

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Jocelyn McCabe, Director of Communications
Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)
360.357.7951 or 360.951.5269 (mobile)
jocelyn@awsp.org

White River Principal is 2008 Middle Level Principal of the Year
Teresa Sinay's collaborative leadership style earns accolades from her peers

OLYMPIA—The Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) has selected Teresa Sinay, principal of White River Middle School in Buckley, as the state's Middle Level Principal of the Year.

During her relatively brief (five year) tenure with White River Middle, Sinay's collaborative leadership style has yielded positive changes in both the teaching and learning culture of the school. Student achievement has risen steadily since she first began work there as co-principal in 2003; she was named principal in 2004. Last year, the school's WASL scores in reading improved by nearly 21 percentage points over the previous year. The school showed similar progress on the math and writing exams meeting or beating the state average.

Sinay has also worked to foster a more collaborative teaching environment, providing time for teachers to work together and learn from one another—something she believes has bolstered her students' success.

"In our mission to ensure successful student learners, we have become diligent learners ourselves," wrote Sinay in her award application. "We've just begun our journey—onward we go. That next step may capture one more student."

"Teresa is an exceptional leader. A focus on learning and a collaborative culture does not simply emerge in a school. Leaders, like Teresa, cultivate collaborative cultures when they develop the capacity of their staff to work as members of high-performing teams," said Janel Keating, deputy superintendent, White River School District. "Teresa's daily work and efforts reflect the interests of those who are the most precious to us—the White River kids."

Sinay's credentials include a Master in Education from the University of Puget Sound and a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education Washington State University. She has been a school administrator for almost eight years, all in the White River School District.

Sinay was selected from six regional finalists as the state's 2008 Middle Level Principal of the Year by a panel of middle-level principals from across the state. Each year, the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) recognizes outstanding secondary school leaders who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students. The program honors principals who have demonstrated excellence in the areas addressed by the selection criteria, including:

- **Collaborative Leadership:** Involves teachers, staff members, parents, students and the community in achieving the goals of the school; provides direction or focus to achieve the school's goals as a member of the school's leadership team; models continuous professional growth; balances management tasks with instructional leadership tasks.
- **Personalization:** Establishes and maintains a positive school climate that reflects high student and staff morale; interacts professionally and tactfully with others; creates

- structures that enable teachers to develop an appreciation for each student's abilities; acknowledges achievement or accomplishments of students and teachers; models values, beliefs and attitudes that inspire others to higher levels of performance; develops and maintains dialogue with representatives of diverse community groups.
- **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment:** Improves teaching and learning by implementing programs and improvement efforts; observes, supervises and evaluates teachers and instructional programs to maximize the learning opportunities for every student; analyzes multiple sources of data to improve instructional practices and outcomes; demonstrates knowledge of learning, teaching, research and programs that maximize student performance.

Sinay will be honored with the elementary, high school and assistant principals of the year at AWSP's 2008 Principals' Conference Oct. 26-28 in Spokane. As the state winner, she will represent Washington state at the national level, as one of more than 50 nominees for the national award. Each state, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Department of State's Overseas Schools select one middle level and one high school principal. From these state winners, six finalists (three middle level, three high school) are selected and eligible for the National Principal of the Year award.

For more information on the National MetLife/NASSP Principal of the Year program, visit www.principals.org

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About the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)

The Association of Washington School Principals is a professional association serving principals and assistant principals. Formed in 1972, the Association now includes more than 3,500 members from public and private elementary, middle and high schools statewide. The mission of AWSP is to support principals and assistant principals and the principalship in the education of all students. For more information on the Association, visit the AWSP Web site at www.awsp.org.