

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION recognizing the work of the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team and encouraging districts to incorporate student representation within school governance structures.

WHEREAS, the right to a quality education is fundamental to American citizenship and enumerated in Section 183 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, which directs the General Assembly to provide for "an efficient system of common schools throughout the State"; and

WHEREAS, over 650,000 students attend more than 1,230 schools in 173 school districts representing 120 counties and 53 independent districts; and

WHEREAS, these students are the primary stakeholders in these schools as their ability to be successful in college, career, and civic pursuits depends upon a high-quality education in elementary, middle, and high school; and

WHEREAS, students are not only future citizens of the Commonwealth, but current citizens as well; and

WHEREAS, a Kentucky student typically spends more than 30 hours per week in the classroom, resulting in unique insights into the effectiveness of the education experience; and

WHEREAS, many districts limit student engagement in formal school governance structures such as school-based councils and committees, school boards, school board committees, and superintendent screening committees, among others, which hinders the ability to provide "an efficient system of common schools" that is responsive to its chief constituents; and

WHEREAS, the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team, in concert with the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, an independent, nonpartisan citizens' advocacy organization, strives to elevate the voices of students in policy discussions pertaining to the improvement of educational outcomes and the positioning of students as partners in the work to advance Kentucky public schools; and

WHEREAS, the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team has demonstrated that informed students have the capacity to enhance school governance and policymaking through their professional development presentations, commentaries published in Kentucky's newspapers, roundtable discussions with students from across the Commonwealth representing an array of geographic, ethnic, and academic backgrounds, and service on high-level education policy study workgroups;

NOW, THEREFORE,

***Be it resolved by the Senate of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, the House of Representatives concurring therein:***

➔Section 1. The General Assembly recognizes the work of the Prichard Committee Student Voice Team as significant evidence of the capability of Kentucky's youth to serve and learn in education policy leadership roles requiring greater capacities of thought and skill.

➔Section 2. The school boards and schools of every district in the Commonwealth are encouraged to incorporate and expand student representation among governance and administrative boards and committees so that student voices may be heard and perspectives gained, leading to more inclusive and comprehensive decisions and actions.

➔Section 3. The Clerk of the Senate is directed to send a copy of this Resolution to Mr. Stu Silberman, Executive Director of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence; and to Ms. Rachel Belin, Student Voice Team Director of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, Security Trust Building, 271 West Short Street, Suite 202, Lexington, Kentucky 40507.