

Principal of the Year

Dr. Harrison Bailey III Named Pennsylvania's 2021 Principal of the Year



Dr. Harrison Bailey III, Principal of Liberty High School in the Bethlehem Area School District (BASD), has been named **Pennsylvania's 2021 Principal of the Year** by the Pennsylvania Principals Association. He will join his fellow state principals of the year from across the country for consideration as the 2022 National Principal of the Year in a program conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). The NASSP National Principal of the Year program recognizes outstanding middle level and high school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession. He will be honored by both the PA Principals Association and NASSP at special award ceremonies in the fall.

Dr. Bailey was surprised when this award was announced by his school district and superintendent at a special celebration held in his high school gymnasium on April 29, 2021. The event was attended by his family, colleagues, students, local dignitaries, school board members and representatives from the PA Principals Association. In addition, a representative from Bethlehem Mayor Robert Donchez's office designated April 29th as Harrison Bailey III Day.

Joseph P. Hanni, PA Principals Association Board Member and Chair of the Secondary Awards Selection Committee, said, "Dr. Bailey's efforts to address the well-being of his own students, in addition to implementing programs that impact students throughout the Lehigh Valley, were strong factors in his selection as this year's Secondary Principal of the Year. His commitment to improving the lives of students in the Bethlehem Area School District and beyond, make him a very deserving recipient of this award."

An educator for 25 years, Dr. Bailey has served in his current role as the principal at Liberty High School, BASD's largest school with approximately 2,800 students, since 2012. Previously, he held the roles of teaching assistant, special education teacher, assistant principal and principal.

Under Dr. Bailey's leadership, Liberty High School has become one of the leading trauma-informed high schools in Pennsylvania. He is also the co-founder of the Multicultural Student Leadership Conference, which was attended by over 200 high school students for the past 10 years. These and his many other accomplishments have created a network of support for Liberty's students, families and staff.

According to PA Principals Association Executive Director, Paul M. Healey, Ph.D., "We congratulate Dr. Harrison Bailey III for being named the 2021 Secondary Principal of the Year. He was chosen for this prestigious award by a committee of his peers from the PA Principals Association who cited several areas of exemplary leadership in the areas of student mental health, restorative practices, trauma-informed schools, a multicultural leadership conference for students and the implementation of engineering and biomedical science programs."

Dr. Bailey earned his undergraduate degree in anthropology and sociology from Lafayette College, and a master's degree in education at Lehigh University, where he also received his Pennsylvania teaching certification and principal's certification. Additionally, he completed his doctoral degree in educational leadership at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania.

In addition to being a husband and father, Dr. Bailey is a researcher and speaker on 'trauma and resilience,' as well as 'equity and male students of color.' He is the coordinator of the Lehigh Valley Men for the Proper Development of Male Youth and a track and field coach. He has previously served on numerous community boards and taskforces and was a former college track and field and football athlete as well as a professional arena football athlete.

"It is an incredibly humbling honor to be selected for this award. Although I am extremely thankful for the recognition, the outstanding students and staff of Liberty High School deserve it so much more. I am truly blessed to serve the people of the Bethlehem community," shared Dr. Bailey.

"Dr. Bailey's leadership in advocating for trauma-informed schools transformed Liberty High School for both students and staff. Thanks to this work, the Bethlehem Area School District's 22 schools now incorporate trauma-informed practices and Dr. Bailey provides workshops for teachers and principals across the state. He is a great choice for PA Principal of the Year."

**- Joseph Roy
Superintendent
Bethlehem Area School District**