

Caldwell Named as Wyoming 2010 National Distinguished Principal



Brent Caldwell, principal of Big Horn Elementary School in Big Horn was selected as Wyoming’s 2010 National Distinguished Principal at the Annual Conference of the Wyoming Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals (WAEMSP) which met in Jackson, January 20-22. The 2010 celebration marks the 27th year that the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the U.S. Department of Education have presented this prestigious award.

“Caldwell was nominated by his Superintendent, Mrs. Sue Belish, and selected by his fellow principals through a statewide search process conducted by the WAEMSP,” said Walter Wragge, WAEMSP Executive Director. In her nomination letter, Mrs. Belish stated, “Brent’s staff has enormous respect for his abilities as an instructional leader because he definitely knows

instruction. His knowledge of effective reading and writing strategies is amazing . . . providing professional development for staff is a passion for Brent. . . One of the qualities I admire most about Brent is his ability and willingness to reflect on his own performance.”

A graduate of University of Colorado, Denver and Boulder, Mr. Caldwell previously held the position of teacher in the Boulder Valley Public Schools, Boulder, Colorado. He has served as principal of Big Horn Elementary since 2000.

“At the helm of every successful school is a successful principal,” said Gail Connelly, NAESP’s executive director. “Our National Distinguished Principals program provides us with an opportunity to recognize the outstanding leadership of these principals and their commitment to creating successful learning communities. Because of them, students thrive academically, teachers grow professionally, and communities are strengthened.”

The National Distinguished Principals program is made possible through the corporate sponsorship of AIG Retirement, an industry leader currently managing long-term investment programs for more than 28,000 education, healthcare, public sector and other not-for-profit and for-profit organizations in more than 41,000 locations—representing nearly 2 million investors throughout the country.

In October, Caldwell will travel to Washington, D.C., for two days of activities planned to honor and bring well-deserved recognition to the elementary and middle-level educators chosen by the states, the District of Columbia, plus private and overseas schools.

Criteria for selection of the principals, set by NAESP and the U.S. Department of Education, require that the honorees are active principals of schools where programs are designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students and where there are firmly established community ties with parents and local business organizations, Wragge said.

Mr. Caldwell has provided three areas that have highlighted his career as a principal: creating a Professional Learning Community focusing on high achievement for every child, supporting and investing energy into developing teacher talents, and Big Horn Elementary being recognized as a “model reading program” by the Wyoming Department of Education.

The WAEMSP has served as Wyoming's professional educational administration association and now represents over 200 elementary and middle-level principals and those aspiring to be principals throughout the state. WAEMSP maintains close ties with the metropolitan Washington, D.C.-based National Association of Elementary School Principals and its almost 30,000 members nationwide.