



PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION FOR MICHELLE HARTON

Whereas Michelle Harton was elected by the citizens of Oak Park to serve on the District 97 Board of Education on April 1, 2003; and

Whereas Michelle Harton faithfully served as vice president and president of the board, and provided leadership that resulted in the successful creation, adoption and implementation of the district's current five-year strategic plan, the implementation of the district's full-day kindergarten program, the development of protocols, including the creation of the board agenda calendar and use of the online board packet, that enabled the board to work more efficiently and effectively, and the establishment of several standing board committees, including the Policy Committee, the Facilities Advisory Committee and the Finance Oversight and Review Committee; and

Whereas Michelle Harton significantly contributed to the district's history of sound fiscal management and charted the path for the successful passage of a referendum in April of this year by overseeing spending reductions of more than \$4 million, and overseeing a comprehensive operational review that led to the overhaul of finance and personnel policies and procedures, and negotiating intergovernmental agreements with the Village of Oak Park that generated revenue of more than \$6.3 million; and

Whereas Michelle Harton provided important insights and nuanced understandings of the experience minority students and their families have in our schools and our community, exhibited a profound commitment to the academic achievement of every child, and spoke eloquently and convincingly about the need to change the board's focus from remedying deficits or gaps in student achievement to ensuring that all children achieved their full potential; and

Whereas Michelle Harton played a pivotal role in recruiting and hiring exemplary administrators who have upheld the academic excellence that is the hallmark of the district's schools; and

Whereas Michelle Harton responded to all concerns brought to her attention by constituents, served as the board liaison to the Oak Park River Forest High School Citizens' Council, PING! - Providing Instruments for the Next Generation, and the Oak Park Education Foundation, worked closely with other government entities, community organizations and residents to improve communication with the district and advocated for the establishment of an Ombudsman office to assist parents in navigating the District; and

Whereas Michelle Harton represented the board in the Minority Student Achievement Network, participated on the Middle School Review Committee in 2003-2004, oversaw the Middle School Study conducted from 2006 to 2008, and successfully negotiated beneficial and fair collective bargaining agreements with the district's various employee groups; and

Whereas Michelle Harton demonstrated her dedication to board service by attending conferences hosted by the Illinois Association of School Boards and additional workshops that resulted in her earning the designation of Master Board Member;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the District 97 Board of Education that it affirms the aforementioned accomplishments of Michelle Harton; and

Be It Further Resolved that the District 97 Board of Education expresses its appreciation and gratitude to Michelle Harton on behalf of the District 97 community for her exemplary leadership during her eight years as a member of the board.

Proclaimed on this 26th day of April, 2011.