



November 4, 2022

Re: Maryland Superintendent of the Year - Dr. Patricia Saelens

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM) announced the Superintendent of the Year Award at a banquet in Ocean City, MD on November 3, 2022. Dr. Patricia Saelens, Superintendent of Queen Anne's County Public Schools (QACPS), was named by her peers as the 2023 Maryland Superintendent of the Year, and will go on to represent our state in the National Superintendent of the Year program.

Dr. Patricia "Patty" Saelens was born and raised on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and received her bachelors and masters degrees from Salisbury University, and her doctorate in Leadership and Innovation from Wilmington University. She was hired in Dorchester County as a social studies teacher by the 1997 Maryland Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Spicer Bell. Upon hearing the news of Patty's latest accomplishment, Dr. Bell shared, "She was one of my best hires! She is most deserving of this prestigious award. Her dedication and passion for student education has never wavered. Over the past 30 years, her leadership and love for education has been exemplified. Queen Anne's County Public School students and staff are so fortunate to have a passionate, hard-working leader."

Dr. Saelens is the past president of PSSAM and the Eastern Shore of Maryland Educational Consortium (ESMEC). She conducted a three year term as a member of the Governor's Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB). She continues to promote leadership through the state of Maryland in her role as a board member of Leadership Maryland. Most recently, she planned and implemented an Aspiring Superintendent Academy for the State of Maryland.

Based on the incredible progress we have made in our county, Mr. Sid Pinder, QACPS Chief Operating Officer, nominated Dr. Saelens for this award. Mr. Pinder states: "The leadership, commitment, and drive Dr Saelens possesses is unparalleled. She is an outstanding educational leader and more than deserving of this distinguished honor."

The 2011 Maryland Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Ed Shirley from Caroline County, states: "Dr. Saelens is absolutely deserving of the recognition that being named Maryland Superintendent of the Year provides. She has always demonstrated the characteristics of a successful superintendent: a strong personal and professional background; a deep understanding of student learning; a commitment if not a love of children; the ability to lead staff to achieve these goals; and, the willingness to listen to parents and incorporate their views into her decisions. I observed these characteristics when Dr. Saelens was in Caroline County and they have no doubt continued through her employment in Queen Anne's County."

Mr. Richard Smith, QACPS Board President states: "Dr. Saelens is knowledgeable, experienced, compassionate, and a truly exceptional leader. In this last year alone, QACPS received funding for all seven strategies for the Maryland Leads Grant, opened three (3) School Based Health Centers throughout our district to increase health care access to underserved communities, expanded the School Resource Officer Program, and actively engaged with the community to promote QACPS. She has assembled a phenomenal team that leads by example, and QACPS is thriving as a result of Dr. Saelens leadership."

2022 Maryland Superintendent of the Year, Dr. Kelly Griffith, states, "Dr. Saelens is truly committed to making a difference for both students and staff in QACPS and in Maryland which is why she is a perfect selection for this honor! She is an energetic focused leader who makes every effort to develop her team's skills so they can reach their full potential! That is a truly courageous leader! Well deserved!"