

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 21, 2015

Contact: Michael Chamness  
(217) 753-2213/ (217) 836-5019 (cell)

## **Sterling's Everett honored as 'Superintendent of Distinction'**

Sterling Superintendent Tad Everett was honored as a regional "Superintendent of Distinction" at an awards luncheon Tuesday (April 21) at the governor's Executive Mansion in Springfield. Everett was selected by his peers in the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Northwest Region.

"My life is so extremely blessed! First of all, I have a Lord who provides me eternal peace and contentment, a family who provides me unending joy, and friends who provide me great happiness. But I also have a board of education, a staff, and a community who support me so that I have the opportunity to live out my passion for kids," said Everett, who has been an educator for 21 years, the last seven as superintendent of Sterling Community Unit District 5. "When I was informed that I was representing the Northwest Division in the IASA's 'Superintendent of Distinction' award, I was very humbled. To even be considered for this award is such an honor and a privilege, mainly because there are so many other deserving superintendents in my region.

"As I reflect back on the year we had at Sterling Public Schools, I am simply amazed at what we were able to accomplish, especially in the economic environment we faced. The work we completed at Sterling Public Schools was only made possible through the abilities and efforts of many outstanding people. Therefore, I by no means consider this an individual achievement, but rather a district and community award."

Everett was one of 20 school superintendents from around the state to be recognized as a "Superintendent of Distinction." Governor Bruce Rauner and IASA Executive Director Brent Clark were among those taking part in the awards ceremony.

"Public education is facing some of its most difficult times, and that is when leadership is most important. These 'Superintendents of Distinction' were selected by their peers in their regions because of the dedication, commitment and leadership that they have demonstrated, and we are pleased to recognize them for what they do to fulfill the promise of public education for children all over the state," Clark said.

Everett attained his Bachelor's Degree, his Master's Degree in Education Administration and his Education Specialist Degree from Eastern Illinois University. He currently is completing his Doctor of Education Degree at Western Illinois University. He served as a teacher, athletic director, assistant principal, principal, human resource director and assistant superintendent before being named superintendent of the Sterling district in 2008.

Everett has helped guide the Sterling district to become one of Illinois' 34 Race to the Top districts and implementation of a K-12 literacy and math curriculum that aligns to the new Illinois Learning Standards. In 2014, Sterling High School was honored by U.S. News and World Report with its Silver Ranking for being in the top 10 percent of all high schools. Other accomplishments include:

- Raising \$1.2 million in private donations to fund Sterling High School's 1:1 Macbook Air laptop initiative;
- Developing a district communications plan to improve communications with stakeholders;
- Completing two collective bargaining agreements with the certified and non-certified unions; and
- Balancing the district's budget despite the state's deep cuts to education funding.

Everett's wife, Cindy, is a chemistry professor at Sauk Valley Community College. The couple has two sons, Zack and Tyler, and a daughter, Katelyn.

The awards and luncheon were sponsored by Horace Mann, one of the nation's largest insurers focusing on educators' needs, and Herff Jones, one of the largest suppliers of class rings, yearbooks and graduation caps, gowns and announcements.

"Superintendents face many challenges. From balancing budgets to keeping schools and students safe, they work to put the needs of students first and consistently work to find, nurture and support quality teachers," said Marita Zuraitis, Horace Mann President and Chief Executive Officer. "Their efforts make their schools outstanding learning environments, and that excellence is what the IASA is celebrating. Horace Mann is proud to recognize and applaud the IASA 'Superintendents of Distinction.' "

"Herff Jones celebrates the educational leaders who are being recognized today for promoting and encouraging excellence in their schools," said Sales Representative Elizabeth Elsner. "Thank you for educating our children."