

BLOUNT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION

TEN COMMANDMENTS DISPLAY

WHEREAS, the United States regularly has acknowledged the role that fundamental religious documents and principles have in American heritage law; and

WHEREAS, one of the most recognized sets of foundational principles were the Ten Commandments, which were displayed in public buildings across the United States, including in schools, government buildings, and courthouses; and

WHEREAS, for the last several decades, expression of that heritage has been restricted; and

WHEREAS, the *Lemon* test was the culmination of separationists' fight to eradicate all references to religion from the public sphere; and

WHEREAS, litigants like the American Humanist Association, American Atheists, the Freedom From Religion Foundation, and The Satanic Temple used the *Lemon* test to block as many displays of America's religious heritage as they could, including the Ten Commandments displays and veterans' memorials; and

WHEREAS, one of the largest upheavals was in *Stone v. Graham* in 1980, where the Supreme Court used the *Lemon* test to strike down Kentucky's law requiring that the Ten Commandments be displayed in public schools; and

WHEREAS, prior to *Stone v. Graham*, many public schools displayed the Ten Commandments, and after *Stone v. Graham*, public schools across the country almost universally removed the Ten Commandments displays; and

WHEREAS, now, however, the legal landscape has changed due to *Kennedy v. Bremerton School District*, as the Supreme Court overturned *Lemon*, which eliminated the *Lemon* test and instead looks to United States' history and tradition for whether the government may recognize our religious heritage; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, after over fifty years of *Lemon's* rule, the traditional recognitions of our religious heritage are very slow to return; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Legislature recently enacted PC 924, HB 47, and SB 303 allowing for the posting of the Ten Commandments in public and charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the Blount County School District affirms the intent and importance of the State's effort to restore historical and traditional documents to our schools; and

WHEREAS, the Blount County School District believes it is right and proper for students to learn about the principles upon which this nation and state were built; and

WHEREAS, the Blount County School District believes that each eligible school

in the district should display the Ten Commandments in a prominent place in the school,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that copies of the Ten Commandments shall be displayed in each and every school in the district with all due speed. And that such display shall meet all the requirements and conditions as set forth in the accompanying district policy.