

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 115

BY SENATORS LONG AND WALSWORTH

A RESOLUTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Dr. Widhalm earned his doctor of music degree in piano performance from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and holds degrees and certificates from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, the Ravel Academie in France and the Hochschule fur Musik in Vienna, Austria; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, having led the state's premier residential high school concentrating on math, science and the arts, Dr. Patrick Widhalm now redirects his career to face the challenge of maintaining and improving the state's best nonresidential high school, while leading students to prepare for academic and personal success throughout college and their adult lives; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Patrick Widhalm has served the citizens of Louisiana through his tenure at the Louisiana School and through his tireless efforts in support of arts education in Louisiana's public schools and his overall support of the arts.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Patrick Widhalm, Ph.D. as his dedicated service to the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts comes to a conclusion.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Dr. Patrick Widhalm.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE