



Three Top School Leaders Named Finalists for 2018 NASSP National Principal of the Year

Principals from SC, IL, and GA to be recognized at Principals Institute

Dr. Tommy Welch Named NASSP Finalists

Reston, VA – Three principals—one from South Carolina, Illinois, and Georgia—are finalists for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)'s 2018 National Principal of the Year (POY) award. They will be recognized at the Principals Institute on September 24–27, which will be attended by dignitaries, policymakers, and industry peers.

Tommy Welch, Meadowcreek High School, Norcross, GA, @principalwelch

In his six years as principal at Meadowcreek High School (MHS), Tommy Welch took one of Georgia's largest and lowest performing, yet most diverse urban school and raised the graduation rate from 47 to 73 percent. One teacher described Welch as embodying Muhammad Ali's idea that "impossible is nothing!" and this is apparent in initiatives he has implemented, including the introduction of more STEM courses, project-based learning, on-campus internships with business partners and state politicians, and transforming the school into five smaller college- and career-theme learning centers. MHS has Georgia's first full-service bank in a school, as well as a maker space designed in collaboration with Georgia Tech. The guiding principles that motivate his school improvement efforts are collaborate, inspire, and own—Welch uses these to empower students, staff, and the community to accomplish their goals and succeed.

"Each of these extraordinary school leaders has synchronized all the small improvements through the school to make sure they are building toward a large improvement," stated NASSP Executive Director JoAnn Bartoletti. "The strides they have made in school improvement are evident in the engagement and success of their students and we honor them for these accomplishments."

School administrators throughout Georgia are extremely proud of Dr. Welch's accomplishments at Meadowcreek High School. Melton Callahan, Executive Director of the Georgia Association of Secondary School Principals "is pleased to recognize an outstanding school principal who personifies excellence in providing quality leadership in his school community."

These three finalists will be recognized at the 2017 NASSP Principals Institute, an event that convenes all state principals from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Schools, and the Department of Defense Education Activity. The institute will be held in Washington, D.C., September 24–27, 2017, and will

involve a series of professional development activities and meetings with congressional members.

The National Principal of the Year will be announced in October during [National Principals Month](#).