Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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News Release

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Award Recipient: Eric Simmons (esimmons@isd2144.org)

Eric Simmons Receives Outstanding Central Office Leader Award

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Eric Simmons, Director of Technology Services for Chisago Lakes School District, the recipient of the 2024 Outstanding Central Office Leader Award. He received this award for exhibiting a willingness to take risks, possessing strong communication skills, being a progressive change agent, and having high expectations for himself and others. Simmons will be honored for his leadership, concern for students, and active involvement in professional and community affairs at a statewide recognition ceremony during the MASA/MASE Spring Conference held March 14-15, 2024.

During his tenure with Chisago Lakes School District, Simmons has actively collaborated with teaching and learning teams to implement innovative technology tools, such as the 'What I Need' time initiative. Utilizing flexible scheduling software, this groundbreaking approach has revolutionized course allocation based on individual student needs, ensuring targeted educational support on a daily basis for students. Simmons led a significant technological transition during the pandemic, overseeing the shift to a comprehensive BYOD and 1:1 device program. This involved integrating new learning management systems, procuring and deploying devices, and digitizing traditional systems for uninterrupted and future-forward educational operations.

In a district with constrained resources, Simmons strategically focused on sustaining school technology, enhancing Career and Technical Education (CTE) and computer science, and establishing a sustainable model for digital learning professional development for teachers. This multifaceted initiative aimed to enhance current educational practices while ensuring long-term viability and adaptability in teaching methods. Additionally, Simmons has played a pivotal role in statewide technology collaboration, facilitating the formation of the Minnesota K-12 Technology Leaders Group. Serving as co-chair from 2018-2022, he created a vibrant platform for K-12 technology leaders to connect, collaborate, and exchange innovative ideas, further advancing educational technology across the state.

Simmons is an active member of MASA and served on the MASA Board of Directors, representing Technology Leaders from Greater Minnesota. He is a current member of the Executive Development Committee and Region 6's Leadership Team.

Simmons has served as Director of Technology Services for Chisago Lakes School District since 2018. He previously has served in technology directorship roles with Princeton Public Schools and New Ulm Public Schools. Simmons began his career in education as a high school Social Studies Teacher and K-12 Technology Integration Coordinator with the McGregor School District.

Simmons received an educational specialist degree and a master's degree in Educational Technology from Concordia University, St. Paul. He earned a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Simmons holds licensure for Superintendent, K-12 Principal, and grades 5-12 Social Studies. In addition to his formal education, Simmons earned a certificate in Educational Technology from the University of Minnesota-Duluth, is an Eagle Scout, and is an active Google for Education Certified Innovator (Sydney, Australia cohort).

Each year, MASA recognizes members for their contribution to public education. MASA is a professional organization of Minnesota's school leaders, including superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of special education, and other central office administrators, as well as state department administrators, college and university professors, and other educators throughout Minnesota dedicated to educational leadership for students.

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