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C21-333

--In School Committee--
10/05/2021

Ordered:

Whereas Donald Burroughs had a profound, wonderful impact on the lives of Cambridge Public School students and staff; and
Whereas we remember Donald Burroughs' life and work to honor him as well as to continue to inspire those who learn more about him; and
Whereas Donald Burroughs was born on January 29, 1952 to Margaret and Bishop William H. Burroughs, Jr. and was the third of eight children; and
Whereas Donald grew up in Greater Boston, attended the Boston Public Schools, and then graduated from The Huntington Preparatory School in 1969; and
Whereas Donald's career as an educator began when he was in junior high school and taught Sunday School as well as worked with the youth choir in his father's ministry at Congregation Ecclesia; and
Whereas Donald pursued his post-secondary education at Boston College School of Education and participated in the Boston College Chorale as well as the BC Eagles Cheerleading Team; and
Whereas Donald sang with the Helen Hollins Singers during his senior year at BC and, after graduation, performed at weekend singing engagements; and
Whereas as a young professional, Donald tutored students in the METCO program and completed the Executive Training Program at Jordan Marsh, including earning an associate degree in merchandising in 1974; and
Whereas Donald worked as an assistant buyer and sales manager until 1976; and
Whereas Donald then engaged in a process of self-reflection and personal realization that led him to re-embrace his teacher self - the person in whom the intellectual, the spiritual, and the communal were authentically integrated because of his own formative experiences of family, school, and church; and
Whereas Donald embraced a formal teaching career at this point, teaching English language arts at Newton North High school during the school year and Brandeis Upward Bound during the summer from 1976-1980; and
Whereas from 1980-1983 Donald taught all subjects to first graders or English language arts to fourth- and fifth graders at the Modern School in Harlem, where his headmistress quickly recognized his musical and dramatic talents, both as a performer and teacher, and enlisted him to play a central role in the school's annual spring festival; and
Whereas the fall of 1983 marked the beginning of Donald's career as a Cambridge Public Schools educator, when he joined the staff of the Pilot School, the democratic alternative school within the district high school, and was part of its teaching and learning community until Cambridge Rindge and Latin School was reorganized in 2000; and

Whereas Donald also taught Cambridge students in the Harvard Upward Bound summer program during the first half of his Pilot School career; and
Whereas Donald trained in the national S.E.E.D. (Seeking Equity and Educational Diversity) Program and became a diversity consultant nationally and a facilitator for teacher-centered development at and beyond CRLS in the second half of his Pilot School career; and
Whereas Donald received a Conant Fellowship and earned a Master's Degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where he pursued a course of independent study focusing on girls' and women's development and Native American curriculum; and
Whereas Donald continued as a faculty member at CRLS after the reorganization of the school in 2000, retiring on January 29, 2010; and
Whereas the courses that Donald developed and taught for a number of years have been integral parts of the CRLS English Language Arts curriculum and have been taught by colleagues who were in professional and personal relationship to Donald while he taught at the high school; and
Whereas Donald remained a very active and cherished member of the National SEED faculty after he retired, as he continued to train educators during summer institutes and provide counsel to SEED leadership; and
Whereas the Cambridge Public Schools community expressed deep grief upon learning of Donald's passing; and
Whereas Donald's former students are grateful that he saw them as individuals, held an abiding belief in each, and inspired all to meet high standards with incisive intellectual challenge; and
Whereas Pilot alum have reflected that Donald changed their lives forever through his social and literary analysis, his African American Literature and Adolescents in Literature classes; and
Whereas colleagues of Donald will always think of him as caring, creative, and dedicated; and
Whereas the Cambridge community also will remember Donald for his style, grace, good humor and his performances in Pilot Plays; and
Whereas Donald's former students and colleagues will always be grateful for his teaching, mentorship and friendship as well as how he influenced the Cambridge Public Schools; now therefore be it
Resolved that the Cambridge Public Schools officially recognize the legacy of Donald Burroughs and thank him for his exemplary teaching as well as leadership; and be it further
Resolved that formal copies of this resolution will be sent to Donald's family.

A true copy:


Manikka L. Bowman
Vice Chair

c:
Member Rachel
Mayor Siddiqui, Member Wilson

Motion # 21-307