



# City of Columbus

Office of City Clerk  
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columbuscitycouncil.org

## Legislation Text

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To commemorate Columbus City Council's 2019 Black History Program by honoring and celebrating the lifetime achievements and contributions of Mrs. Catherine T. Willis as a transformational leader in the field of education.

**WHEREAS**, the City of Columbus and the members of Columbus City Council are proud to honor and celebrate the legends, legacies, and trailblazers of this community as they represent the prosperity and the transformational leadership that has come to define the tradition of excellence that is Columbus; and

**WHEREAS**, Columbus City Council's 2019 Black History Program is proud to honor the legacy and transformational leadership of Mrs. Catherine T. Willis as a shining light in the field of education and the Columbus community at large; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Catherine T. Willis is being recognized for her accomplishments in the field of education because she's has established a reputation as a dedicated community activist who has supported education, the arts and as an advocate for families; she has been involved in the United Negro College Fund and was a founding member of the Friends of Art for Community Enrichment Inc., and the Ohio Wesleyan University Upward Bound program; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Willis, a former Columbus City Schools teacher has been primarily focused on education - in fact her passion led her to become an active volunteer, supporter and member of the board of directors for the "I Know I Can," program which guarantees every Columbus City School student an opportunity to attend college - Mrs. Willis also initiated the Chess in the (Neighbor) Hood program at the Martin Luther King Library and because of its success was asked to extend the program to other sites; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Willis's legacy of advocacy in education extends beyond the borders of the State of Ohio - in fact she continues to be a passionate champion for the Piney Woods Country Life School located in Mississippi - her work there has enabled local students to attend this remarkable school founded in 1909 - the school offers African American students a head, heart and hands education; and

**WHEREAS**, Mrs. Willis legacy of leadership in the arts has allowed her to successfully cultivate our community's brightest young minds - she created the urban strings youth orchestra which has grown from 2 youth in 2007 to more than 45 string musicians ages 9 to 18 today - Catherine has also been celebrated as trailblazer in this community over the years; her awards include: the Jefferson Award which she received twice, the Central Ohio Senior Hall of Fame; the Greater Columbus Arts Council Educators Award; she was named a "Game Changer" by Who's Who of Black Columbus, now therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:** That this Council does hereby honor and celebrate the lifetime achievements and contributions of Mrs. Catherine T. Willis and present her with the 2019 James Preston Poindexter Award for being a Shining Light and Transformational Leader in in the field of education.