



HR0901

LRB104 21876 ECR 37710 r

1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to congratulate Principal Dr. Shaka Rawls
4 of Leo Catholic High School, located in the Auburn Gresham
5 neighborhood of Chicago, on being named a 2026 recipient of
6 the prestigious Golden Apple Award for Excellence in
7 Leadership; and

8 WHEREAS, The Golden Apple Award for Excellence in
9 Leadership is presented annually to school leaders who have
10 demonstrated exemplary performance and a sustained,
11 significant positive impact on their school community,
12 resulting in dramatic student growth; and

13 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls, a 1993 graduate of Leo Catholic High
14 School, returned to his alma mater as principal in 2016 at a
15 time when the school was on the brink of closure due to low
16 enrollment; and

17 WHEREAS, Under Dr. Rawls' transformative leadership, Leo
18 Catholic High School has doubled its enrollment and achieved
19 extraordinary academic success, including a consistent 100%
20 college acceptance rate for seniors; and

21 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls has overseen a 20-percentage point

1 increase in on-track-to-graduate rate for ninth graders and a
2 graduation rate exceeding 90%; and

3 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls has extended his commitment to students
4 beyond academics, serving as a personal mentor, sitting with
5 students at lunch, and creating a learning environment where
6 young Black and Brown men feel loved and seen for their
7 humanity; and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls has established a dual credit
9 partnership with the University of Illinois Chicago, providing
10 students access to higher education opportunities while they
11 are still in high school; and

12 WHEREAS, Under Dr. Rawls's guidance, the students of Leo
13 Catholic High School have contributed over 7,500 hours of
14 community service in just two years, embodying the school
15 motto of "facta non verba", meaning "deeds, not words"; and

16 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls has been selected as a 2026 recipient
17 of the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Leadership from
18 nearly 100 nominees across the State of Illinois, having
19 demonstrated remarkable perseverance after first being
20 nominated for the award in 2022; and

21 WHEREAS, As the recipient of the Golden Apple Award for

1 Excellence in Leadership, Dr. Rawls will receive a \$10,000
2 award, a portion of which he has already generously committed
3 to donate to Leo Catholic High School, and a sabbatical to take
4 courses at Northwestern University; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. Rawls will now serve as a Fellow of the Golden
6 Apple Academy of Educators, where he will help mentor the next
7 generation of teachers through the Golden Apple Scholars and
8 Accelerators programs; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
10 HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
11 we congratulate Principal Dr. Shaka Rawls of Leo Catholic High
12 School on receiving the 2026 Golden Apple Award for Excellence
13 in Leadership, and we thank him for his tireless dedication to
14 the students of Leo Catholic High School and the community of
15 Auburn Gresham in Chicago; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
17 presented to Dr. Rawls as a symbol of our esteem and respect.