



PENNSYLVANIA PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

122 Valley Road - Enola, PA 17025

Dr. Eric C. Eshbach
Executive Director

Dr. Michael S. Snell
Asst. Executive Director

March 30, 2023

For Immediate Release...

Contact: Sheri Thompson, Director of Communications/Public Relations, Pennsylvania Principals Association:
sherit@paprincipals.org; 717-732-4999, ext. 113

OR

Sarah Karpel, Supervisor of Community Relations and Engagement, Derry Township School District:
skarpel@hershey.k12.pa.us

Anna L. Gawel Named Pennsylvania's 2023 Outstanding Assistant Principal

(ENOLA, PA) — **Anna L. Gawel**, Assistant Principal of Hershey Elementary School (4th and 5th grades) in the Derry Township School District, has been named **Pennsylvania's 2023 Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year by the Pennsylvania Principals Association**. As a state winner in the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) National Outstanding Assistant Principal (NOAP) of the Year Program, Mrs. Gawel is eligible for consideration to be named the NAESP National Outstanding Assistant Principal of the Year.

Kristin Musselman, Chairperson of the PA Principals Association's Outstanding Assistant Principal Award Selection Committee, said, "It has been an honor to work with Anna Gawel. She is an administrator who leads with heart. She brings a positive attitude and positive mindset to the teachers and staff members that she works with on a daily basis. Among her colleagues, Anna is described as being a person of high integrity and as an assistant principal who leads with passion. Through our interactions and based on her recent accomplishments, it is clear that Mrs. Gawel is invested in her students, teachers and the school community. It is for these reasons that the PA Principals Association is proud to recommend her for this award."

Mrs. Gawel has served as assistant principal at Hershey Elementary School since 2014. She has been an educator for 20 years, beginning her career as a first-grade teacher (2003-2013) and then as an instructional coach (2013-2014) also in the Derry Township School District.

Stacy L. Winslow, Ed.D., Superintendent of Derry Township School District, said, "Mrs. Gawel is an exceptional leader. Her devotion to her students and staff is evident in her personal knowledge of their circumstances, needs and strengths. She has led a phenomenal professional learning experience for teaching staff in the last several years and in doing so has fostered growth in district priority areas that can be seen throughout the elementary staff. She is very deserving of this award."

-more-

Anna Gawel Named PA's 2023 Outstanding AP - Page 2 of 3

During her tenure as an assistant principal at Hershey Elementary School, Mrs. Gawel organized and created an online professional development course for differentiated supervision. The course began as a pilot and is focused on district goals and is personalized for the staff members taking the course. It has grown over the past five years to encompass over 50 teachers and staff members at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

The district has provided intensive staff development at the elementary level around the Professional Learning Community (PLC) process for their staff members and administrative team. Mrs. Gawel, along with the elementary administrative team, revised their schedule to allow this collaboration during the school day, which resulted in improved expertise in examining data and utilizing best practices. "Our district has focused on becoming a PLC because we know the value of collaboration in teaching and learning," explained Mrs. Gawel. In addition, Mrs. Gawel was instrumental in the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports/Response to Instruction and Intervention (MTSS/RtII) through a WIN (What I Need) model and developed highly functioning teams that are meeting the needs of all learners. She said, "This process has truly embodied the idea of 'team' and why it is so important in education."

Mrs. Gawel shared, "My hope for when people look back at my time in this role is that they will view my most significant contributions to my school as having been my relationships with the students, families and staff in Derry Township School District. I want the school to be a community that fosters belonging, strong community ties, values learning/growth and feels safe and welcoming. At the end of the day, if the people around me can say they felt valued, supported, heard and connected to our school community, I have done my job."

In addition to being a member of the PA Principals Association and NAESP, Mrs. Gawel belongs to the National Association for Educational Communication and Technology and the Pennsylvania State Education Association. In addition, she presented at the 2022 National Blue Ribbon School Conference, participated in the Curriculum Management Improvement Model Audit Training (2020) and is a graduate of the Learning Forward Academy (2019). Active in her community, she has been a member of the Hershey Community Chorus since 2007, served on the Road Clean Up team (2003-2019) and was a summer-school teacher and a mentor for new and student teachers for several years.

"Our selection committee has once again chosen a distinguished, talented educator to represent assistant principals in Pennsylvania at the elementary/middle level. Anna Gawel exemplifies the qualities we seek for this award while serving the 480 students and 60 staff at Hershey Elementary School: dedication, leadership, professionalism, and a passion for learning for students, staff, the school and the community. I am pleased that Anna will represent the Pennsylvania Principals Association as our 2023 Outstanding Assistant Principal," said Dr. Eric C. Eshbach, Executive Director, PA Principals Association.

Mrs. Gawel earned a bachelor's degree from Marywood University; her reading specialist certification and a master's degree from Millersville University of Pennsylvania; and her principal certification from The Pennsylvania State University. She is currently pursuing a doctoral degree at Penn West University with an expected graduation date of August 2024.

Anna Gawel Named PA's 2023 Outstanding AP - Page 3 of 3

"I am so incredibly humbled and honored to be selected for this award. It is an even greater honor to be counted in with the previous outstanding assistant principal award winners and nominees. You are truly remarkable!" she said.

Mrs. Gawel resides in Palmyra with her husband and two daughters. "It is the faces of my wonderful daughters that I think about when making decisions and working with students at school. What would I want done for my children? Then that is what we do for all children."



Anna L. Gawel

About the [Pennsylvania Principals Association](#): *The PA Principals Association membership of approximately 3,500 is comprised of elementary, middle level and secondary school principals, assistant principals and other educational leaders and is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).*

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To ensure a quality education for every child by comprehensively supporting the educational leaders of our schools.*

The Vision of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To be the best service organization of its kind in the United States.*

About [Derry Township School District](#): *Derry Township School District is an award-winning public school system located in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Our community enjoys a legacy that began with founder Milton S. Hershey. The district serves approximately 3,300 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade residing in Derry Township, Dauphin County.*

###