

Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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**P R E S S
R E L E A S E**

Electronic versions of this press release and Superintendent Phillips' photograph are available. Please email Mary Law at MASA (mrlaw@mnasa.org) to request copies.



Superintendent Patty Phillips

Patty Phillips is 2010 MN Superintendent of the Year

(St. Paul, Minn.) — — The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Superintendent Patty Phillips, Superintendent for the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools, the 2010 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

As the Minnesota honoree, Superintendent Phillips is a candidate among other state winners for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) convention on February 13, 2010 in Phoenix, Arizona.

Superintendent of the Year nominees are evaluated on how each candidate demonstrates:

- Leadership for learning—creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system.
- Communication skills—strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- Professionalism—constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- Community involvement—active participation in local community activities and understanding of regional, national, and international issues.

Superintendent Phillips was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations. “Patty Phillips is truly an exemplary leader,” says MASA Executive

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Director Dr. Charles Kyte. “She is a skilled collaborative leader who knows how to help her district community envision positive change and chart a course for achievement. We are proud to have Patty represent Minnesota’s superintendents as Superintendent of the Year.”

Superintendent Phillips has been superintendent for the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools since 2005. With an enrollment of 11,000 students, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale serves students in seven suburban communities east of St. Paul. There are nine elementary schools within the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School District, along with three middle schools, two high schools, an early childhood education center, an alternative learning center and a senior center. The district regularly receives state and national recognition for achievement in the arts, academics, community service and athletics.

The North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School Board Chair nominated Superintendent Phillips for the Superintendent of the Year Award. “Patty is by far the most energetic, dedicated, strong, enthusiastic, positive leader in education that I have had the pleasure of working with,” says North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School Board Chair Nancy Livingston. “Patty is an amazing superintendent who has dedicated her whole life to education.”

Superintendent Phillips is especially noted as someone who will leave a lasting impact on our educational system. Patty is passionate about education, a strong advocate for all students, an excellent communicator, a wise and fearless administrator and a tremendous role model. She has surrounded herself with a strong administrative team dedicated to excellence in student achievement. Superintendent Phillips is a lifelong learner and models her passion for learning and continuous improvement to staff and colleagues. Patty has spearheaded the task of moving the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school board from a role of management to policy governance. She takes the time to get to know staff and students by spending time in schools. Chair Nancy Livingston states, “Being around students energizes her, which invigorates others. Patty is student centered, genuinely takes an interest in students and constantly interacts with them to get their perspectives on topics.”

Superintendent Phillips was asked about how 21st century skills are defined by her and how has her district changed the learning students receive in response.

“I define 21st century skills as the palette for today’s digitally born artists...the operating system they need to master in order to maximize the potential of their technologically savvy minds...the BAM...kick it up a notch ingredients that will make our students come out on top.” Superintendent Phillips goes on to say, “21st century skills are learned and applied through relevant content, with more focus on the process of thinking than the process of remembering. Students in collaborative teams are completing complex projects; evaluating the pros and cons of various solutions to problems; and increasing their engagement

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with each other and the world beyond school through project based learning activities that connect to real world solutions. (With) our new technologies and the merging of content with skills (we) have moved our students from consumers in silos to interactive producers.”

Superintendent Phillips was asked how has her district changed involvement in an effort to respond to the changing needs of families.

“Our school district’s number one goal is to improve student achievement, close learning gaps and create a sustained sense of urgency for positive change. Parent involvement makes an enormous impact on students’ attitudes, attendance and achievement,” Superintendent Phillips stated. “To respond to the changing needs of our families, the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School District has ramped up our outreach to our students and their families. We realize that one size doesn’t fit all so we are instituting a number of initiatives.” Some of those initiatives include: hiring a homeless liaison; hosting Parent Learning Academies; funding all day Kindergarten for all students; teaming social workers with community service agencies; increased targeted services programming; and hosted bi-monthly coffee and conversation with the superintendent and school board members.

Superintendent Phillips was asked what action has her school district taken in response to the economic downturn.

“We’ve gouged fifteen million dollars out of our budget; but we have reallocated resources, written grants, formed relationships with some exciting business partners, and added initiatives that are helping us achieve our vision. We are providing free, all day kindergarten for all students; have added literacy and math specialists in each of our nine elementary schools; have provided free ACT Testing for all students; have added half an hour onto the elementary school day; instituted a late start for our two high schools; significantly increased the number of students taking Advanced Placement and College in the Schools courses...renovated our technology infrastructure and decreased our replacement cycle from ten years to five,” Superintendent Phillips stated. “We are living proof that with every crisis comes an opportunity.”

In a letter of support from Marc Cove, Senior Vice President of Platinum Bank, Superintendent Phillips is praised for, “Through her example of just ‘doing’ and her ability to speak passionately about the benefits of a strong and successful school system, she has loaded the train with teachers, parents, administrators and a significant amount of business leaders. All for kids and the version of community well educated kids bring with them.”

In a letter of support, Dr. Lori Simon of St. Paul Schools praised Superintendent Phillips’ leadership. “Patty has a passion for her work and leads with a clear vision of what a rigorous and nurturing education environment looks like. She had cultivated a district culture of shared vision and purpose that is focused on what is best for students...Patty has established strong relationships and a shared efficacy of purposeful

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community and mutual respect.” Dr. Simon goes on to state, “Throughout her work, Patty leads with passion and grace, and embraces challenges through her collaborative leadership. Patty has high expectations for herself and those she works with, and serves as a great role model for students, staff, parents and community.”

Larry Eberhard, Keller Williams Realtor, praises Superintendent Phillips in a letter of support, “Perhaps the greatest quality Patty possesses is her passion in a leadership role for learning. She lives, unequivocally, to better the students, staff and board members that surround her through an environment grounded in learning...it has been inspiring and encouraging to see the changes that Patty has brought about in her role as leader, communicator, professional and ultimate champion for this district.”

Superintendent Phillips received her master’s and bachelor of science degrees from the University of Minnesota. Before becoming Superintendent for the North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale Schools, she was superintendent for the Virginia Schools. Prior to the superintendency, Patty was a Kindergarten Teacher, Director of Curriculum & Staff Development and Elementary Principal for the Virginia Schools.

MASA is a professional organization whose mission is to establish the statewide agenda for children, serve as the preeminent voice for public education, and empower members through quality services and support. MASA members are school superintendents, directors of special education, other central office school administrators, regional administrators, and higher education administrators and professors from throughout Minnesota.

Long Term Care Insurance Advocates is the sponsor of the Minnesota Superintendent of the Year program. ARAMARK Education, ING, and the American Association of School Administrators are cosponsors of the National Superintendent of the Year award program.

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