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Palmyra-Macedon Superintendent Dr. Bob Ike Named 2018 New York State School Superintendent of the Year

He is the first Wayne County superintendent to earn this honor in the award's 30-year-history; board president calls him a "phenomenal leader."

Albany, NY – The New York State Council of School Superintendents (THE COUNCIL) has announced Superintendent Dr. Bob Ike of the Palmyra-Macedon Central School District has been named the 2018 New York State School Superintendent of the Year.

"I hold my opportunity to serve the children of Palmyra-Macedon in the highest regard and I am honored to have been selected among my colleagues as New York State's Superintendent of the Year," Dr. Ike said. "The Palmyra-Macedon Central School District is what it is today because of the people who live and work in our community and the students who care about their school."

He added, "When a community has faith in the school district, students, faculty, and staff are able to thrive. When a Board of Education establishes a sense of trust and collaboration, hope is alive, and solidifies an attitude that public education matters in our community and is valued as an investment in the future."

Dr. Ike assumed his position as superintendent of the Palmyra-Macedon Central School District in August 2007. He resides with his family in Palmyra and graduated from South Seneca High School located in the Finger Lakes.

He has been recognized by his peers with the 2017 Genesee Valley ASCD Award for "outstanding work" in school supervision; the 2006 Outstanding Leadership Award from the Belleville Henderson FFA, when serving as that Belleville Henderson school district superintendent; and as the 2004 Middle School Principal of the Year, when serving as principal of Newfield Middle School, by the School Administrators Association of New York State and National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Dr. Ike was elected by his colleagues to represent the superintendents of the state on the Executive Committee of the New York State Council of School Superintendents and has been co-chair and co-author of one of the most significant leadership studies in the nation, titled *Snapshot of the Superintendency*. He currently serves as an adjunct professor and leadership coach with the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester and serves on the faculty of the Superintendent Development Program at the State University of New York College at Oswego.

Council Executive Director Dr. Charles Dedrick said, “Bob Ike is respected statewide as an educational leader and always exemplifies the best of our profession. As a member of our Executive Committee, he is a thoughtful and informed leader providing keen insight on key issues affecting our state. As the chair of the Snapshot Committee, he also understands how important superintendent leadership is to a school district’s success to provide students with a comprehensive educational experience.”

Under Dr. Ike’s leadership, Pal-Mac experienced great transformational change. Encountering a tumultuous situation upon taking office 10 years ago, Dr. Ike set out to conduct “100 Interviews in 100 Days” to see how the district’s operations, communication, and image could be improved. Words being used to describe the district and its climate at that time included “the need for teamwork” and “not transparent.”

Dr. Ike recently conducted a second round of “100 Interviews in 100 Days” a decade later and learned the district and community have seen tremendous growth, which many credit to his leadership and focused vision. The community today, based on the recent interviews, sees public education at Pal-Mac as an important investment in the present and the future and the two towns of Palmyra and Macedon are embraced as one school community.

Dr. Ike was nominated for Superintendent of the Year by Sharon Lang, president of the Palmyra-Macedon Board of Education. “His strong guidance has brought the district through difficult challenges, always presenting solutions that continually made the interests of students the priority,” she said. “He is a phenomenal leader who is highly visible in our district and in the community. Many new programs have been added over the years due to Dr. Ike’s vision, which has resulted in Pal-Mac being the ‘go to’ school in our region.”

Palmyra-Macedon Central School District accomplishments achieved during Dr. Ike’s tenure include:

- The high school graduation rate has risen from 82 percent to as high as 93 percent. The graduation rate for the increasing number of economically disadvantaged students in the district has grown from 61 percent in 2011 to 81 percent in recent school years.
- Students receiving a New York State Regents diploma with advanced designation increased 21 percent between 2016 and 2017, elevating the 10 percent increase experienced between 2013 and 2016.
- The Pal-Mac Middle School is the first and only middle school in upstate New York to have earned Lighthouse status as a Leader in Me school as part of a global leadership program.

- The Pal-Mac Primary School has been designated by the Children’s Institute as a Nationally Certified Primary Project School.
- With limitations to internet access in the rural communities of Palmyra and Macedon, the district has helped remove the barrier by equipping all district buses with wifi and by providing each student with a digital device, allowing for extended learning and research during bus commutes and sports travels. The district is also undergoing a 1:1 digital conversion.
- District staff and students are encouraged to embrace risk-taking and innovation, whereas thinking is proactive and setbacks are expected. Staff members turn failure into success.
- Every child in grades Pre-K to 8 receives a “welcome back to school” home visit by a school administrator prior to the start of every school year.
- Dr. Ike, along with the high school principal and teacher leaders, heightened the dual enrollment opportunities for students, expanding course offerings to high school students with credit from four colleges – Finger Lake Community College, Monroe Community College, State University of New York College at Oneonta, and Rochester Institute of Technology.
- Senior-class participation in work-based experiences, such as job shadowing, has increased from 10 percent to 95 percent.
- Pal-Mac has been granted the School of Distinction Award by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association for having 100 percent of its varsity programs earning the Scholar-Athlete Team Award for high GPA (an honor given to only 3 percent of schools in New York State).
- The district’s secondary schools are members of a global community of schools offering the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme. This status is held by only 617 schools in the United States and only 23 in New York State. Enrollment in IB English increased 233 percent between 2007 and 2017. Nearly 100 percent of 11th grade students are enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma English course, providing all students access to challenging coursework.

As the New York State Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Ike now becomes New York’s candidate for national superintendent of the year, to be awarded at the National Conference on Education of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) in Nashville Feb. 15-17, 2018.

The Superintendent of the Year Award was established in 1988 by AASA and is co-sponsored by the First Student, and the Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company (VALIC) and AASA.

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About the New York State Council of School Superintendents

The New York State Council of School Superintendents is a professional and advocacy organization with over a century of service to school superintendents and assistant superintendents in New York State. The Council provides more than 800 members with numerous professional development opportunities, publications and personal services while advocating for public education and the superintendency.