

By: Griggs

H.C.R. No. 73

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, Bombarded with media images and messages that seem  
2 to glorify irresponsible and destructive behavior and that elevate  
3 figures in the sports and entertainment industries to celebrity  
4 status irrespective of their personal behavior, a growing number of  
5 Americans are becoming increasingly troubled about the state of the  
6 union and the character of America's youth; and

7           WHEREAS, Concerns about children in today's society are  
8 compounded by highly publicized accounts of violence in our  
9 schools, high levels of drug use and promiscuity, and the  
10 increasing inability of many young people to fulfill their  
11 responsibilities as students; and

12           WHEREAS, Although these behaviors and the self-destructive  
13 attitudes that engender them frequently manifest themselves in the  
14 classroom and create problems for teachers, school administrators,  
15 and other students, they also are awakening a conviction within the  
16 education community and among parents, policy makers, and other  
17 concerned citizens that our public schools have an important role  
18 to play, along with family, religion, and the larger community, in  
19 helping children develop good consciences and ethical behavior; and

20           WHEREAS, While the primary responsibility for instilling  
21 character in our nation's youth rests with each child's parents, our  
22 schools can play a pivotal role in reinforcing the values being  
23 taught in the home through a curriculum that treats the development  
24 of personal character traits as a matter equally as important as

1 academic achievement; and

2 WHEREAS, The public school system's role as a force in  
3 society to promulgate the fundamental values and beliefs on which  
4 this nation was founded becomes more important at a time when  
5 changes in family structures and the pressures of the modern age  
6 leave many parents, whether busy with work or absent altogether,  
7 unable to impart those values and beliefs that once were vital  
8 components of family life; and

9 WHEREAS, Numerous school districts, both within the state and  
10 across the nation, have either implemented character education  
11 programs or successfully incorporated a virtues program into their  
12 daily curricula for students in kindergarten through 12th grade;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Often developed as a joint project involving  
15 faith-based communities, parent-teacher organizations, public  
16 school administrators and teachers, the local business community,  
17 students, and elected school officials, virtues education programs  
18 focus the attention of schoolchildren on those character traits of  
19 prominent past and present individuals that display the virtues  
20 society most highly prizes; and

21 WHEREAS, By stressing the fundamental importance of values  
22 that all can agree are worth emulating, virtues education programs  
23 can help solve problems such as student violence, teenage  
24 pregnancies, and substance abuse; help raise levels of academic  
25 performance; and restore hope in the future of society; and

26 WHEREAS, Some examples of virtues that many individuals  
27 consider appropriate include attentiveness, availability,

1 citizenship, compassion, confidence, contentment, courage,  
2 dependability, diligence, discretion, efficiency, encouragement,  
3 enthusiasm, fairness, faith, forgiveness, friendliness,  
4 generosity, gentleness, gratitude, honesty, humility, initiative,  
5 joy, kindness, obedience, optimism, patience, peace, perseverance,  
6 purity, respect, responsibility, reverence, self-control,  
7 thoughtfulness, and wisdom; now, therefore, be it

8         RESOLVED, That the 78th Legislature of the State of Texas  
9 hereby direct the Texas Education Agency and the State Board of  
10 Education to adopt and promote a virtues education program and to  
11 provide school districts with materials and support to assist in  
12 the program's implementation; and, be it further

13         RESOLVED, That the virtues education program include  
14 age-appropriate curricula and educational material and be  
15 structured to provide instruction beginning in kindergarten and  
16 continuing through 12th grade; and, be it further

17         RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official  
18 copies of this resolution to the commissioner of education and to  
19 the chair of the State Board of Education.