

NAESP
NATIONAL DISTINGUISHED PRINCIPALS® PROGRAM

A Program to Recognize Excellence in
Elementary and Middle Level Principals'
School Leadership

Information and Criteria Packet





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PROGRAM BACKGROUND & CRITERIA

The National Distinguished Principals® (NDP) program was established in 1984 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. Honorees from private schools and overseas schools are selected by special committees.

Criteria established by NAESP requires that the selected principal:

- Has been a member of NAESP for **three** consecutive years at the time of nomination and maintains membership through the conclusion of the NAESP Award Ceremony in October;
- Is an active principal of a school in which a commitment to excellence is clearly evident through programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students, and through firmly established community ties with parents and local business organizations;
- Has been an active principal for at least **five** years (NOTE: Only those years served as a building *principal*, not assistant principal, may count toward the necessary five);
- Will remain in active service in a position of school leadership during the school year in which they will serve as NDP;
- Shows a strong commitment to the principalship through active membership in professional associations;
- Is respected by students, colleagues, parents, and the community at large;
- Assumes an active role in their community, distinguishing themselves as a leader in civic, religious, or humanitarian activities;
- Shows strong educational leadership by setting high expectations for school staff and students; and
- Maintains an orderly, purposeful learning environment.

PLEASE NOTE

Anyone currently holding a position on the **NAESP Board of Directors**, during the official nomination time period or during the year he/she would serve as NDP, is ineligible for NDP selection.

Elementary school NDP candidates must be principals of schools with students in either grades pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, or 4, though older students may attend as well.

Middle level school NDP candidates must be principals of schools with students in grades 4, 5, 6, 7, and/or 8 only.

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APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- **Contact Information:** School and Home.
- **Professional Information:** Experience, Education, Activities, Awards, Honors, Community Service.
- **Significant Accomplishments as a Principal:** Top three.
- **Best Practices:** Applications of change at your school during your tenure that have shown positive results/outcomes.
- **School Leadership Statements:** Four questions regarding professional beliefs, practices, and accomplishments.
- **Supervisor Certification:** Endorsement by employer.
- **Letters of Reference:** Four total, from: the nominee's supervisor, a fellow administrator, a teacher, and a parent or civic/community leader.