



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

1805 Chantilly Street, Richmond · Virginia 23230 · (804) 355-6791 · FAX (804) 355-

Web Address: www.vaesp.org Email Address: vaesp0info@gmail.com
“*Serving Elementary and Middle Level Principals*”

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jim Baldwin

Phone: (804) 355-6791

Clint Mitchell selected as Virginia’s Recipient of the 2021 NAESP National Distinguished Principal Award



Fairfax, VIRGINIA – April 8, 2021 Dr. Clint Mitchell, principal of Mount Vernon Woods Elementary in Fairfax, VA was selected as Virginia’s recipient of the **2021 NAESP National Distinguished Principal Award**. The award is presented each year as a collaborative effort between the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP). The 2021 celebration marks the 38th year that the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) in conjunction with the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals (VAESP) has presented this prestigious

award. The National Distinguished Principals® (NDP) program was established to recognize elementary and middle level principals who set high standards for instruction, student achievement, character, and climate for the students, families, and staffs in their learning communities. The program was based on three fundamental ideas:

- Children’s attitudes towards learning and their perceptions of themselves as lifelong learners are established in the beginning school years.
- The scope and quality of children’s educational experiences are determined primarily by the school principal, who establishes, through the important work of teachers and the support of caring parents, the character of a particular school’s program.
- The dedication and enthusiasm of the outstanding principals who guide children’s early education experiences should be acknowledged to both show appreciation for their work as well as to allow them to serve as models for others in the field.

Each year, NDPs represent Pre-K – 8th grade public schools from all across the country as well as principals in U.S. private schools and those from the United States Departments of Defense Office of Educational Activity and the United States Department of State Office of Overseas Schools. Public school elementary and middle-level principals are nominated by peers in their state, and final selections are made by committees appointed by each of NAESP’s state affiliate

offices. Criteria for selection of the principals, set by NAESP, require that the honorees are active principals of schools where programs are designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students and where there are firmly established community ties with parents and local business organizations.

Due to current CDC guidance on group size gatherings, Dr. Mitchell received notification of his award during a surprise visit to the regularly scheduled virtual FCPS Principals' meeting on April 8, 2021 by VAESP Executive Director, Jim Baldwin. Also participating in the announcement were Dr. Scott Brabrand, Superintendent, Fairfax County Public Schools. Clint was joined during the announcement by his wife, Jehovanni. Also present were VAESP Board members from across Virginia including Jamill Jones, VAESP President, Andrew Buchheit, NAESP Representative and past president, Deborah Frazier, Eastern Zone Director, past president and former member of the NAESP Board of Directors, Zone 3, Amy Schott, Federal Relations Coordinator, Derrick Womack, Marie Lemmon and Patricia Zissios, , Potomac Zone Directors, Derrick Womack, Piedmont Zone Director, Amy Larsen, Northern Zone Director, Virginia Gills, Central Zone Director, Samantha Reed, Southwestern Zone Director and Valerie Cason-Williamston, Assistant Principal Representative to the Board.

Dr. Mitchell was nominated and selected by his fellow principals through a statewide search process conducted by VAESP. He holds his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Brooklyn College City University of New York, a Master's of Education from George Mason Universities in Virginia and his Doctorate from Virginia Tech. "At the helm of every successful school is a successful principal. Our NAESP National Distinguished Principal program provides us with an opportunity to recognize the outstanding leadership of principals and their commitment to creating successful learning communities. Because of them, students thrive academically, teachers grow professionally, and communities are strengthened," said former NAESP Executive Director, Gail Connelly.

This Summer, Dr. Mitchell will be recognized during an awards celebration as a guest of VAESP at its Annual Conference in Virginia Beach. Additionally, in the fall, he will travel as a guest of NAESP to Washington, D.C., for two days of activities planned to honor and bring well-deserved recognition to the elementary and middle-level educators chosen by the states, the District of Columbia, plus private and overseas schools. He will be formally recognized by VAESP at the next scheduled VAESP Conference.

Dr. Mitchell. has been a member of FAESP/VAESP/NAESP and recipient of the PWCS Principal of the Year Award, Washington Post Distinguished Leadership Award and the VAESP School Bell Award. He was nominated as FCPS Regional Principal of the Year. Service to community includes: United Community, SCYPT/Community Schools/One Fairfax, FCPS Community Schools Task Force and Keynote speaker for No Kid Hungry/Share our Strength.

Call James P. Baldwin (VAESP headquarters) at 804-355-6791 for additional information.