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Ernest Holiday
SCASA PAOY

Orangeburg County School District's Ernest Holiday Named SCASA Personnel Administrator of the Year

Orangeburg, SC – Ernest Holiday, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources for Orangeburg County School District, has been named the Personnel Administrator of the Year by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA), a prestigious recognition honoring outstanding leadership and service in school personnel administration. For Holiday, the honor is both humbling and affirming. “Personally, it means a lot. I’ve followed individuals in the personnel affiliate that I’ve always looked up to who have received this award. To be named Personnel Administrator of the Year and be mentioned alongside those individuals is truly humbling,” he said.

Professionally, Holiday says the recognition reinforces his mission in education, supporting the adults who serve students every day. “Working in human resources has always been about taking care of individuals so they can take care of students. Receiving this award helps me know that I’m in the right place, doing the right thing, and serving the purpose meant for my life,” he expressed.

In his role, Holiday focuses on removing barriers for educators and staff so they can focus on what matters most: student success. By addressing personnel concerns, benefits questions, and other employment matters, he aims to give teachers and staff the support they need to thrive in the classroom.

Under his leadership, the district has implemented initiatives designed to directly support employees, including the creation of an Employee Sick Leave Bank. The program allows employees who experience

extended illnesses and exhaust their leave days to apply for additional time so they can continue receiving their pay while focusing on recovery. Holiday acknowledges that working in human resources often involves navigating complex and sensitive situations. While many challenges require reactive solutions, he approaches each situation with reflection and a commitment to fairness. “In HR, many issues come to us after something has already happened. Our role is to investigate, remain objective, and make decisions that are fair and in the best interest of everyone involved,” he shared.

Before transitioning into district leadership, Holiday served as a school principal, where he found joy in daily interactions with students. While his current role places him further from the classroom, he says the impact is still deeply meaningful. He credits much of his inspiration to his family, particularly his mother, an educator whose dedication to helping others shaped his own path. “My mom has always had a heart for people and has always given of herself to help others. I have her heart. Watching her dedication inspired my career in education,” he added.

A graduate of Hunter-Kinard-Tyler High School, Holiday later earned a basketball scholarship to attend Presbyterian College, where he majored in special education. He went on to earn a master’s degree in educational administration from Winthrop University and is currently pursuing a doctorate in educational administration at Mercer University. Returning to serve in the same district that helped shape him has been especially meaningful. “To come back and work in the district that raised me, where people encouraged me growing up and served as role models, is an incredible feeling. It’s amazing to be able to give back to the community that invested in me,” he said.

For those who hope to follow a similar path in education leadership, the assistant superintendent offers simple but powerful advice and that’s always do what’s right and make decisions based on what’s best for students. Holiday’s recognition highlights the vital role personnel leaders play in strengthening school systems by supporting the educators and staff who impact students every day.

Orangeburg County School District Superintendent Dr. Shawn Foster stated, “Mr. Ernest Holiday exemplifies the leadership, compassion, and commitment that define the very best in education. His dedication to supporting our employees ensures that our teachers and staff have the resources and encouragement they need to focus on what matters most, our students. This recognition from the South Carolina Association of School Administrators is a testament to the meaningful impact he makes across our district every day.”

For additional information, please contact Taylor R. Johnson, Communications and Multi-Media Specialist, at taylor.johnson@ocsdsc.org or 839-253-2070.

Orangeburg County School District

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