

2016 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 115

BY SENATOR LONG

COMMENDATIONS. Commends Dr. Patrick Widhalm as he concludes his dedicated service to the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To commend Patrick Widhalm, Ph.D. as he concludes his dedicated service to the Louisiana  
3 School for Math, Science, and the Arts.

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm has served the Louisiana School, as the school is known,  
5 as executive director for the past fifteen years, serving as the school's sixth executive  
6 director; and

7 WHEREAS, the Louisiana School was established by the state legislature in 1982  
8 and is located on the campus of Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, this state-supported residential high school with competitive admissions  
11 was established to serve Louisiana's high-achieving, highly-motivated students in grades ten  
12 through twelve; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm began his leadership at the Louisiana School in 2001,  
14 having held administrative positions at similar schools; and

15 WHEREAS, Patrick Widhalm grew up in Nebraska and he credits public school  
16 music programs for inspiring him to a rewarding education and career in music and bringing  
17 music to children in public schools; and

18 WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm earned his doctor of music degree in piano performance

1 from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and holds degrees and certificates from the  
2 University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, the Ravel Academie in France and the  
3 Hochschule fur Musik in Vienna, Austria; and

4 WHEREAS, prior to accepting the position as executive director of the Louisiana  
5 School, Dr. Widhalm served in an administrative capacity at the Conservatory for Music at  
6 Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, and before that as the founding dean of Arts and  
7 Academics at the South Carolina Governor's School for Arts and Humanities in Greenville,  
8 South Carolina; and

9 WHEREAS, while leading the Louisiana School, Dr. Widhalm served six years as  
10 vice chair for education on the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts board of directors and as  
11 the liaison for Louisiana's affiliation with the Kennedy Center Arts Education Network; and

12 WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm led the Louisiana team selected to participate in the 2008  
13 Education Leaders Institute, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2009, Dr. Widhalm received the Louisiana Culture Award for  
15 "Education Innovator", he has participated in Leadership Louisiana and was recently  
16 appointed by the governor to the state's arts council; and

17 WHEREAS, throughout his tenure, Dr. Widhalm has guided the faculty, staff,  
18 students and alumni to establish the Louisiana School's reputation as one of the best high  
19 schools in the country; and

20 WHEREAS, the Louisiana School was recently ranked as the ninth best public school  
21 in the nation and as the best high school in Louisiana by *Niche's* "2016 Best Public High  
22 Schools in America", both achievements of which Dr. Widhalm can be very proud; and

23 WHEREAS, upon his departure from the Louisiana School, Dr. Widhalm has  
24 accepted a position as the new head of school at Benjamin Franklin High School in New  
25 Orleans, another high-achieving school in Louisiana; and

26 WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm frequently quotes Peter Drucker when addressing students  
27 about achievement stating, "the best way to predict your future is to create it", an axiom that  
28 would appear to hold true for Dr. Widhalm's own career; and

29 WHEREAS, on a personal note, Dr. Widhalm and his wife Betsy have raised two  
30 daughters, Katie and Mary Beth; and

