



Tupelo High School

Date: April 12, 2016

To: Dr. Gearl Loden

From: Mr. Jason Harris 

Re: Tupelo High School Balfour Award

The Balfour Award is given to a student whose achievements in the classroom and beyond have identified him or her as exceptionally accomplished, well-rounded, and notable in many fields of endeavor. The award identifies a particularly outstanding member of the graduating class whose scholarship, loyalty, and service have been exemplary.

This year, on January 27th, Tupelo lost Jack Raymond Reed, Sr. As Tupelo's pre-eminent civic leader, Mr. Reed was instrumental in the growth of our city's economy, employment opportunities, public education system, racial reconciliation and cultural community. As stated by former Mississippi Gov. William Winter, "He was a leader in every way his whole lifetime. He was right and generous and fair in his personal, private and public views. He did nothing that was detrimental to our state or the principles for which he stood."

As a proud Tupelo High School alumnus, Mr. Reed worked tirelessly to advocate for public schools. His four children all graduated from Tupelo High school and there are Reed grandchildren walking the halls of his alma mater even now. The Reed family name is synonymous with the belief that strong public schools equal a stronger community. Influenced by Jack, Sr. and his dedication to public education, many Reed family members remain involved in our school district to this day.

It is for all of these reasons that we would like to recognize Mr. Reed's impact on our community and honor his legacy by designating the Balfour Award as the Jack Raymond Reed, Sr. Balfour Award. If approved, we would notify the Reed family and ask that they attend graduation for the inaugural presentation of the award. We would ask that they join us on stage to shake the hand of the recipient. In doing so, this would only change the Balfour Award introduction and not lengthen the commencement ceremony.

I greatly appreciate your consideration to allow Tupelo High School to recognize Mr. Reed and his family.