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NEWS and INFORMATION

Scottsdale Unified School District Superintendent Finalists Bios

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. (February 9, 2009) – The Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) Governing Board has narrowed the search for a new superintendent to three final candidates: Dr. Henry S. Bangser, Dr. Gary T. Catalani and Dr. Robert D. Hassler.

Dr. Henry S. Bangser

Dr. Henry S. Bangser is the former superintendent of the New Trier Township High School District 203 in Northfield/Winnetka, IL. That district has approximately 4,100 students in grades 9-12 and has had the highest ACT scores in Illinois since 1993.

Bangser began his career as a teacher in Illinois and moved into an assistant principal role there six years later. Three years after that, he became principal—a position he maintained until he became superintendent in New York four years later (1983). Dr. Bangser was superintendent of three school districts in New York and Illinois until he switched careers in 2006 to become CEO at Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Ltd.

Awards include the Northwestern University Alumni Merit Award, *Top 100 Educators in the United States to Watch* and the Northwestern University Educational Administration Award. He has held positions on several boards including the Board of Trustees for the Educational Records Bureau and Chair of the Board of Directors for Harris Bank in Winnetka.

Dr. Gary T. Catalani

Dr. Gary T. Catalani is the former superintendent for Community Unit School District 200 in Wheaton, IL. He maintained this position from 1999 until 2007, when he retired. The Community Unit School District has more than 14,300 students in preschool through high school.

Catalani began his career as an instructor in Illinois. Six years after starting to teach, he moved into the role of Dean of Students and the following year he became assistant principal (AP). After putting in six years as an AP, he moved into the role of principal, a role he kept for a decade. He next became superintendent-elect and, a year later, superintendent. After four years, he became superintendent of another district, the Community Unit School District.

Professional accomplishments for Catalani include serving on the Educational Research and Development Institute, Chairperson for the North Central Outcome Accreditation Team at an area high school, Instructional Leader for the Illinois Principals Association and Outstanding Young Administrator.

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Dr. Robert D. Hassler

Dr. Robert D. Hassler is superintendent for the North Penn School District in Lansdale, PA. In this K-12 district with more than 13,000 students, Hassler has achieved more than five years of consecutive increases in student performance in math and reading as well as record high scores in the recently implemented state writing assessment. He also closed the special needs achievement gap by 40 percent in math and 48 percent in reading.

Hassler began his career as a teacher and coach in Pennsylvania. Nine years into his career he became principal and, three years later, served as principal and curriculum coordinator and handled public relations. After several years, Hassler became assistant superintendent for curriculum and, four years later, he moved into the role of interim superintendent. At that point he moved into the assistant superintendent role with another district and, one year later, became superintendent—a role he has had for a decade now.

Hassler's accomplishments include receiving Expansion Management Magazine's "Gold Medal Award" for two years in a row, initiating National School Public Relations Award-winning communication outreach programs, establishing a Performance Cost Index to measure the rate of return on educational investment and initiating the North Penn Community Forum and Community Conversations Programs which were recognized as "best practices" by the Family Friendly Schools organization. In addition, he is on the board for the North Penn Chamber of Commerce and the North Penn Boys and Girls Club.

Public Forums

Candidates will attend public forums where the community can learn more about them and ask questions.

- Wednesday, February 18th, 6:30 p.m. Lecture Hall, Coronado HS, 2501 N. 74th St., Scottsdale.
- Thursday, February 19th, 6:30 p.m. Auditorium, Desert Mountain HS, 12575 E. Via Linda, Scottsdale.

Once selected, the new superintendent will replace Dr. John M. Baracy who retired on October 30, 2008.

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Scottsdale Unified School District is one of Arizona's most Excelling school districts, with 22 schools earning the state's highest rating—Excelling—for the sixth year in a row. All Scottsdale schools are rated as Excelling, Highly Performing, Performing Plus or Performing by the Arizona Department of Education. For more information about Scottsdale Unified schools, please visit www.susd.org.