State Board of Education Ceremonial Resolution
Honoring Garfield Elementary School as a Special Olympics Unified Sports Banner School
CR22-25

WHEREAS, the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program is aimed at promoting social inclusion through intentionally planned and implemented activities affecting systems-wide change;

WHEREAS, the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program is designed to be woven into the fabric of participating schools, enhancing ongoing efforts and providing rich opportunities that lead to meaningful change in creating a socially inclusive school environment that supports and engages all learners;

WHEREAS, a Unified Champion School receiving National Banner recognition is one that has demonstrated commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 national standards of excellence—each developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community;

WHEREAS, the primary activities within these 10 national standards of excellence include: Special Olympics Unified Sports (where students with and without disabilities train and compete as teammates), Inclusive Youth Leadership and Whole-School Engagement;

WHEREAS, schools receiving Unified Champion School National Banner recognition should also be able to demonstrate they are self-sustainable or have a plan in place to sustain inclusive activities into the future;

WHEREAS, Garfield Elementary School, led by Principal Kennard Branch, was named one of ESPN's Top 5 Banner Schools and was honored on May 13, 2022 with a Special Olympics National Unified Champion Banner for 2020-2024;

WHEREAS, Garfield Elementary School met all ten national standards of excellence set by the Special Olympics for their work during the pandemic to meet the needs of the entire student body and especially those with intellectual disabilities;

WHEREAS, the D.C. State Board of Education also recognizes that during the pandemic, Garfield Elementary School held several virtual and fully inclusive, whole-school events including a Read Across America Day, a Women's History Month Assembly, an Autism Acceptance event, among others; and

WHEREAS, support for special education programs and resources is critical to ensure that all our students are provided with the best opportunities for success both in and out of the classroom—including opportunities and commitments valued by the Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the D.C. State Board of Education honors and celebrates Garfield Elementary School for this year's—and previous year's—awards as a Special Olympics Unified Sports Banner School.

Date Adopted: June 15, 2022 Signed: _____

Jessica Sutter, President