



PENNSYLVANIA PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

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For Immediate Release

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Michael Fedisson Named Pennsylvania's 2024 Principal of the Year

(ENOLA, PA) — Michael Fedisson, Principal of Bellefonte Area High School in the Bellefonte Area School District, was named **Pennsylvania's 2024 Principal of the Year by the Pennsylvania Principals Association**. As a state winner in the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Principal of the Year Program, Mr. Fedisson is a candidate for the National Secondary Principal of the Year. He will be recognized for his achievement by both the PA Principals Association and NASSP.

According to Dr. Eric Eshbach, Executive Director, PA Principals Association, "I am pleased with the selection of Michael Fedisson, an outstanding leader and principal, as Pennsylvania's 2024 Principal of the Year. He was chosen for this honor by a committee of his peers for his leadership and extraordinary contributions to his school, his students and his community. It is clear that Mr. Fedisson is a strong, collaborative leader who is committed to the success of everyone around him. We are extremely proud to have him represent the PA Principals Association and secondary principals across the commonwealth."

An educator for 21 years and an administrator for 13 years, Mr. Fedisson has been Bellefonte Area High School's principal since 2017. He began his career at Bellefonte Area School District as a seventh-grade English Language Arts teacher at Bellefonte Middle School (2003-2011); briefly served as the dean of students at Bellefonte Area High School (2011-2012); and served as vice principal at Bellefonte Area High School (2012-2017). In addition, he is a proud graduate of Bellefonte Area High School and a former student athlete.

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Under Mr. Fedisson's exemplary leadership, numerous programs and initiatives were developed and implemented in his school. He is proud of the strong courses and curriculum offered at the high school, such as their agriculture education program, "Project Lead the Way Engineering Curriculum," and the recent addition of a "Developing Future Educators" course to address the teacher shortage and highlight education careers for students. His school focuses on career education through the School to Career Committee which has expanded career speaking, job shadowing, internship and co-op opportunities for all students. "In the past three years, we have brought in over 90 speakers to provide students with further opportunities to understand various aspects of careers and the world of work," he shared. As a result of this program, students have developed a career portfolio to highlight potential career choice, post-secondary training/work plan and contributions through community service.

One of Mr. Fedisson's first initiatives at the high school was to implement a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, and in his second year as vice principal, they were able to reduce their office discipline referrals by 50 percent. He said, "With continued work from our team, we have maintained that level and cultivated a positive culture in our school with a team of more than 50 student leaders. We have served as a model PBIS program for other schools in central PA."

In the past several years, Bellefonte Area High School has increased its focus on student and adult mental health. As part of the district's Social Emotional Learning (SEL) committee, "Belong, Be Connected, Be Future Ready," Mr. Fedisson and his team strive to provide additional mental health and wellness supports for staff and students. "Most notably, we have partnered with a local non-profit group, The Jana Marie Foundation, to offer training in teen mental health first aid to all 10th graders," he explained.

According to Tammie Burnaford, Superintendent, Bellefonte Area School District, "Mr. Fedisson has done a wonderful job of instituting many student-centered initiatives within our high school. He also works very hard at investing in the overall pride that the students and staff have for being members of the Bellefonte Area School District. I am immensely proud of his achievements; they are well deserved!"

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Mr. Fedisson earned a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Education from California University of Pennsylvania. He holds memberships in the PA Principals Association, NASSP, the PA Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

“I am extremely humbled by this honor. It represents the dedication of our school team and is an opportunity for me to express my gratitude to those who have supported and believed in me along the way,” said Mr. Fedisson.

In addition to career as an educator, Mr. Fedisson is actively involved in his community. He is a 2022 graduate of Leadership Centre County and serves as a committee member for Leadership Centre County Education Day (2022-2024). In 2006, he was named the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Fedisson and his wife, Amanda, have three children, James, Jacob and Aubrey. As a family, they enjoy spending time outdoors, hiking, kayaking and fishing.

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Michael Fedisson

About the PA Principals Association: The PA Principals Association membership of approximately 3,300 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.

For more information about the Bellefonte Area School District, visit: <https://www.basd.net/>