



Councilmember Anita Bonds

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To recognize and commemorate the Duke Ellington School of the Arts as it celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

WHEREAS, the Duke Ellington School of the Arts (Ellington) developed into an accredited four-year public high school program at Western High School in 1974 under the inspiration of Ms. Peggy Cooper Cafritz and involvement of Mr. Mike Malone;

WHEREAS, the school is named after Edward "Duke" Ellington, a native Washingtonian, renowned bandleader, and composer, whose artistry and dedication to excellence inspire the next generation of artists and leaders;

WHEREAS, Ellington began as the Workshop for Careers in the Arts in 1968, a collaboration with The George Washington University that provided a training program designed for artistically gifted teenagers;

WHEREAS, this workshop achieved instant success, with students receiving full scholarships to The Julliard School, Howard University, The George Washington University, among other collegiate institutions;

WHEREAS, Ellington was originally housed in the historic Western High School building, constructed in 1898 as one of DC's first buildings specifically designed for high school education;

WHEREAS, Ellington underwent a renovation beginning in 2014 to restore its historic character while modernizing and expanding its facility, and the new campus opened in 2017.

WHEREAS, Ellington remains a beacon of excellence in arts-integrated education, now in partnership with the John F Kennedy Center or the Performing Arts, The George Washington University, The Ellington Fund and the District of Columbia Public School System, empowering students to thrive academically and artistically;

WHEREAS, Ellington has successfully maintained its tradition of excellence, with 100% of its seniors graduating last year and 99% of them accepted into college, embodying the transformative impact of its rigorous and inclusive curriculum;

WHEREAS, Ellington boasts an impressive list of alumni, including comedian Dave Chappelle; singers Johnny Gill, Ari Lennox, Denyce Graves and Tony Terry; actors/actresses Corey Hawkins, Simbi Khali, Serena Reeder; and journalists Michaela Angela Davis, Adam Serwer;

51 WHEREAS, Ellington continues to be a vital cultural institution of the District of Columbia and  
52 recently celebrated its 50th anniversary of the British Embassy with Dame Karen Pierce, British  
53 Ambassador to the United States, hosting a reception to honor its legacy.  
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55 RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this resolution  
56 may be cited as the “Duke Ellington School of the Arts 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recognition Resolution of  
57 2024.”  
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59 Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia hereby celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the  
60 Duke Ellington School of the Arts, commends its enduring impact on the lives of countless students, and  
61 honors the visionary founders, devoted faculty, alumni and supporters who contributed to its amazing  
62 history and bright future.  
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64 Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the  
65 District of Columbia Register.

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