

News Release: PGCPs Principals Receive State Recognition from the AEMS Alliance

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For Immediate Release

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UPPER MARLBORO, MD – Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) Principals Walter Reap, Edward M. Felegy Elementary School, and Wendell Coleman, Oxon Hill Middle School, were recognized at the 4th Annual Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) Arts Leadership Recognition Award Breakfast and Forum.

The Alvin and Louise Myerberg Arts Leadership Recognition Award recognized Reap and Coleman and several other principals in the state at The Baltimore Museum of Art on Wednesday, October 28, 2015. The award honors outstanding principals who recognize the power of the arts in preparing students with 21st century skills.

“AEMS is pleased to recognize Maryland principals who work to ensure that their students receive a high-quality arts education that supports teaching and learning in and through the arts,” said Alexa Milroy, Director of Program and Administration, AEMS Alliance. “These educational leaders recognize the power of the arts in preparing today’s learner with 21st century skills and they establish arts-rich environments so that all students have arts experiences during and after school.”

The AEMS Alliance received 12 principal nominations, from eight different Maryland school systems for the AEMS award. Each school system was allowed to nominate up to three principals for the award. The nominee application included a written response to give evidence of various criteria, such as inclusion of the arts in the vision and/or mission statement for the school, collaboration with community cultural partners, advocacy for the value and importance of arts education in the school, the community, and beyond, and evidence of arts-rich experiences for all students beyond what is allocated by the school system. A letter of support from a school staff member and/or community member was also required.

“This recognition is a huge honor to me because it recognizes the work the entire Edward M. Felegy school community is undertaking, with so many of the stakeholders in the district, to increase student achievement across all content areas through arts integration,” said Reap. “The county’s focus on literacy has provided a platform for the arts to take off and we are thrilled that our students are thinking across the content areas while being exposed to a variety of arts forms.”

Added Coleman: “The arts are extremely important because it gives students different ways to express themselves and gives teachers another method of engaging students in learning. We have expanded the arts program at Oxon Hill Middle to include a Drama and Visual Arts program in addition to our Chorus, Band and Orchestra programs, which have all seen growth over these last five years.”

Reap became principal at Felegy last school year, after serving as principal in Anne Arundel County for nine years. Coleman has been the principal at Oxon Hill Middle School for five years.

-30-

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), one of the nation's 20th largest school districts, has 201 schools and centers, more than 133,000 students and nearly 20,000 employees. The school system serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities located in the Washington, DC suburbs. PGCPS is nationally recognized for college and career-readiness programs that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including dual enrollment and language immersion.

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