



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GLOUCESTER COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT
NAMED VIRGINIA SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR**

Roanoke, Virginia (May 2, 2022) – Dr. Walter “Rick” Clemons, Superintendent of Gloucester County Public Schools, was named Virginia Superintendent of the Year at the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) Annual Awards Luncheon today in Roanoke. He was selected by the Presidents of the Virginia Board of Education, the Virginia Education Association, the Virginia Parent and Teacher Association, the Virginia School Boards Association, the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals, and the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals, with support by the President, President-Elect and Secretary/Treasurer of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents.

Dr. Clemons’ leadership in addressing the challenges his school division faced during the Pandemic served as an example for other school divisions in Virginia. He skillfully balanced the tension in his community between those with concerns for the learning and social needs of Gloucester’s students, and those with concerns for the health and safety of the students, staff, and the community at large. His division was one of the first in the region to return to in-person learning through a phased-in hybrid approach combining both virtual and in-person learning.

Recently, Dr. Clemons has been successful de-escalating tensions around divisive issues that have challenged many communities by emphasizing doing what is best for students, being transparent about the division’s curriculum and teaching resources, and providing a public forum for community members to express their opinions. The publication of library resources on the school division’s website and the organization of a “Town Hall Meeting” are just two examples of strategies that were initiated by Gloucester County Public Schools to reduce local anxieties over potentially divisive issues.

In presenting Dr. Clemons with the Virginia Superintendent of the Year Award, VASS President Zeb Talley said, “Rick has done an outstanding job representing all Virginia educators as a staunch advocate for the state’s public-school students.” He continued, “He is a skillful leader who stands firm in doing what is best for students while providing everyone in his community with the opportunity to share their opinions about what quality public education means.”

Dr. Clemons’ highly capable leadership in Virginia is a function of his broad experiences as an education administrator in five different school divisions. He started his administrative career in 1996 as an assistant middle school principal in Newport News Public Schools, followed by working as an assistant high school principal in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools, and then serving five years as a high school principal in Franklin City Public Schools.

MORE

(Gloucester County Superintendent Named Virginia Superintendent of the Year, con't.)

He continued in Franklin City as the school division's assistant superintendent before accepting his first superintendent position in Northampton County Public Schools, where he served for three years. Dr. Clemons has served as the division superintendent for Gloucester County Public Schools for the past eight years.

As the Virginia Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Clemons will be eligible for the National Superintendent of the Year Award that will be presented February 2023 in San Antonio, Texas by the American Association of School Superintendents.

The Virginia Regional Superintendents of the Year include:

Region I

William D. Sroufe

Division Superintendent
Colonial Heights City

Region II

Victor D. Shandor

Division Superintendent
York County

Region III

Walter R. Clemons

Division Superintendent
Gloucester County

Region IV

Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.

Division Superintendent
Alexandria City

Region V

Eric W. Bond

Division Superintendent
Augusta County

Region VI

Mark L. Mear

Division Superintendent
Montgomery County

Region VII

Keith S. Perrigan

Division Superintendent
Bristol City

Region VIII

Kristy N. Somerville-Midgette

Division Superintendent
Brunswick County