

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 1829

A Resolution commending Shirley Johannsen for her extraordinary service and rare accomplishment of teaching for 50 years at State Street Elementary School in Topeka.

WHEREAS, Shirley Johannsen graduated from high school in Little River, Kansas, and attended college at Emporia State University. She started her teaching career at State Street Elementary School in the Oakland neighborhood of Topeka 50 years ago, in the fall of 1964; and

WHEREAS, Shirley Johannsen has taught multiple generations of students at State Street, and if one assumes an average class size of 20 students for the past 50 years, she has affected the lives of at least 1,000 children. Principal Sarah Sharp has said Ms. Johannsen often requests that students who are struggling be placed in her class, where she helps them improve their academic performance; and

WHEREAS, During her years in Topeka Public Schools USD 501, "Ms. J," as the students, parents and staff call her, has supported an array of extracurricular activities, from sports and theater to other arts activities, that made a difference for students; and

WHEREAS, Ms. J also has put in countless hours painting and restoring sections of the school, spending a recent summer repainting the auditorium's art-deco-style seating by hand, taking care to match the original colors; and

WHEREAS, Ms. J has been given opportunities over the years to teach in other school districts but has always enjoyed teaching at State Street, where she has said the children, parents and patrons of the Oakland neighborhood have inspired her to stay for 50 years; and

WHEREAS, Hundreds of students, parents, teachers and staff gathered at the school on November 20, 2013, to honor Ms. J on her 50 years of service and surprise her by unveiling a plaque with the school auditorium's new name, the Shirley Johannsen Auditorium; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Julie Ford, superintendent of Topeka USD 501, congratulated Ms. J on her length of service at the same school and presented her with congratulatory letters from President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, and others; and the students presented her with a letter from University of Kansas basketball coach Bill Self, knowing that Ms. J is a devoted fan of KU basketball; and

WHEREAS, It was recently announced that Shirley Johannsen will be inducted into the 2014 class of The Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame, located in Dodge City; Now, therefore,

*Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas:* That we commend Shirley Johannsen for her extraordinary service and rare accomplishment of teaching for 50 years at State Street Elementary School, and we congratulate her on the naming of the school's auditorium, the Shirley Johannsen Auditorium; and

*Be it further resolved:* That the Secretary of the Senate shall provide five enrolled copies of this resolution to Senator Anthony Hensley.

Senate Resolution No. 1829 was sponsored by Senators Hensley, Kelly and V. Schmidt.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the SENATE, and was adopted by that body

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*President of the Senate.*

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*Secretary of the Senate.*