

## News Release

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### **Boulder school leader named Colorado's National Distinguished Principal of the Year**

Holly Hultgren, principal of Lafayette Elementary School in the Boulder Valley School District, is the 2008 Colorado National Distinguished Principal of the Year. The announcement was made by the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE), which coordinated the selection process.

Hultgren is a dedicated leader who has demonstrated her ability to work successfully with all types of students and to motivate staff members. In her 20 years as a principal, she has created high-performing schools in a variety of settings.

Under Hultgren's leadership, Lafayette Elementary has improved from an average to high academic performance rating on the School Accountability Report over the last three years. During the same time, enrollment increased by 140 students and school climate surveys revealed high marks for parent and staff satisfaction.

Beyond her school leadership accomplishments, Hultgren has regularly developed and supported new principals. She teaches graduate courses in administration and serves as a mentor and coach for assistant principals in the school setting.

In support of her nomination, Boulder Valley Superintendent Christopher King called Hultgren "unique among our principal ranks." King said, "I have learned from Holly to never question the relationship between a strong leader and a successful school. In a few short years, Holly has turned around her current school, raising enrollment and academic achievement simultaneously."

Hultgren has been principal at Lafayette Elementary School since 2005. Prior to that time she was principal of Superior Elementary School and Nederland Elementary School. She started her career as a teacher in the St. Vrain Valley School District. Hultgren earned degrees from Dickinson College in Pennsylvania and Washington University in Missouri, followed by a doctorate in education from the University of Denver. She completed post-doctoral study at the Harvard Principal's Center.

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Hultgren was selected by her peers in the Colorado Association of Elementary School Principals (CAESP), a department of CASE and affiliate of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). The National Distinguished Principal program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, NAESP, and VALIC.

The award recognizes successful elementary or middle level principals who have provided outstanding leadership. Selection criteria include evidence of respect from the school community; active community involvement; strong educational leadership; and evidence of maintaining an orderly, purposeful learning environment.

Dennis Ingram, president of CAESP, noted Hultgren's impressive accomplishments. "There is no question that Holly Hultgren is an exceptional principal. She has an uncanny ability to encourage and inspire others to their best performance, said Ingram. "Holly is an educator in every sense of the word. Under her leadership, staff and students flourish."

CASE and CAESP will present Hultgren with her award at a school district event this spring. She and other CASE award winners also will be recognized at the annual CASE convention this summer in Breckenridge.

As Colorado's National Distinguished Principal, Hultgren will be honored, along with other state winners, in Washington, D.C. next fall.

*Established in 1969, the Colorado Association of School Executives (CASE) is an organization of more than 2,000 school administrators committed to improving student achievement through promoting and building quality education leadership in all Colorado schools.*

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Photo available at:

<http://www.co-case.org/associations/779/files/Holly-M.-Hultgren-Colorado.jpg>