

City of East Lansing, Michigan

**RESOLUTION HONORING ANDREW WELLS FOR HIS
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN EAST LANSING ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS RETIREMENT**

May 17, 2022

WHEREAS, Andrew Wells was born in Detroit, Michigan and lived with his four siblings and mother, Martha Bibbs; and,

WHEREAS, Martha Bibbs became the first woman and the first Black person to be appointed State Personnel Director for the State of Michigan Civil Service Commission; and,

WHEREAS, in 1968, Martha married James Bibbs, Michigan State University's first African American head coach, and the family moved to East Lansing, Michigan in the Flower Pot Neighborhood and have been there for over four decades; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew attended Hannah Middle School and participated in extracurricular activities, including intramural sports and band and was recognized by his peers and staff as a rising leader and role model; and,

WHEREAS, Andy, as he came to be known by teachers and classmates, continued to develop his leadership skills at East Lansing High School where he was an outstanding student athlete and received numerous recognitions, including:

- Three varsity letters in basketball and four in track and field,
- MVP two years in a row in both basketball and track and field,
- All state honors and was selected to the all-conference teams as a varsity athlete,
- East Lansing High School freshman record in the high jump in 1972 and held school records in the high and low hurdles for at least ten years,
- Lansing State Journal Honor Roll Champion in the high hurdles, low hurdles and high jump,
- Conference champion in the high jump, low and high hurdles,
- Captain of the basketball and track teams for two years; and,

WHEREAS, as a member of the All-Area Dream Team in basketball in his junior and senior years, he played with other notables, including Ervin "Magic" Johnson and Jay Vincent. Andy was also selected to play in the State of Michigan Roundball Classic his senior year; and,

WHEREAS, Andy did not limit his talent to sports as he participated in the school musicals and, according to former theater director Kate Veihl, was the first African American student to participate in theater; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew Wells graduated from East Lansing High School in 1976 and attended Eastern Michigan University and Michigan State University for basketball and track and field with athletic scholarships, earning varsity letters at both institutions; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew earned All-Big Ten honors in the hurdles and the high jump and served as Co-Captain of the MSU Track and Field Team during his senior year; and,

WHEREAS, in 1981, Andrew graduated from Michigan State University, and he currently holds a B.S., M.A. and Education Specialist degree; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew began his career in East Lansing as a lunchroom supervisor and was soon promoted and assigned the role of District Community Liaison Officer, supporting at-risk high school students; and,

WHEREAS, in 1994, he began serving as Athletic Director and Associate Principal at East Lansing High School; and,

WHEREAS, on July 15, 1995, Andrew married his best friend and the love of his life, Daphne Bellows, a fellow Spartan, and they have three children: Andrew II, Brianna and Kaylie; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew went on to hold several positions within the district, including East Lansing High School Coach, Athletic Director, High School Associate Principal, Principal of Whitehills Elementary and Glencairn Elementary; and,

WHEREAS, in 2017, Andrew returned to the halls of East Lansing High School as its lead administrator and principal; and,

WHEREAS, Mr. Wells touched the lives of thousands of students over the years, and his genuine compassion and care has made an indelible impact on the entire East Lansing Public School District:

“Even though Mr. Wells was not at the high school when I was there, he was always nice and caring and looked out for my best interest. He was always positive and concerned with my success and wellbeing and was at most of my track meets even though he didn’t have to be” ~ Taylor Manson, 2020 Olympic Bronze Medalist, East Lansing High School Class of 2017

“I have known Mr. Wells since fifth grade when he was my elementary principal, and he has stuck by me every step of the way. He reaches down to all of us and connects to students on a personal level and makes us feel safe and cared for - every single sporting event he is there cheering from the sidelines letting us know we are all part of something bigger - he created a family of our school. He will be missed. He is irreplaceable. Thank you for everything you have done for me; the fist bump every morning it has meant the world to me” ~ Ethan Dewitt, class of 2022

“I have known Mr. Wells since elementary school. He is an amazing principal; as a Junior, I am sad that he will not be here for my last year at East Lansing because when I think of EL, I see Mr. Wells, he is here for everything! Even during lunch, he talks to every student; he goes out of his way to speak to everyone so that we all feel seen and heard. His speeches are amazing, I wish the upcoming classes could have known him” ~ Summer Aljaari, East Lansing High School Class of 2023

“He has made me and his mother very, very proud. He is a good, caring and obedient son, a wonderful father and husband. Without being prejudice, he is a tremendous young man. I am happy to have lived long enough to see his retirement, but the best for Andy is yet to come” ~ Coach James Bibbs, Andrew’s stepfather

WHEREAS, his career and service to the community spans over three decades and is marked by exceptional professionalism, hard work, significant contributions and recognitions:

Andrew has served the East Lansing School District in many ways: as a student mentor at East Lansing High School; girls and boys basketball and track coach; member of committees in the community and district, including Administration Representative for Labor Relations and numerous interview/hiring committees; East Lansing High School representative to the City of East Lansing for the Youth Action Team; District representative to the City of East Lansing in the hiring process for Chief of Police; strategic planning committee member; East Lansing Education Foundation steering committee and a member of the East Lansing School District Achievement Gap Task Force. He was recognized for the following: Regional Athletic Director of the Year, East Lansing School District Workplace Excellence Award Recipient, and recognized by the Whitehills and Glencairn parent associations for his dedication to serving in the capacity of principal of both buildings concurrently. Mr. Wells was also the recipient of the 2021 Crystal Award for his positive impact in the City of East Lansing; and,

WHEREAS, Andrew Wells is a man of solid principles and faith, and he is an active member of Abundant Grace Faith Church; and,

WHEREAS, the East Lansing community has been irrevocably touched by the grace, dignity, humanity, elegance, compassion and service of Andrew Wells; and,

WHEREAS, there cannot be too much said in recognition of a man who embodies the spirit of East Lansing like Mr. Wells; and,

WHEREAS, the East Lansing City Council recognizes the outstanding professionalism, talent and service of Mr. Wells.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the East Lansing City Council recognizes Andrew Wells’ three decades of committed service and congratulates him on his retirement from the East Lansing Public School district.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that May 20, 2022 is declared Andrew Wells Day in the City of East Lansing.

Ron Bacon, Mayor

Jennifer Shuster, Clerk