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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*
DATE: March 24, 2009
SUBJECT: Recognition of Maryland's 2008 National Milken Educators

BACKGROUND:

Two outstanding teachers were surprised at school assemblies this past November and learned they had been selected as winners of the prestigious Milken National Educator Award. Maryland has had a partnership with the Milken Family Foundation for sixteen years, and has successfully identified fifty-three Maryland educators who have won the Milken prize, a non-restricted cash award of \$25,000. This cash award is given to each national winner at the annual Milken National Educator Conference. The conference will be held in April, 2009 in Los Angeles, California. With this year's honorees, the Milken Foundation will have contributed \$1,325,000 to Maryland's Milken National Educators. Each year, the Maryland State Board of Education honors the newly selected teachers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This year's recipients are **Shannon Landefeld**, a fourth grade teacher at Tulip Grove Elementary in Prince George's County and **Christian Slattery**, a music teacher at Hall's Cross Roads Elementary in Harford County. They will be accompanied by family members, their principals, and local superintendents.

The recipients will be introduced and a brief video will be shown capturing the excitement of the two surprise announcements made this past fall. Ms. Landefeld and Mr. Slattery will speak briefly about the personal and professional significance of this recognition.

ACTION:

Each of our new Milken National Educators will be presented with a Milken National Educator crystal obelisk and MSDE/State Board Citation. Commemorative photos will be taken. State Board members will have an opportunity to congratulate the winners.

Attachments (2)
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Shannon Landefeld Bio

- Shannon Landefeld has been a teacher for 9 years, joining Tulip Grove Elementary School in Bowie in 2002 first as a 1st-grade teacher and now a 4th grade teacher.
- Children have “starring roles” in her classroom.
- She is highly regarded by parents and other teachers because her students routinely leave 1st-grade reading on or above grade level.
- She is a hands-one teacher whose philosophy is that learning should be active and visible;
- She has incredible patience and innovative teaching strategies and people skills.
- She coordinates the “Extended Learning Opportunity” program, an after-school program very successful in assisting students needing help.
- When Shannon began teaching at Tulip Grove Elementary in 2002 the reading MSA score was 73 percent. By 2007, the reading MSA score was 91 percent. The math MSA score was 59.5 percent. By 2007 the math MSA score was 91.4 percent. Shannon’s contribution was establishing a strong academic foundation in 1st-grade so that students are successful as measured by MSA.
- She is currently on the Prince George’s School District’s Science Leadership Team; has written 1st-grade science curriculum for the general education population; has written the enrichment curriculum for 2nd-grade Gifted and Talented students; has served as the grade level chairperson; and currently serves as the “job-alike” mentor for a new teacher at the school. In 2007, Shannon was recognized by the City of Bowie as its Outstanding Educator.

Christian Slattery – Vocal Music Teacher at Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary

The following are ways in which he promotes success in his students:

1.) An uncanny ability to integrate the music curriculum with other content areas while maintaining the integrity of the music curriculum. Throughout his career at Hall’s Cross Roads, Mr. Slattery has integrated music with math, literature, science, art, history, physical education, and character education.

2.) Combining a deep understanding of technology and music results in an ability to incorporate technology to instruct the chorus; aid in demonstrating concepts to visual learners; reach children with a variety of disabilities (Ex. Deaf students and autistic children.); and to communicate with the students’ families through a Music Department Web Page.

3.) A fervent desire to take responsibility for his own learning, Mr. Slattery continually conducts research to incorporate information in his instruction. He usually draws on his own creativity when implementing new ideas but to assist in sparking that creativity he spends time researching the internet, music education literature, and other colleagues to gain inspiration.

4.) Learn by doing, learn by leading, and learn from mistakes are cornerstone practices evident in Christian’s classroom which clearly align with the plan-do-study- act process of continuous improvement. When implementing instructional strategies, Mr. Slattery analyzes the effectiveness of strategies and reflects upon the findings to modify instruction to achieve optimum student success. In this setting, students assume leadership of their own musical abilities because Christian provides an opportunity for students to instruct lessons after he models objectives. He allows students to lead ensembles and promote group activities where students compose and improvise music. A risk-free environment coupled with high expectations has helped students develop confidence and a willingness to lead their peers in song, dance, or music.

Mr. Slattery is involved in the following committee’s county and school wide:

- Currently seeking National Board Certification in Early Middle Childhood Vocal Music.
- Serves as an active member of the Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary School’s School Improvement Team.
- An active member of the Hall’s Cross Roads Elementary School action research Professional Learning Community: “Family Involvement in Special Areas.”
- Department Chair at Hall’s Cross Roads and attends Harford County Music Department Committee Meetings.
- Created and implemented professional development for new Harford County Public Schools music teachers-August 2007.

- Current member of the Harford County Elementary General Music Curriculum Writing Committee.
- He has created and communicates with parents through the music department web site and provides resources for parents at home to assist in enhancing their child's musical abilities.

Mr. Slattery is a competent caring professional who keeps the needs of his students at the core of all his actions. He is a reflective practitioner who leads by example. Mr. Slattery is supportive of a team approach and his classrooms and instructional planning is child centered. He maintains an open and positive relationship with his parents, maintains a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning, and works to support school-wide initiatives. He is an educator who loves his school and profession so much that he travels 1 hour one way to get to school each day stays late then gets back on the road for the long travel back home which is another hour. We are **very fortunate** to have such a fine professional at Hall's Cross Roads Elementary School.