



PENNSYLVANIA PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

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Robert Palazzo Named Pennsylvania's 2022 National Distinguished Principal

(ENOLA, PA) — **Robert Palazzo**, Principal of Panther Valley Elementary School (PVES) in the Panther Valley School District (PVSD), in Carbon County, has been named **Pennsylvania's 2022 National Distinguished Principal (NDP) by the Pennsylvania Principals Association**. As a state winner in the National Association of Elementary School Principals' (NAESP) National Distinguished Principal (NDP) Program, Mr. Palazzo will be honored by NAESP and the PA Principals Association at special award ceremonies in the fall.

Dr. Jonathan G. Ross, President of the PA Principals Association and Chair of the NDP Selection Committee, said, "Our committee is pleased to announce Robert Palazzo as the 2022 Pennsylvania National Distinguished Principal. During his tenure as principal, PVES has been transformed into a community-focused learning environment that partners with multiple businesses and organizations to provide an exemplary program for the children in their care. Whether spearheading an effort to build his students a playground or promoting literacy by bringing the school "Book Buggy" to local events, Mr. Palazzo stops at nothing to secure needed services for his students. As a result, the teachers, staff and community at large feel a part of something greater than themselves that will undoubtedly shape the lives of a generation of children for the better. We have no doubt that Mr. Palazzo represents everything that is great about Pennsylvania principals and will represent us well on the national stage."

Mr. Palazzo served in his current role as the principal at Panther Valley Elementary School (K-3) since 2017. Previously, he was a school psychologist in the Palmerton Area School District from 2008-2017.

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“It is an honor to receive this award and even more so to know that I was nominated by members of the Panther Valley community. This award is one that I share with the entire faculty, students and community of the Panther Valley School District. Together, in the middle of a pandemic, we have worked collaboratively to combat the barriers our students and families face to create a dynamic learning environment for our students to learn and grow,” said Mr. Palazzo.

Under Mr. Palazzo's leadership, the first pre-kindergarten program within PVSD was established; a playground for students was built through community-based, grassroots fundraising within 18 months; and in collaboration with St. Luke's University Health Network, a family development specialist position was created in the district to help increase preventative factors and decrease barriers within the community. Mr. Palazzo explained, “This school year, we opened the first pre-kindergarten class in the history of the district and have plans to expand the program for the following year by opening an early learning center.”

“Robert Palazzo is a man of good character. He is able to balance his professional career and his family in a manner that is respected by his staff, friends and community. The Panther Valley School District has been fortunate to have Robert Palazzo as Principal,” shared David McAndrew, Superintendent of Panther Valley School District.

Mr. Palazzo is a member of the Pennsylvania Principals Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. In 2021, he was awarded the Pennsylvania Community Star by the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health for his collaborative efforts with St. Luke's University Health Network.

According to PA Principals Association Executive Director, Dr. Eric C. Eshbach, “In the current environment where school leaders are struggling to address learning loss, the social-emotional needs of students and the varying demands of parents and communities, the selection of Robert Palazzo as Pennsylvania's National Distinguished Principal for 2022 sends a powerful message to our members. Mr. Palazzo has a keen understanding of each of these issues and has developed practices in his school that other principals should be clamoring to replicate. The Pennsylvania Principals Association has a history of awarding the NDP honor to principals who become mentors for others and leaders in our state. I am confident Robert will live up to that tradition.”

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Mr. Palazzo earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology, a Master of Science in school psychology and his Certificate in Advanced Study in School Psychology from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Oswego. He received a Master of Education from Wilkes University.

“Much of my success, is due in part to the support and patience of my wife, Katie. We have a five-year-old daughter, Isabel, and a two-year-old daughter, Rose, who keep me busy when I am not at work,” he shared.

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Robert J. Palazzo

About the PA Principals Association: The PA Principals Association membership of approximately 3,500 is composed of elementary, middle level and secondary school principals, assistant principals and other educational leaders and is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To ensure a quality education for every child by comprehensively supporting the educational leaders of our schools.*

The Vision of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To be the best service organization of its kind in the United States.*

