

MEDIA ADVISORY



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Portland Principal Named Finalist for 2011 MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year Award

King Middle School principal to meet with judges to determine national winner

Reston, VA; July 6, 2010—Michael McCarthy, principal of King Middle School, in Portland, ME, has been named a finalist in the 2011 MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year Program for his outstanding contributions to student achievement.

In his 21 years as its principal, McCarthy has transformed the once low-performing urban school to one that now holds a waiting list of students hoping to gain entrance. Serving the most diverse and economically disadvantaged student population in the state, King has certainly seen its share of challenges.

Despite those barriers, McCarthy has espoused a commitment to ensuring that all students succeed and that staff members are engaged and devoted to improved learning. Under McCarthy's leadership, the school has eliminated tracking, moved to a flexible schedule, and instituted looping, an advisory program, and student-led portfolio conferences. "We have become the middle school where everyone matters and where everyone gets to the top of the mountain," McCarthy said.

Each summer, McCarthy conducts wilderness training with staff members to foster a spirit of teamwork and collaboration. It was during one of those trainings that the group developed King's vision to make sure that all students reach their full potential.

King is now seen as a model to other schools, both nationally and internationally. "We have hundreds of visitors to King every year, and they come primarily because of Michael's reputation as a maverick; as an inspirational, forceful leader who holds to his bedrock belief that a school must be designed so that all learners can succeed," said Hiram Sibley, a teaching strategist at King.

The search for the National Principal of the Year began in early 2010 as each state principal's association selected its State Principal of the Year. From this pool of state award winners, a panel of judges selected three middle level and three high school finalists. The national middle level and high school winners will be named in September and recognized in Washington, DC, during the Principals' Institute for State and National Principals of the Year, September 29-October 2, 2010.

McCarthy—Maine's first finalist in this annual recognition program--and each of the other five finalists will receive a \$1,500 grant and the two national award winners will receive an additional grant of \$3,500. The grants will be used to improve learning at the school (e.g. a special school project and/or professional development opportunities).

The National Association of Secondary School Principals and MetLife are strongly committed to supporting the visions of unsung school leaders. For more information about the MetLife/NASSP State and National Principal of the Year Program and winners, please visit www.principals.org/poy.

About NASSP

In existence since 1916, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the preeminent organization of and national voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and aspiring school leaders from across the United States and more than 45 countries around the world. The mission of NASSP is to promote excellence in middle and high school leadership. NASSP administers the [National Honor Society®](#), [National Junior Honor Society®](#), [National Elementary Honor Society®](#), and [National Association of Student Councils®](#). For more information about NASSP, please visit www.principals.org.

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