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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 209

Offered March 7, 2022

Commending Belle View Elementary School.

Patrons—Surovell and Ebbin

WHEREAS, in 2022, Belle View Elementary School in Alexandria will proudly celebrate 70 years of providing a quality education to its students; and

WHEREAS, Belle View Elementary School history extends back to shortly after World War II, when then rural Fairfax County experienced a population boom that resulted in approximately one-third of the student population being taught in temporary facilities such as churches, fire departments, and apartment buildings; and

WHEREAS, Fairfax County embarked on an ambitious construction agenda to meet the unprecedented need, building 21 elementary schools between 1951 and 1957; and

WHEREAS, in November 1952, Belle View Elementary School, designed by architect Robert Willgoos, opened its doors with Principal Harry Burks and 16 teachers welcoming 618 students in grades one through seven; and

WHEREAS, during the 1960s, Belle View Elementary School underwent many changes as Fairfax County schools were integrated, while the Space Race and developments in Southeast Asia led to the increased use of technology and an emphasis on learning about different cultures; and

WHEREAS, schools across the nation also began to implement kindergarten classes in response to the federal Head Start initiative; Belle View Elementary School had its first class of kindergartners in 1968; and

WHEREAS, by the 1980s, the student population of Belle View Elementary School had become more diverse as the greater metropolitan Washington, D.C., area began to experience an increase in immigration; and

WHEREAS, a leader in environmental education, Belle View Elementary School provides its young students with the opportunity to view firsthand lifecycles and organisms in their natural habitats with a rain garden, vegetable garden, and flower garden that attract birds, butterflies, and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, Belle View Elementary School became the only school in Fairfax County to have a naturally occurring wetlands on school property; the wetlands include a marsh and meadow area and a walkway for students to traverse the area; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2018, Belle View Elementary School embarked on a whole school renovation to include a new library, fine arts wing, main office, and additional classrooms equipped with the latest technology to better meet the growing needs of students; and

WHEREAS, Belle View Elementary School, the parent-teacher association, and the entire school community continue to work in partnership to benefit student success and achievement both in the classroom, on the school grounds, and through diverse after-school programs; and

WHEREAS, while the school mascot has changed from Beagles to Bobcats and student fashions have changed, Belle View Elementary School has remained committed to providing an academically challenging and positive learning environment in which all students can thrive; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Belle View Elementary School on the occasion of its 70th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Thomas Kuntz, principal of Belle View Elementary School, as an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for the school's commitment to the young people of Fairfax County and best wishes for a joyful 70th anniversary celebration.

INTRODUCED

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