

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 21

BY REPRESENTATIVE LEBAS

A RESOLUTION

To commend Joseph Sonnier, principal of Port Barre Elementary School, for his extraordinary achievements and contributions.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to commend Joseph Sonnier, who was appointed principal of Port Barre Elementary School in November of 2013 after more than thirty years of service at the school and to recognize his outstanding accomplishments and contributions to his students, school, and community; and

WHEREAS, a native of Leonville, Louisiana, Joseph Sonnier attended Southern University for two semesters, studying electrical engineering, before he began his career at Port Barre Elementary School as a custodian in 1981; and

WHEREAS, nineteen years later, while still working in this position, Mr. Sonnier returned to college part time, studying education at Louisiana State University at Eunice, where he earned an associate degree in 2006; and

WHEREAS, two years later, Mr. Sonnier, while balancing his continuing studies and his custodial duties as Port Barre's beloved "Mr. Gabe", earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL); and

WHEREAS, after his graduation from ULL, Mr. Sonnier transitioned from his longtime custodial position to the classroom, where he taught third grade math, science, and social studies until 2011, when he became an all-around fourth grade teacher; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sonnier pursued graduate studies while teaching and received a master's degree in educational leadership from Arkansas State University in 2012; and

WHEREAS, in November of 2013, more than thirty years after joining the school family as a custodian, Joseph Sonnier was appointed principal of Port Barre Elementary School, and today he leads the school with great effectiveness and distinction; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the different hats he has worn at school, Mr. Sonnier has long been an active and vital member of his community, directing baseball and softball for Opelousas Parks and Recreation, officiating high school and college basketball, and coaching high school baseball and softball, and he and his wife, Felicia, are the proud parents of two sons, Sean and Maurice Sonnier; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Sonnier has earned the utmost admiration and respect of his fellow educators, who hold him in the highest regard for his steadfast commitment to excellence and for his unique ability to motivate students to succeed by setting a shining example of all that is possible through determination and hard work; and

WHEREAS, Joseph Sonnier merits a special measure of commendation for the noble and exemplary strides he has taken in the molding of young minds and for the tremendous joy and pride that he brings to his family and friends, to his students and colleagues at Port Barre Elementary School, to St. Landry Parish, and to the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend Joseph Sonnier; does hereby recognize and record for posterity his extraordinary achievements in education and his singular contributions to Port Barre Elementary School over more than three decades of dedicated service, first as a custodian, then as a teacher, and finally as principal; and does hereby extend to him best wishes for continued success and happiness in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Joseph Sonnier.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES