

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Fairfield's Zurliene honored as 'Superintendent of Distinction'**

Fairfield Superintendent Diana Zurliene was honored as a regional "Superintendent of Distinction" at an awards luncheon Tuesday (April 21) at the governor's Executive Mansion in Springfield. Zurliene was selected by her peers in the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Egyptian Region.

"I felt very humbled to receive this honor. There are so many superintendents out there that are doing the same things that I am in always striving to do what is best for students. The position of superintendent is a demanding one and especially now as I believe the process of education is undergoing a transformation that is unparalleled," said Zurliene, who has been an educator for 30 years and has served as superintendent of Fairfield Public School District 112 for six years. "The focus on teaching as it relates to student learning, the use of technology and the amount of information that can be accessed is unprecedented. One of our duties as a superintendent is to lead our students, staff and parents into this new age with a confidence that the education presented to our students will prepare them for a future that is ever changing."

Zurliene 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.

Zurliene attained her Bachelor's Degree in Health Education, and her Master's Degree and a Specialist's Degree in Educational Administration. She served as a teacher, dean of students and principal before being named superintendent at Fairfield in 2009.

At Fairfield, Zurliene has helped achieve a number of accomplishments, including:

- Implementing a 1:1 program with Chromebooks, with students in grades 6-8 having their own devices with fourth- and fifth-graders getting devices next year'
- Implementing professional learning meetings for staff to focus on student instruction and identifying best practices;
- Completing a 10-room addition to the K-3 building;
- Completing a new gymnasium and lobby for the junior high; and
- Remodeling a 61-year-old building by utilizing maintenance grants and district funds.

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."