

For Immediate Release

May 22, 2009

John Winthrop Middle School named CAS Middle School of the Year

The Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) is proud to announce that John Winthrop Middle School has been selected as the 2009-2010 CAS Middle School of the Year. Chosen from among 150 eligible Connecticut middle schools, Winthrop Middle School distinguished itself as a consummate middle school, employing exemplary practices as defined by the National Middle School Association and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

After completing a detailed application process that included attention to curriculum, instructional practices, school climate and safety, community involvement and student success, two schools were selected as finalists. These schools were visited by a trained CAS committee that included veteran principals, teachers and the CAS assistant director for middle level education. During the site visits, interviews were held with faculty, administration, parents and students. Classes were observed and scores of documents were examined. At the conclusion of the visits, the committee deliberated over their findings and declared a winning recipient based on all of the evidence.

Reasons for choosing JWMS include:

- Students consistently score at or near the top of their educational reference group, in the Connecticut Mastery Tests especially in the area of writing; a testament to the skills and dedication of the faculty under the inspired leadership of Principal David Russell;
- There is a culture that promotes parent and faculty involvement in curriculum and instruction, school improvement and policy development.
- The Young Scholars Program (talented and gifted) offers a wide array of real-life experiences and is open to each and every student in the school.
- An home-grown advisor-advisee program entitled Advisory Connection team (ACT) that has been acknowledged as a model for middle schools across Connecticut and other New England states.
- Faculty members who seek out professional development and become trainers in diverse topics such as “Breaking Ranks in the Middle, school reform; Understanding by Design, curriculum development and differentiated instruction;
- The interdisciplinary units are far-reaching and promote authentic learning.

John Winthrop is an extraordinary middle school in every respect. They will be formally honored at a celebration at the school in the fall.

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