

2013-J6126

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring Lawrence A. Clarke upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service in the field of education

WHEREAS, It is the practice of this Legislative Body to take note of and publicly acknowledge individuals of remarkable integrity and character whose endeavors have enhanced the quality of education in this great State; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Lawrence A. Clarke upon the occasion of his retirement after many years of distinguished service in the field of education; and

WHEREAS, Born on June 10, 1950, in Mt. Kisco, New York, to Margaret and Edward Clarke, Lawrence A. Clarke graduated from Rondout Valley High School, spending most of his childhood in and around Sullivan County; and

WHEREAS, He earned a Bachelor's degree in Education, with minors in English and Spanish, from SUNY Plattsburgh; he went on to complete his Master's degree in Educational Administration from SUNY Albany; and

WHEREAS, On August 28, 1976, Lawrence and Susan Clarke were married and together they had three children, Lauren, Jessica, and Lawrence; today they are the proud grandparents of four grandchildren, Calvin, Trey, Evan and Wyatt; and

WHEREAS, Described by his children as selfless, forward-thinking, fair, insightful, thoughtful, and dedicated, Lawrence A. Clarke has taught them the value of life through his actions, experiences and words; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence A. Clarke began his career in education teaching English at Schoharie Junior-Senior High School in 1973; he was instrumental in introducing a Spanish language program and coordinated an

Alternative Education Program aimed at putting failing students back on track to graduate with their peers; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Lawrence A. Clarke was named Assistant Principal, and two years later, he was promoted to Principal; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his illustrious career, Lawrence A. Clarke worked collaboratively with local colleges and businesses to expand educational opportunities for students; he initiated the Schoharie Distance Learning Program, established the Junior-Senior High School Pupil Services Team, and truly went above and beyond, supporting students' extracurricular activities such as sports, musicals, dances, concerts, plays, and science competitions; and

WHEREAS, With a genuine concern for his students, Lawrence A. Clarke worked with Social Services, the Mental Health Department and County Probation Officers to keep at risk students focused on their education regardless of what may be affecting their lives; and

WHEREAS, In addition, he was a pioneer in the school safety movement, inviting experts into the county for training purposes; he is the co-founder of the Countywide School Violence Prevention Team, Schoharie County Child Study Team and coordinated the Children's Services Initiative; and

WHEREAS, Admired by his colleagues for the steadfast dedication and commitment he gave to his students, particularly those most in need, Lawrence A. Clarke influenced the lives of countless individuals; and

WHEREAS, In 2003, Lawrence A. Clarke was named Superintendent of Liberty Central School; in this capacity, he continued to put the students first, often greeting them when they disembarked from their buses in the morning, regardless of the weather; and

WHEREAS, Lawrence A. Clarke recognized the importance of, and devoted himself to, mentoring district administrators, emphasizing safety, the value of teaching life skills in conjunction with academics, and the strong leadership skills required in order to work effectively with

students, teachers, parents and the greater community; and

WHEREAS, Upon his retirement from the esteemed position of Superintendent in 2006, Lawrence A. Clarke and his wife moved to Virginia, during which time he took a job as Assistant Principal of Charlottesville High School; and

WHEREAS, Within this larger school setting, replete with a performing arts center, more diverse population, and broader academic as well as extracurricular offerings, Lawrence A. Clarke quickly went to work in his signature style, walking the hallways, shaking hands, getting to know every student, teacher, aide and visitor in his building; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, visitors were quick to note that shortly after Lawrence A. Clarke arrived at Charlottesville High School, a tone of unflinching gentleness yet firm expectation pervaded both classrooms and corridors, creating an atmosphere of security, encouragement and unlimited potential of success for all; and

WHEREAS, As with his leadership at other schools, Lawrence A. Clarke's academic intervention and good counsel rescued many students from scholastic failure, at-risk behavior and economic insecurity, guiding them instead toward graduation, higher education, gainful employment and social success; and

WHEREAS, After more than four decades of service in the field of education, Lawrence A. Clarke will officially retire on Monday, June 30, 2014, to spend time with his cherished wife, Susan, his children, and his grandchildren, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, In completing his service as an educator, Lawrence A. Clarke leaves behind more than mere bricks and mortar; he leaves behind a legacy to the residents of the communities he so ably served and to future generations of their students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Lawrence A. Clarke upon the occasion of his retirement, and wish him well in all his future endeavors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Lawrence A. Clarke.