

Legislation Text

File #: 150828, **Version:** 0

Honoring and Recognizing Lisa Ciaranca Kaplan from Andrew Jackson Elementary School on being nationally recognized and awarded the 2015 Escalante-Gradillas Prize for Best in Education.

WHEREAS, Lisa Ciaranca Kaplan has worked nearly thirty years as an educator with deep classroom teaching experience and education development. She was named principal of the Andrew Jackson School a mere six years ago; and

WHEREAS, Winners of the Escalante-Gradillas prize exemplify the commitment to learning, discipline, character-building, and high expectations that characterized Garfield High School when Jaime Escalante taught there and Henry Gradillas was its principal, after whom the award is named. Mrs. Kaplan is cut from the cloth of Henry Gradillas and Jaime Escalante, a principal who is deeply skilled at education, but who are also energetic, inspired and inspiring leaders in their own right, skilled at delegating, effective at building partnerships and utterly absent of pride and ego; and

WHEREAS, Annually, \$10,000 is awarded to one outstanding teacher or school administrator, as well as a \$10,000 grant to the winner's school. In her selflessness and generosity, Mrs. Kaplan is donating her prize to Jackson School; and

WHEREAS, When she started Andrew Jackson Elementary had an enrollment of only 230 students, outdated textbooks and a very rough reputation where visits by the Philadelphia Police Department were on an almost daily basis; and

WHEREAS, With the assistance of a dedicated group parents, the "Friends of Jackson", Mrs. Kaplan first focused on sprucing up the physical building to make it a more inviting and nurturing place to educate young minds; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Kaplan was able to turn the tide and the reputation of Andrew Jackson to a place where neighborhood residents soon started to view Jackson as an asset to the neighborhood and a place where they desired to send their children; and

WHEREAS, Through sheer determination Mrs. Kaplan was able to partner with different organizations and universities to offer her students art and music programs even with the School District's ongoing financial problems and budget cuts; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Kaplan was awarded the 2014 Distinguished Principal Award from the Lindback Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Through Mrs. Kaplan's tireless efforts and the assistance of a group of dedicated and involved parents, Mrs. Kaplan was able to boost the enrollment at Andrew Jackson Elementary to over 500 students and make it a viable education option for neighborhood students; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby honor and recognize Lisa Ciaranca Kaplan on being nationally recognized and awarded the 2015 Escalante-Gradillas Prize for Best in Education.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Lisa Ciaranca Kaplan as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.