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Press Release
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NJASA Names Three Regional Superintendents of the Year



Region I
Tracey Marinelli
Little Falls Township



Region II
Joseph Isola
Howell Township



Region III
Dr. Joseph Meloche
Cherry Hill

The 2021 NJASA Regional Superintendents of the Year Are Available to Comment on Education-Related Issues.

Trenton, NJ Oct. 23, 2020..... The New Jersey Association of School Administrators ([NJASA](http://www.njasa.net)) has selected three regional 2021 Superintendents of the Year. They are: Region I winner – Tracey Marinelli, Chief Education Officer, [Little Falls Township](#); Region II winner - Joseph Isola, Chief Education Officer, [Howell Township](#); and Region III winner – Dr. Joseph Meloche, Chief Education Officer, [Cherry Hill](#).

The three Regional Superintendents of the Year will be introduced to New Jersey residents and the educational community on Oct 28 via the NJASA [YouTube](#) site. Association Executive Director Dr. Richard G. Bozza said, "These three remarkable chief education officers provide vision, imagination, and

compassion for the students, staff and communities they serve. On behalf of NJASA, it is a privilege to acknowledge and congratulate New Jersey's 2021 three regional superintendents."

Region 1 winner Tracey Marinelli, an educator for 22 years, has been at the helm of the Little Falls Township School District since 2015. She notes, "My role, as superintendent, is to cultivate the 3Rs: relationships, results and returns. Of these, relationships must come first. Building relationships is about 'showing up.' It is about being present and engaged even when you are not asked, and it is not expected."

Under her leadership, Little Falls developed a full inclusion program where all students with special needs learn alongside their grade level peers. As a result, not only did Little Falls receive the prestigious Lighthouse District Award in 2019 for closing the achievement gap between general education and special education students, they also receive high scores on annual student, parent and staff satisfaction surveys and have achieved a monumental shift in mindset and instructional practice.

With the support of an amazing school board, Region II winner Joe Isola was able to envision and launch the Monmouth County Schools Partnership for Wellness, a partnership of approximately 60 school districts focusing on SEL and mental health for our students, staff and communities. Through collaboration with member districts, the Monmouth County Schools Partnership for Wellness strives to enhance awareness regarding mental health and well-being topics, cultivate empathy for individuals who struggle with various types of mental health conditions, and engage school community members in this important work all in the name of saving lives.

He joined the Howell Township district as a middle school principal in 2004 and assumed the district's chief education officer position in 2014. Prior to his service in the Howell Township, he worked in the NYC Public School system.

Dr. Joseph Meloche, Region 3 winner, is an outspoken advocate for the importance of student voice as a central component in the educational process. *Education Week* identified him as a "Leader to Learn From" in 2018 for his expertise in student voice. He provides the critically essential leadership required to provide an academic environment of excellence throughout the district, which embraces diversity while motivating and engaging all students to be successful as scholars and as people. Equity and student voice are the foundations of Dr. Meloche's ongoing work in Cherry Hill. His collaborative work with the Cherry Hill African American Civic Association (CHAACA), the Cherry Hill Hispanic Civic Association (CHHiCA), the Zone PTA, and the Cherry Hill Special Education PTA (CHSEPTA) allow equity and voice to remain central to every discussion.

After more than 20 years in public education, including 12 in a variety of administrative roles in Cherry Hill, he was appointed Chief Education Officer of the Cherry Hill Public Schools in 2015.

The next step in the process for the three regional winners will be the selection of a New Jersey candidate to participate in the [AASA](#) National Superintendent of the Year Award. A committee of NJASA Past Presidents and former Regional Superintendents of the Year will select the 2021 New Jersey Superintendent of the Year. Now in its 34th year, the National Superintendent of the Year® Program pays

tribute to the talent and vision of the men and women who lead our nation's public schools. This program is sponsored by First Student, AIG Retirement Services and AASA.

The selection qualifications for the State and National Superintendent of the Year include: meeting the needs of their students, demonstrated communication strength, a commitment to professional development and growth, and significant community involvement. Additionally, at the state and regional levels, NJASA has an additional qualification that addresses service with the county affiliate and NJASA.

AASA will announce the National Superintendent of the Year at its Virtual Conference on Education in February 2021.

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About NJASA:

The New Jersey Association of School Administrators is an organization of chief education officers and school administrators who lead school districts in New Jersey's 21 counties. The Association's mission is to ensure a superior statewide system of education. Through ongoing professional training and education, the Association shares knowledge among its members about best practices from both educational and administrative perspectives. Its goal is to move education forward by ensuring the highest quality of instruction for all New Jersey children. The Association is located at 920 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08618-5328. For more information -- PH: 609.599.2900 / Fax: 609.599.9359 / website: www.njasa.net.

Education Brief Videos

Due to the complexity of educational topics, NJASA has released a series of videos to help parents and taxpayers better understand the issues. Each video can be accessed on a special NJASA YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/TheNJASA or by clicking on the YouTube icon on the NJASA website, www.njasa.net.