



Duncanville Independent School District

"Champions for Children"

PRESS RELEASE

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Duncanville ISD Principal Selected as Texas National Distinguished Principal Finalist

Duncanville, Texas ~ A surprise visit to Duncanville ISD's Byrd Middle School by Sandi Borden, Executive Director of the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA), has lead to the announcement of principal Gabe Trujillo as a finalist for the 2009 TEPSA Middle Level National Distinguished Principal Award. Trujillo came to Duncanville ISD in 2001 as Principal at Fairmeadows Elementary, and has spent the last eight years as Byrd Middle School principal.

The National Distinguished Principal program promotes PreK-8 educational excellence and calls attention to the fundamental importance of the school principal. The program honors principals who exhibit extraordinary leadership, commitment to their students and staff, service to their communities, and contributions to the profession and its professional associations.

Earlier this year, Trujillo was selected as the Texas Middle School Principal of the Year by the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP). To be honored by two associations with such distinguished designations is rare. "I am just blown away by all this," he

said. Trujillo earned his bachelors and masters degrees from Wayland Baptist University, and his Superintendent Certification from Texas Tech University. He began his educational career in Plainview, Texas as a math teacher, and just completed his sixteenth year as an educator or elementary/secondary principal.

Under Trujillo's leadership, Byrd Middle School has seen significant improvement in student achievement levels and employee performance. Innovation and a collaborative leadership style have been key elements to Trujillo's success, creating opportunities for the implementation of student enrichment and intervention programs. Through professional learning committees for onsite staff development and an altered schedule that builds a daily focus on enrichment programs, Byrd students and staff members feel respected, important, and empowered.

Duncanville ISD Superintendent Dr. Alfred Ray describes Trujillo as a visionary leader, with the ability to focus on initiatives that build capacity in his staff and campus programs that result in engaging and relevant instruction. "Gabe is an innovative thinker, always questioning and examining ways to improve and looking at challenges as opportunities," Dr. Ray said. "I appreciate his ability to think outside the box in ways that truly benefit kids. He is one of many shining team members within Duncanville ISD. What a wonderful and well-deserved honor for him, his campus, and our district."

"Being named Principal of the Year by TASSP was very humbling. Now, to learn I've also been selected as a National Distinguished Principal Finalist for TEPSA, is simply overwhelming," Trujillo said. "This distinction is an indication that I hire good people. I'm surrounded here at Byrd by dedicated faculty, talented assistant principals, and an amazing support staff. This recognition is indeed a reflection on their commitment to our young people and their abilities in the classroom. I couldn't be more proud to serve Byrd Middle School students and staff as well as the Duncanville ISD community."

"At the helm of every successful school is a successful principal," TEPSA's Sandi Borden said. "Gabe's commitment to improving student achievement has created a school where

students are thriving academically, teachers are growing professionally, and the surrounding community is improving as a result of his work.”

Each year, TEPSA recognizes one elementary and one middle level National Distinguished Principal award recipient. Trujillo is one of two National Middle Level finalists under consideration by the national committee. They will both be recognized at the TEPSA Awards Reception and Banquet on June 10, during the TEPSA Summer Conference. One will then be named as TEPSA’s National Distinguished Principal of the Year. Criteria for selection of the principals are set by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the U.S. Department of Education.

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