



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MASTER PRINCIPALS HONORED AT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

Two school principals in Arkansas achieved the status of Master School Principal and were recognized today at the Arkansas State Board of Education meeting at the Arkansas Department of Education. Both individuals have completed three years of rigorous professional development plus additional performance evaluations to graduate from the Arkansas Leadership Academy's Master Principal Program with the designation this spring.

Dr. Ken James, Arkansas Commissioner of Education, and Dr. Beverly Elliott, Director of the Arkansas Leadership Academy, presented certificates awards of distinction to:

- Debbie Heath, principal of Wynne Primary School in Wynne.
- Dr. Roger Hill, principal of Kirksey Middle School in Rogers.

"I congratulate these individuals for pursuing excellence in their careers as educational leaders," Dr. James said. "This training above and beyond the licensing requirements for school administrators will indeed benefit these fine principals and, even more importantly, the teachers and students in the schools where they serve."

The Arkansas Leadership Academy Master Principal Institute was authorized by Act 44 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the 2003 Arkansas General Assembly. It is designed to develop leadership skills of principals through three phases of professional development.

“More than 500 principals from 70 counties have participated in Phase I of the program,” Elliott said. “Of those more than 500 principals, 85 have continued through the process to Phase II, III, or now, Master School Principal designation.”

Master Principals will receive a \$9,000 per year bonus for five years upon earning the designation. They are eligible for an additional \$25,000 per year for five years if they are selected to serve at a low-performing school.

Phase I of the Master Principal Institute is open to all school principals with at least one year of experience and who have support and permission from their superintendents to participate. Principals from across the state meet during the year in four multi-day sessions for intense study while applying the learning from those sessions in their schools throughout the year. Admission to the second phase of the program requires submission of a portfolio documenting the application of the lessons learned from the first phase and the results of that work to improve student and adult learning in the school.

To be admitted to the third phase, principals must complete a rigorous application process that includes evidence of their impact on education at the district, state, and regional levels. These portfolios are evaluated by stakeholders in education from Arkansas as well as from out of state. Scorers receive training through the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

After successful completion of all three phases, principals may choose to participate in a rigorous assessment by a team of trained examiners with at least one member one each team from another state. The rigorous assessment process examines evidence from three primary sources:

- Student Performance: An analysis of student academic achievement data
- Principal Performance: An analysis of a portfolio created by the principal
- School Performance: A site visit to gather evidence

Successful completion of these steps qualifies an individual for Master School Principal status. The Arkansas Leadership Academy is a collaborative partnership which includes 49 partners including the departments of general, higher, and workforce education, nine professional organizations: Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators, Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Arkansas Education Association, Arkansas North Central Association , Arkansas Rural Education Association, Arkansas School Boards

Association, Arkansas Public Relations Association, Arkansas National State Teachers of the Year, Wal-Mart, Tyson Foods, 15 universities, 15 educational cooperatives, and Arkansas Educational Television Network.

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The Arkansas Department of Education strives to ensure that all children in the state have access to a quality education by providing educators, administrators and staff with leadership, resources and training.