

For Immediate Release

11 a.m. on September 28, 2009

Contact:

Elliot Smalley
(843) 937-6303

Lucy Beckham Named National High School Principal of the Year

CHARLESTON, SC- CCSD's Lucy G. Beckham, principal of Wando High School in Mt. Pleasant, SC, has been named the 2010 MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) National Secondary Principal of the Year.

Elliot Smalley
Deputy for Strategic
Planning and Communications

Dr. Nancy J. McGinley
Superintendent of Schools

"She is a national leader who inspires excellence in everyone around her—someone we all learn from—and we could not be happier for her and the entire Wando community," said CCSD Superintendent Dr. Nancy McGinley. "Wando is one of the most impressive schools—of *any* grade level—that you will find in the country, and now its leader has deservedly been given the most prestigious honor that a high school principal can receive."

PRESENTATION OF AWARD AND THE PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR PROGRAM:

This award was announced on Monday, September 28 at 10 a.m. during a surprise assembly at the school. Several state and local dignitaries were present for the presentation of this award, including CCSD Superintendent Dr. Nancy J. McGinley, State Superintendent Dr. Jim Rex, NASSP Executive Director Gerald N. Tirozzi, MetLife Financial Representative Michael Leonard, and South Carolina Association of School Administrators Executive Director Molly Spearman.

Each year the MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year program focuses attention on the outstanding work principals do in middle level and high schools across the country. The program annually honors secondary school principals who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession.

ABOUT LUCY BECKHAM:

Beckham has been an educator for more than 33 years and an administrator for 15 years. She has served as principal of Wando High School since 1998. Despite having 3,100 students, Wando is

one of the highest-performing high schools in the state. Under Beckham's leadership, Wando has won national acclaim, including mention among the best schools in the country by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Beckham became principal of Wando while the district was in the process of designing a larger building to accommodate the town's rapid growth. When the new school opened in 2004, Beckham was determined to not let the massive structure deter faculty and staff from reaching each and every student.

She helped form four career-related schools of study and a ninth-grade academy that provide opportunities for personal connections. Students at all grade levels meet with faculty advisers weekly and as they move to the upper grades, they are assigned to an administrator/ counselor team who monitors and supports each student until graduation. Further, Beckham makes a strident effort to keep in constant communication with parents and the community at-large through the school's website and the weekly education column she pens for the local newspaper.

Under the conviction that quality teachers are the driving force behind the success of a school, Beckham has recruited some of the nation's top educators to work at Wando. She supports her staff through continued professional development and with the quality feedback received from the 200-plus observations completed monthly by the school's administrative team. Teacher satisfaction is a top priority for Beckham. A recent school climate survey showed that over the last four years, teacher satisfaction with the school's learning environment skyrocketed from 85.2% to 97.9% and in the same period, satisfaction with the social and physical environment jumped to 98.5%—a true testament to Beckham's passion for sustaining a positive and supportive learning environment for teachers and students alike.

"Wando High School has become a national example of high school excellence under Lucy Beckham's leadership. Though we are not surprised by her winning this honor, we could not be prouder of her," said CCSD Superintendent Dr. Nancy McGinley. "She shows just how critical principals—as school leaders who set the tone and vision for schools—are to achieving 'The Victory in the Classroom.'"

For more information, please contact Elliot Smalley at (843) 937-6303.

###