



**Contact:**

Emily Morgan

[communications@norwalkps.org](mailto:communications@norwalkps.org)

203-854-4007 office

## **Dr. Damon Lewis Named 2025-26 National Middle School Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals**

Norwalk, Conn. (July 11, 2025) - Norwalk Public Schools is proud to announce that Dr. Damon Lewis, principal of Ponus Ridge STEAM Academy, has been named the 2025-26 National Middle School Principal of the Year by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Dr. Lewis earned this national honor after being selected as Connecticut's 2025 Middle School Principal of the Year by the Connecticut Association of Schools. He was one of three finalists considered for national recognition at the middle school level. The award was officially presented to Dr. Lewis on July 9 during the Illuminate Gala at the UNITED Conference in Seattle, hosted by NASSP and the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

"I am incredibly humbled and honored to be recognized by my peers on the national level. It is a testament to the support I have been provided by Norwalk Public Schools in working with our community of learners including staff, students, and families," Lewis said.

He shared that his goal was never to be seen as the "*best* principal," but simply to do the "*best* job for the community I serve." He expressed his gratitude to the entire Norwalk community and his team at Ponus Ridge for their ongoing support.

"We are extremely proud of Dr. Lewis for receiving this well-deserved national recognition," said Dr. Alexandra Estrella, Superintendent of Norwalk Public Schools. "When I nominated him for this honor, I had no doubt he would be chosen. His deep commitment to his students, staff, and school community is evident in everything he does. We have long recognized his outstanding leadership here in our district, and it's incredibly rewarding to see that excellence celebrated at both the state and national levels."



Dr. Lewis has served as principal of Ponus Ridge since 2015, following four years as the school's assistant principal. A visionary and collaborative leader, he has cultivated a culture of academic excellence and inclusivity, helping to drive significant school-wide improvements.

Under his leadership, chronic absenteeism at Ponus Ridge dropped from 23% to just 8.3%, a success that has drawn national media attention. Dr. Lewis has also championed equity and access, resulting in increased enrollment of Hispanic and Black students in the Gifted & Talented program, and a notable rise in female student participation in Accelerated Math.

Beyond Ponus Ridge, Dr. Lewis has made lasting contributions to district-wide initiatives, including the redesign of the Gifted & Talented program, middle school model, school counseling services, and STEAM programming. He has served on several leadership groups, including the Superintendent Principal Advisory Council, District Strategic Plan Task Force, and Safety Task Force Committee, and currently facilitates the Black Male Administrators Group.

Dr. Lewis's national recognition affirms not only his remarkable leadership, but also Norwalk Public Schools' commitment to fostering excellence, equity, and innovation in education.