

Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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News Release

For Immediate Release

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Jay Haugen is the 2019 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year

(St. Paul, MN) – The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Jay Haugen, Superintendent of Farmington Area Public Schools, the 2019 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. As the Minnesota honoree, Haugen is a candidate among other state recipients for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced during the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention held February 14-16, 2019 in Los Angeles, CA. Haugen was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations. Nominees are evaluated on how each candidate demonstrates leadership for learning, communication skills, professionalism, and community involvement.

“During his time at Farmington Area Public Schools, Jay has become an inspiration within his community through his extraordinary leadership and community outreach practices,” said MASA Executive Director Dr. Gary Amoroso. “Jay is a leader in education innovation within Minnesota and the nation – and I am very eager to see the continued transformations that Jay has in store for his district.”

During Haugen's eight-year tenure with the Farmington Area Public Schools, he has cultivated and inspired the design of a new system of schooling. Guided by the district's strategic plan, it is an education system that is student-centered, where every student is unique and learns to be in charge of their learning experience. The strategic plan was established and is regularly updated by a representative committee of community members, students, and staff. The strategies and goals that stem from the plan are then refined by another 70 community and staff.

Haugen has pushed Farmington towards this new educational system through the district's approach at supporting its administrators and staff in achieving their strategic plan's direction. A major part of the system was completely reforming the staff evaluation model across the district. This started with the understanding that, like students, every administrator and teacher also has their own specific skills and deserves a unique pathway to their own creation and success. The end result is a system of rubrics that allows each teacher and staff member to achieve their best results using their specific strengths and passions.

Farmington Area Public Schools conducts a survey within the community on an annual to biennial basis. This survey allows the district to know what the community's views are regarding the district's progress. Through these strategic community surveys, Haugen is able to better understand what the community values and where there might be hesitation. In his first year as Superintendent, Haugen spoke with more than 2,000 people in the surrounding community. Haugen often holds town hall style forums and hosts special community events such as “Soup with the Supt,” where he cooks a meal and invites the community to come share. These ongoing grassroots processes ensure deep community involvement and commitment to their strategic direction.

The district plans purposefully to provide more flexible learning environments to meet student needs. The high school, which is less than 10 years old, is reaching its design maximum of 2,400 students, but under Haugen's leadership, the high school space is utilized much more like a college campus and so it can accommodate up to 4,000 students and never feel confined. This innovative utilization of space within the high school is estimated to save the community more than \$100 million in taxes in the coming years.

The district also updated older buildings that now serves a significant number of students by finding unused spaces, including locker areas, book storage areas, and old computer labs that were not being used due to Haugen's 1:1 tablet initiative. The renovation cost was \$2 million and it recaptured an estimated \$10 million of space. The district also built the largest solar array by a single public entity in Minnesota, which will save the district more than \$100,000 in electricity a year.

Haugen is in his 23rd year as a Minnesota superintendent. Prior to his Superintendency in Farmington, he was the Superintendent of Sleepy Eye Public Schools and then of West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools.

Haugen began his career as a high school science teacher, eventually moving on to pursue graduate studies while providing pioneering work in the development of educational software. He returned in an administrative capacity serving a consortium of seven southwestern Minnesota school districts near Redwood Falls, MN as Director of Curriculum and Staff Development. Haugen then served as a regional coordinator for Minnesota Department of Education's Minnesota Educational Effectiveness Program (MEEP).

Haugen is an active member in both MASA and AASA. He served on the MASA Board of Directors from 2012-15, and as MASA President during 2013-14. Haugen has been involved in MASA committees including the Legislative Committee, and served as the chair of the Federal Advocacy Committee during 2008-09. He is also a member of Interstate Migrant Education Council (a federal program representing more than 20 states) and was the chair of the Three Counties for Kids, a children's mental health collaborative.

Haugen is a member of various community organizations including the Farmington Rotary Club, Lions Club, Farmington Business Association, Dakota County Chamber of Commerce, and the Farmington Development Committee.

Haugen has received numerous awards including the MASA Richard Green Scholar Award, MinnSPRA Star Award: District Leadership for Excellence in Communication, Blandin Leadership Program for Contributions to Community, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council for Service on the Migrant Head Start Policy Council, and the Region V Award of Appreciation for Serving on the Governing Board.

Haugen earned a master's degree in education and a 6th year administrator credential from Tri-College University. He received a bachelor's in biology and a teaching certificate from North Dakota State University.

The Minnesota Superintendent of the Year Award is sponsored by ATS&R, Planners/Architects/Engineers. Visit their web site at www.atsr.com.

For more information on the AASA Superintendent of the Year Program, please visit www.aasa.org.

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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