

Senate Resolution No. 1983

BY: Senator THOMAS

HONORING Dr. Kishore Kuncham upon the occasion of his retirement after 30 years of distinguished service to the Freeport School District

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body seeks to acknowledge those individuals whose professional lives and civic endeavors serve to enhance the stature of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor Dr. Kishore Kuncham upon the occasion of his retirement after 30 years of distinguished service to the Freeport School District on Tuesday, August 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, For the past 30 years, Dr. Kishore Kuncham rendered faithful, conscientious, and valuable service to Freeport School District; and

WHEREAS, In his role as superintendent for the past 15 years, Dr. Kishore Kuncham's leadership has centered on fostering a holistic learning environment that goes beyond academics, focusing on the social and emotional growth of every student as they prepare to become future leaders and competent global citizens; and

WHEREAS, As Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kishore Kuncham emphasized his whole child approach to learning while introducing innovative programs and services, including offering more than 30 Advanced Placement courses and more than 30 Dual-Enrollment College Credit courses, resulting in the highest graduation rates in several decades with alumni attending some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the country; and

WHEREAS, Students participating in the district's music and arts programs develop a life-long appreciation of the arts, with performing groups being regularly invited to share their musical talents at prestigious venues while also performing at local community events, allowing these students to gain valuable artistic experience and make meaningful connections with community stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, The Freeport School District's state-of-the-art science research programs, in collaboration with world-renowned institutions and prestigious universities such as Cornell University and Brookhaven National Laboratory, have flourished during Dr. Kishore Kuncham's tenure and have provided students with the unique opportunity to work alongside Nobel Prize laureates, NASA scientists, and astronauts; and

WHEREAS, Under the purview of Superintendent Dr. Kishore Kuncham, the district's athletic program has gained statewide recognition for producing championship teams whose student athletes serve as role models both on and off the field; and

WHEREAS, The Freeport School District experienced great financial stability under this superintendent's meaningful 15-year career; the district achieved and maintained one of the highest bond ratings, an accolade earned by only a select few school districts; Dr. Kishore Kuncham's prudent fiscal management resulted in almost a decade of consecutive tax levy decreases and approved budgets, while channeling substantial investments into programs, technology, and facilities at the benefit of students and staff alike; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Kishore Kuncham also worked hard to obtain grant funding for students and teachers in his district, ultimately allowing them to pursue their educational endeavors to their greatest extents; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Kishore Kuncham's unwavering advocacy for peace and non-violence has brought the Freeport School District and the community together through annual peace concerts, peace marches, and an unprecedented 131-mile peace walk, all of which have left the valued superintendent celebrated for his tireless fundraising efforts and commitment to humanitarianism; and

WHEREAS, An advocate for the important role health and wellness plays in educating the whole child, Dr. Kishore Kuncham also introduced the daily practice of mindfulness, yoga, and guided breathing into Freeport Schools; and

WHEREAS, For his visionary leadership and profound commitment to education and the community at large, Dr. Kishore Kuncham is the recipient of numerous awards and accolades, including: the highest honor from the Association of School Business Officials International-the Eagle Award, the Outstanding Superintendent of the Year Award from more than one organization, the New York State PTA Distinguished Service Award, the Nassau BOCES Education Partner Award, the Long Island Herald Person of the Year, and his guidance throughout the COVID-19 pandemic earned him the title of Hometown Hero; he also received the prestigious "Key Influencer" Award as one of only two civilians in the entire country to have the honor to fly with the Blue Angels; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Kishore Kuncham founded the Freeport Educational Foundation and served on the Board of Governors of the New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR); his service extends to board leadership roles in organizations such as Reform Educational Finance Inequities Today (REFIT), New York Benefits for Educators and Student Trust (NYBEST), United Way of Long Island, Island Harvest, the Cradle of Aviation Museum, and the Nassau Community College Foundation; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Kishore Kuncham's historic role as the first Indian-American School Superintendent in New York State will forever be remembered as a testament to his trailblazing spirit; and

WHEREAS, Over his 35 years of dedicated service to the field of public education, Dr. Kishore Kuncham served with loyalty, honor, and distinction; and

WHEREAS, In his official acts, Dr. Kishore Kuncham was governed by a keen sense of duty and always showed a unique grasp of human problems; and

WHEREAS, During his tenure with the Freeport School District, Dr. Kishore Kuncham earned the admiration, esteem, and affection of his colleagues and community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor Dr. Kishore Kuncham upon the occasion of his retirement after 30 years of distinguished service; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Dr. Kishore Kuncham.