

## 2015-J6212

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the 853 Schools

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those institutions of true purpose and compassionate commitment whose exemplary programs and accomplishment clearly demonstrate an enduring pursuit of excellence in the education of the youth of the Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and fully in accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the 853 Schools; and

WHEREAS, Created by Chapter 853 of the New York State Laws of 1976, 853 schools are operated by private agencies and provide day and/or residential programs for students with disabilities; a Committee on Special Education (CSE) may recommend a placement of a student with a disability in an approved private school when it determines that the student cannot be appropriately educated in the home school district, a neighboring district or in the programs of a board of cooperative educational services (BOCES) program; and

WHEREAS, Some students are placed in an 853 School under Article 81 of New York State Education Law by family court, local social services districts, the Office of Children and Family Services or the Office of Mental Health; and

WHEREAS, Students at 853 Schools may have emotional and educational challenges, and some have been victims of abuse or neglect; for others, the education serves as a vehicle to rehabilitate out of the juvenile justice system; the vast majority of the students have special educational needs addressed through individualized education programs (IEP); and

WHEREAS, In 1991, the New York State Coalition of 853 Schools was formed with approximately 20 schools; this Coalition was formed to partner with New York Education Department to identify ways to best serve students; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Coalition of 853 Schools focuses on finding solutions for various challenges, such as improving facilities for students and teachers, addressing health and safety concerns, improving programs and supporting teachers and clinical staff; and

WHEREAS, For the last 25 years, the membership of the Coalition has more than doubled; currently, 43 schools are diligently working to support students and enhance their lives; and

WHEREAS, Today, the New York State Coalition of 853 Schools strongly believes in continually integrating standards, increasing awareness of the capacity of our students to succeed; together with the partnership and collaboration with state agencies and the New York State Legislature, the Coalition strives to bring together concerned and interested parties to work towards improving outcomes for students; and

WHEREAS, The success enjoyed by the 853 Schools is in direct correlation to the efforts of the 26,500 dedicated staff members and administrators who work tirelessly to ensure that over 10,200 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families have the support they need to live an ordinary American life; and

WHEREAS, The 853 Schools are proudly aware of its distinguished past, eager to fulfill its present commitment to parents, students and the community, and planning with vision and purpose for the ebb and swell of growth and change it will encounter in the years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the 853 Schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Coalition of 853 Schools.