**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF MIDDLE‑LEVEL EDUCATION, TO HONOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THOSE WHO EDUCATE THIS UNIQUE AGE GROUP, AND TO DECLARE MARCH 2014 “MIDDLE‑LEVEL EDUCATION MONTH” IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, schools that educate middle‑grade students play a critical function in the nation’s educational system: They are responsible for educating young adolescents between the ages of ten and fifteen (grades five through nine), a time of rapid, dramatic changes in physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development; and

Whereas, each day, nearly twenty‑four million adolescents come to school in need of challenging, engaging instruction with knowledgeable teachers and administrators prepared to provide them with safe, challenging, and supportive learning environments. They also need organizational structures that banish anonymity and promote personalization, collaboration, and social equity. Both research and practice have proven all of these helpful to middle‑grade students’ achievement; and

Whereas, the habits and values established during early adolescence have a critical, lifelong influence that directly impacts the future health and welfare of our nation; and

Whereas, research has found that the academic achievement of eighth‑grade students is crucial, and has an impact on their readiness for college by the end of high school greater than anything that happens academically in high school; and

Whereas, in order to improve graduation rates and prepare students as lifelong learners ready for college, career, and citizenship, a deeper public understanding of the distinctive mission of the middle level is necessary. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, recognize the importance of middle‑level education, honor the contributions of those who educate this unique age group, and declare March 2014 “Middle‑level Education Month” in South Carolina.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑