

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **LaSalle's Marenda honored as 'Superintendent of Distinction'**

LaSalle Superintendent Daniel F. Marenda was honored as a regional "Superintendent of Distinction" at an awards luncheon Tuesday (April 21) at the governor's Executive Mansion in Springfield. Marenda was selected by his peers in the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA) Starved Rock Region.

"I am honored to be selected for this distinction, especially because it is a recognition that comes from my peers in the superintendency. The Starved Rock Region has an outstanding group of superintendents, any one of whom would be deserving of special recognition. I appreciate having the opportunity to work together with them and for them as their representative on the IASA Board of Directors and AASA Governing Board for the betterment of schools in Illinois and the nation," said Marenda, who has been an educator for 33 years, the last six as superintendent of LaSalle Elementary School District 122. "I would also like to acknowledge my Board of Education, staff and students who I consider equal recipients of this honor as all of the accomplishments at LaSalle Elementary Schools have truly been a team effort."

Marenda 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.

Marenda attained his Bachelor's Degree and Master's degree in Education from Illinois State University and currently is working on his Doctor of Education Degree at Western Illinois University. He was a teacher and principal before becoming superintendent at Spring Valley in 2005. He was named superintendent of the LaSalle district in 2009.

Marenda has helped guide the LaSalle district through challenging financial times, maintaining financial recognition status, the Illinois State Board of Education's highest financial category, despite being a high poverty district with and low Equalized Assessed Value (EAV). Even under those conditions, LaSalle has been able to improve its facilities and implement technology upgrades, including a 1:1 iPad/Chromebook program for students in grades 6 through 8.

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."