



NASSP Honors Three Principals for Technology Leadership

2015 Digital Principal honors awarded to leaders in Maryland, Michigan, and Pennsylvania

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Reston, VA – Three extraordinary and tech-savvy school leaders have been selected as 2015 NASSP Digital Principals for integrating digital media in their efforts to improve instruction, student achievement, and their own leadership. The winners will be recognized at the [NASSP Conference Ignite '15](#) in San Diego next month.

John Bernia (@MrBernia) is principal of Oakview Middle School in Oakland Township, MI. Like all principals, Bernia works to get the most out of every technology dollar. But he believes the most important work he does to integrate technology is manage the school day to provide teachers collaborative time to learn about and plan with technology tools. Bernia leveraged the substitute teacher budget to free a committee of teachers to plan for staff development. He then used conference periods, parts of our staff development days, staff meetings, and other opportunities to offer practical tips to our teachers to increase the use of the technology purchases we have been able to make. Bernia served on a committee to develop the district BYOD policy, to revisit the formal policies around student technology use, and to expand the number of blended and online courses available in the district. This work fostered an environment where technology use by students is encouraged. "As a principal, my goal is to provide teachers with opportunities to use technology in their classrooms, to expand the use of technology for students, and to model the use of technology to be more productive and to grow as a professional."



James Richardson (@PrincipalJRich) is principal of Buck Lodge Middle School, a 1-1 iPad school located in Prince George's County, MD. In 2011, Buck Lodge Middle School was selected to participate in a Title 1 initiative called Transforming Education through Digital Learning (TEDL). As a part of this initiative, Richardson focused on digital transformation that emphasized technology-rich instruction, building teacher capacity, and empowering students—94% of whom receive meals assistance and 39% of whom are English language learners. With Richardson's leadership, Buck Lodge was the first school in the district to successfully implement digital content schoolwide. The school's success earned them the 2013 Apple Distinguished Program label, and in 2014 earned Richardson the Apple Distinguished Educator title, a rare designation for a principal. He takes pride in a school where students are "empowered to become investigative reporters, artist, photographers, statisticians, scientist, even writers telling their own stories. Everywhere, I see them being creators of content and demonstrating mastery by acting, recording video, conducting experiments, collaborating, scanning, communicating, laughing, crying, and yes, even failing--but learning from their failures, and ultimately getting back up and trying again. They take risks, I take risks, we all take risks."



Bill Ziegler (@DrBillZiegler) is principal of Pottsgrove High School in Pottstown, PA, where he recently led a highly collaborative process to build a 1-1 program. Ziegler created a Teacher Digital Team and a Student Digital Team, and he worked closely with parents and the district to ensure all stakeholders were involved and invested in the school's digital transformation. His leadership extends to the state level where, as president of the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals, he launched the weekly #PAESSPchat on Twitter and introduced a Tech Studio, conducted by NASSP Digital Principals, to the state conference. He regularly models the power of new media to everyone in the Pottsgrove community, and recently turned the school's Twitter handle over to a student so the community could see the school for a student's perspective. "As a principal, I am responsible for leading in a digital age," Ziegler says, "and assuring that our students are equipped, prepared, and ready to be digital learners, leaders, and citizens."



The NASSP Digital Principal Award program was created in 2012 to recognize excellence in technology leadership. The 2015 candidates were nominated by their peers or teachers, then invited to submit a portfolio of items that highlight their digital leadership. The portfolios were reviewed by a panel of expert judges and three principals were identified as the 2015 winners. The three 2015 NASSP Digital Principals will receive an expenses-paid trip to Ignite '15 in San Diego, CA, February 19-21 to formally receive their award and to present on a panel about technology leadership. For more information, visit www.nassp.org/digitalprincipal

About NASSP

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the leading organization of and voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and school leaders from across the United States and 35 countries around the world. The association connects and engages school leaders through advocacy, research, education, and student programs. NASSP advocates on behalf of all school leaders to ensure the success of each student and strengthens school leadership practices through the design and delivery of high-quality professional learning experiences. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP administers the [National Honor Society](#), [National Junior Honor Society](#), [National Elementary Honor Society](#), and [National Association of Student Councils](#).