

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 265

BY REPRESENTATIVES GLOVER, BAGLEY, JEFFERSON, JENKINS, PHELPS,
PRESSLY, AND SEABAUGH

A RESOLUTION

To commend Ascension Smith, founding principal of Caddo Parish Magnet High School,
on her accomplishments.

WHEREAS, it is most fitting to recognize Ascension Smith, founding principal of Caddo Parish Magnet High School, and to commend her for maintaining the school's academic excellence for more than four decades; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 1979, the Caddo Parish School Board approved the plans for the creation of a parish-wide magnet school whose curriculum would revolve around academics and the arts; in November of that year, Ms. Smith was chosen to spearhead the development of the school; and

WHEREAS, as a native of Spain with wide exposure to many different cultures, she possessed a great appreciation for the transformative power of education which she combined with the American zeal for democracy and competition during her tenure as principal; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith used brochures and slide presentations to recruit prospective students from all Caddo Parish public, private, and parochial middle and high schools; she also employed her seemingly inexhaustible supply of energy and enthusiasm to go door-to-door in neighborhoods around the parish to introduce herself, describe the school, and establish a rapport with the community; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith personally selected her thirty-two member teaching staff from over four hundred applicants and chose an additional seven part-time professionals from the community to teach courses such as gymnastics, ballet, drama, and architecture; the school's second principal, Mary Rounds, was a member of the original faculty; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith accepted six hundred ninth and tenth grade students out of the nine hundred student applicants to attend Caddo Parish Magnet High School and personally welcomed each of them on the day of the school's opening in August 1980; each school year saw a new freshman class added, and within two years, Caddo Parish Magnet High School offered a full four-year program; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith's incredible dedication and hard work resulted in Caddo Parish Magnet High School becoming fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1983; the school maintains its four-year program status, and its enrollment fluctuates between one thousand and one thousand two hundred fifty students; the school consistently ranks among the top high schools in Louisiana, and *U.S. News & World Report* ranked it as the seventh-best high school in Louisiana for the 2021-2022 school year; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Ascension Smith is a truly incredible leader, and she is most deserving of the highest recognition for overseeing the creation and growth of Caddo Parish Magnet High School and building a secured foundation for the school's continued success.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Ascension Smith, founding principal of Caddo Parish Magnet High School, on her accomplishments and does hereby extend sincerest wishes that she continue to enjoy good health and prosperity in her retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Ascension Smith.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES