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TO: Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Karla Guseman
Superintendent

SUBJECT: Honorary Street Dedication – Michael Austin Clark

DATE: January 20, 2026

The Clark Family has been working in partnership with the City of Joliet to dedicate an honorary street in the name of **Michael Austin Clark**, a lifelong servant leader and champion for the Joliet community. The proposed honorary designation is for **Glenwood Avenue, between Larkin Avenue and Hames Avenue**. The city of Joliet, Planning Division is asking that I obtain JTHS District 204's acknowledgement and / or consent for the proposal.

Michael Austin Clark's impact on the City of Joliet is both profound and far-reaching. He served the community in many distinguished capacities, including as **President of the Joliet NAACP** and **President of the African American Business Association**. While these leadership roles were significant, one of Michael's proudest accomplishments was graduating from **Joliet West High School in 1999**. As a dedicated alumnus, he consistently gave back to Joliet Township High School District in meaningful and intentional ways.

Michael served on **strategic planning committees**, participated in **action plan teams**, partnered with JTHS on the **MLK Day of Service**, and mentored student-athletes. He was widely known for his ability to **strategically build bridges between the school district and the broader community**, ensuring collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility for student success. Michael deeply believed in **equitable educational practices** and advocated tirelessly for all students and families.

Naming **Glenwood Avenue**, the street on which his alma mater sits, in honor of Michael Austin Clark is more than befitting. This honorary designation symbolizes the enduring connection between Michael, Joliet West High School, and the Joliet community he loved and served. It will serve as a daily reminder to students, staff, and community members that **service, leadership, and education matter**.

It is important to note that this honorary street designation **will not change the official address of the street or the school**. Rather, it is a symbolic recognition of a legacy rooted in service, education, and community empowerment.

Thank you for your time and consideration as we work together to honor the life, legacy, and lasting impact of Michael Austin Clark.

The mission of Joliet Township High School, a historically rich, unified and innovative learning community, is to empower every student to compete and contribute positively to our community and global society by providing a rigorous and personalized education through an academy environment.

Joliet Township High School District 204 is committed to cultivating an inclusive community that values and embraces diversity and respects the humanity of all people.

Joliet Township High School ensures equal educational opportunities are offered to students, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability, veteran's status, or marital status.