

PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

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Dr. Michael James Almeida Named Rhode Island Middle School Principal of the Year

March 23, 2010 - The Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals has named Dr. Michael James Almeida, Principal of Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School in Coventry, as its 2010 Middle School Principal of the Year.

Dr. Almeida holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Education from Rhode Island College, a Master's Degree in Secondary Administration from Providence College, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Johnson & Wales University. As a Physical education and health teacher, Dr. Almeida taught in Providence, Westerly, and Warwick. He served as Principal of Riverside Middle School in East Providence from 2003–2007 and has been Principal of Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School (ASFMS) in Coventry since July of 2007.

Teachers note that the hallmark of Dr. Almeida's leadership is "to build a cooperative spirit within our learning community." A truly collaborative leader, Dr. Almeida has worked with all stakeholders to develop a school culture at ASFMS which fosters shared decision making; development of strategic plans which reflect shared vision, mission, values, and beliefs; continuous collaboration around learning and teaching; creation of high expectations for all school community members including teachers, administrators, students, and parents; and ongoing celebration and recognition of student and faculty achievement.

Superintendent Kenneth DiPietro notes that "Dr. Almeida maintains a personal and professional goal for school personalization through his advocacy for advisories, common planning time, web and listserv notices to parents, learning walks, RtI, PBIS, professional learning communities and full staff engagement in decision making." The superintendent further notes that clear evidence of Dr. Almeida's capacity as a principal is the "constant and overwhelming support of parents and staff."

Described as "a consummate professional" whose decisions always "reflect the best interest of students," Dr. Almeida has "extraordinary vision and knowledge of current best practice." "He is a firm believer in cultivating shared leadership and capitalizing on individual strengths to build capacity." Teachers feel he motivates, inspires, and empowers them. They credit him with transforming their faculty and professional development meetings by focusing on Accountable Talk, formative assessments, differentiated instruction, and analysis of data to inform instruction. "Omnipresent throughout the building, Dr. Almeida is an active listener when talking with students, parents, and teachers. He processes ideas from everyone and incorporates them into solutions."

The Middle School Principal of the Year Awards Program is conducted nationally by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) with financial support from MetLife. In October 2010, Dr. Almeida along with the winners from each state will be honored at ceremonies to be held in Washington, D.C. He will also be recognized at a RIASP dinner meeting to be held at the Radisson Hotel in Warwick on May 27, 2010.

Dr. Almeida resides in East Providence, Rhode Island.