

FEB 26 2003

Laid Over Under Rule 25

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 22

BY FORD

A Resolution urging the State Board of Education, education professionals throughout Iowa, and Iowa's community leaders to actively and prominently make every effort to close Iowa's achievement gap.

WHEREAS, a suitable education nourishes the soul, builds character, eliminates class barriers, and pays rewards beyond an individual's lifetime; and

WHEREAS, Iowa's exemplary education system, though still consistently ranking among the nation's best, is not meeting the needs of all of the state's children uniformly; and

WHEREAS, a UNICEF report analyzing the educational performance in the world's industrialized nations noted that family backgrounds and the home environment play crucial roles in children's education; and

WHEREAS, research in this country has identified a number of other factors contributing to the achievement gap, including students' racial or economic background, access to high-quality preschool instruction, peer influences, teachers' expectations, and curricular and instructional quality; and

WHEREAS, research also indicates poor and minority children, the very children who need the most support, are often served by schools that receive fewer resources, have difficulty attracting a quality teaching and administrative staff, have a greater variety of student needs to fill, and receive less parental and community support; and

HR 22

1 WHEREAS, in 2001, the Education Trust reported that
2 Iowa districts with the highest child poverty rates
3 have \$456 less in state and local moneys to spend per
4 student compared with the lowest-poverty districts;
5 and that Iowa districts with the highest minority
6 enrollments have \$596 less in state and local moneys
7 to spend per student compared with the lowest-minority
8 districts; and

9 WHEREAS, scientifically based research indicates
10 the achievement gap can be closed through the
11 utilization of any number of measures, including
12 implementing parent education programs; high-quality
13 preschool programs; promoting the expectation from
14 parents and educational professionals that all
15 students can succeed and demanding that they do so;
16 using challenging curricula and instructional
17 strategies that engage students' interests; recruiting
18 and retaining well-qualified, fully supported
19 teachers; and maintaining a culture where learning and
20 achievement are valued and modeled; and

21 WHEREAS, Iowa's population is changing, with more
22 challenges and changes to come, making this the best,
23 most appropriate time to close the achievement gap,
24 thereby energizing and strengthening the state's
25 future; NOW THEREFORE,

26 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
27 That the House of Representatives urges the State
28 Board of Education, education professionals throughout
29 Iowa, and Iowa's community leaders to actively and
30 prominently make every effort to close Iowa's

1 achievement gap; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That upon adoption, a copy
3 of this resolution be sent to the State Board of
4 Education to be distributed electronically to
5 education professionals and community leaders
6 throughout the state.

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