April 20, 2020

**Kennett Superintendent Honored By School Administrators Association**

The Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA) has selected **Dr. Chris Wilson, Superintendent of the Kennett #39 Public Schools**, as the recipient of the annual Robert L. Pearce Award for 2020. A committee of his peers selected Wilson. Each of the eight MASA districts nominated a superintendent for the award. The award was to be presented at the 2020 MASA Awards event on March 25, but that event was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of that, Dr. Wilson received the award via a Zoom call during the Kennett #39 Public School District’s April Board Meeting.

Dr. Doug Hayter, Executive Director for MASA, stated, “Chris Wilson embodies so many important attributes that school districts seek in their superintendent. He is dedicated to assuring that all students have opportunity to find success, he supports providing staff important professional development opportunities, and he works with his board and administrative team to assure the district has a clear mission and direction. Chris is also a valuable and active member of MASA, serving as a representative to the Executive Committee for the Southeast District and on the American Association of School Administrators Governing Board.”

Wilson received his Associates degree from Three Rivers Community College; his Bachelor in Education from Missouri State University; his Masters and Specialists degrees from Southeast Missouri State University; and his Doctorate in Education from William Woods University.

Wilson’s entire administrative career has been with the Kennett #39 School District. He began as an assistant principal at South Elementary School, followed by an assistant principalship at Kennett High School. He served as an assistant superintendent and then moved into the role of superintendent in 2010.

Wilson shared that his philosophy of education is centered on providing comprehensive supports that allow all students to learn in the manner that best helps them find success. Under Wilson’s leadership, students in the Kennett Schools take advantage of before and after school tutoring; targeted reading instruction; 1:1 technology (Chromebooks); online credit course offerings; career technical programs; and workforce development opportunities.

Attracting and retaining staff is a struggle for many districts including Kennett. Working with his board of education and other district leadership, Wilson has strived to keep quality staff by offering multiple professional development opportunities, including state and national seminars. Wilson also works “to create a culture of collegiality, community and collaboration” which includes ongoing work in Professional Learning Communities.

Over the past five years, the Kennett Schools have placed an emphasis on building and maintaining effective internal communications. Wilson meets with team leaders monthly and he has initiated an Administrator Summer Boot Camp. He also meets regularly with building principals, building leaders and staff. Likewise, Wilson requires all building level administrators to communicate with parents and community members regularly.

Dr. Wilson is a member of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Governing Board. He serves as the Southeast District’s representative to the MASA Executive Committee and he served as the Southeast District’s President in 2015-2016. Wilson is a member of the Advisory Council for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Commissioner. Wilson also serves as a Board Member for the Missouri United School Insurance Council and the Missouri State High School Activities Association.

Dr. Wilson is a member of the Kennett Rotary Club and he has served as a governing member of the Kennett Chamber of Commerce, the Kennett Educational Foundation, and the Twin Rivers Regional Hospital Board of Directors.

The Pearce Award includes a monetary award to the recipient and a scholarship for a student in the district of the award winner.

Wilson is the 34th recipient of the Robert L. Pearce Award. The award is among the two most prestigious for MASA members, the other being the Superintendent of the Year, which is given at the MSBA/MASA Fall Conference. The award’s purpose is to honor Robert L. Pearce, a founding partner of Bonsack & Pearce, Inc., an architectural firm specializing in educational work. Robert L. Pearce appreciated the importance of education and the vital work of school superintendents.

Other 2020 Pearce Award Nominees, including their school districts and MASA District:

* Ken Eaton, Mound City R-II (Northwest)
* John French, Lewis Co C-1 (Northeast)
* Kyle Kruse, St. Clair R-XIII (South Central)
* Keith Marty, Parkway (Greater St. Louis)
* Scott Patrick, Warrensburg R-VI (West Central)
* Andrew Underwood, Belton School District (Greater Kansas City)
* Chance Wistrom, Republic R-III (Southwest)

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