equipped gymnasium in the South, the Joel Cheek Gymnasium, which included an indoor pool that was saved from budget cuts during construction and financed by the Peabody Woman's Club's Auxiliary; locker rooms; showers; and offices for physical education directors; and

WHEREAS, Peabody Demonstration School earned a reputation for its curriculum and faculty and garnered respect for its early commitment to diversity, which is still one of the school's defining strengths; and

WHEREAS, twenty-four years after its completion, on June 13, 1954, Peabody Demonstration School suffered a devastating fire that began in the auditorium's electrical box and spread, resulting in fire damage on the second and third floors, smoke damage throughout, and water damage in the gymnasium; and

WHEREAS, while repairs were being made to the school, summer classes were held on the Peabody College campus in the Home Economics and Industrial Arts buildings and the Psychology and Social Religious buildings; the school was repaired so quickly that the Class of 1955 held its prom in the auditorium; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with its core value of diversity, Peabody Demonstration School voluntarily desegregated in 1964 and hired the school's first African-American teacher, Dolores Nicholson, in 1969; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Peabody College decided to close the demonstration school after almost sixty years of operation; however, parents, alumni, students, and teachers of Peabody Demonstration School united to form a new school, University School of Nashville, on the same campus, with almost all of the original school's faculty and students; and

WHEREAS, University School of Nashville has continued Peabody Demonstration School's historic legacy for educational excellence, with its dedicated faculty and staff of 150 continuing to serve the school's approximately 1,000 students; and

WHEREAS, today, University School of Nashville boasts an intrepid faculty that continues to abide by the belief that attention to the individual student is key in education; and

WHEREAS, the administration, faculty, staff, and students of University School of Nashville have, over the past 100 years, cultivated an atmosphere of educational, athletic, and personal excellence that is second to none, and it is fitting that this body recognize this august institution on this occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor University School of Nashville on the occasion of its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, extending our best wishes for this fine institution's continued success in the future.

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