



METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP**

**Dr. Shawn A. Smith**  
Superintendent

Lawrence Education & Community Center  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MSD of Lawrence Township**  
**EXCELLENCE**  
**DESIGN CHALLENGE**

INDIANAPOLIS - The MSD of Lawrence Township is pleased to recognize all finalists and to announce the winner of the 2025 Excellence Design Challenge, sponsored by the Lawrence Township School Foundation. The Design Challenge seeks to financially reward staff members (certified or classified) for an innovative idea that, if implemented, meaningfully impacts the organization through efficiency, effectiveness, and/or measurable improvements. The winning project, identified from several finalist submissions, included a comprehensive Research and Development phase outside of the contract day, as well as a progress report to the administrative team mid-way through this phase.

The MSD of Lawrence Township is pleased to announce that **Ms. Yaritza Montijo** of Skiles Test Elementary School is the recipient of the 2025 Excellence Design Challenge \$20,000 Grand Prize.

Her proposal, "**MSD of Lawrence Township Best Authors**" project is a district-wide bilingual writing contest designed to foster authorship and provide authentic writing opportunities for all students. By engaging learners in both English and their home languages, the contest encourages creative expression, cultural pride, and language development. Students compete by submitting original pieces, with winners recognized at district and community events. This initiative aims to motivate students to write with purpose, celebrate linguistic diversity, and build a supportive community of young authors.

"I am proud to celebrate the innovation of the Challenge Winner and Finalists and am grateful to the Foundation for their ongoing supportive role with this program," shares superintendent, Dr. Shawn A. Smith. He adds, "Ms. Montijo's project represents the innovative thinking taking place throughout the district and a continued commitment to supporting our district-wide literacy focus."

**About the Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township:**

The fifth largest and one of the fastest growing school district in the state, the MSD of Lawrence Township serves approximately 16,000 students across four Early Learning Centers, eleven Elementary Schools, two Middle Schools, two High Schools, a Center for Innovation and Technology, and an alternative setting high school. Lawrence Township strives to be the district of destination, a reputation built over the years based on the district's award-winning staff, accomplished administrators, high-achieving students, supportive community, and innovative educational programs. Visit our website at [www.LTschools.org](http://www.LTschools.org).