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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lynndale Elementary Leader Named State's Distinguished Elementary Principal

Edmonds Principal Paul Nash selected for state honor

EDMONDS – Keeping a secret is tough for anyone—just ask the 380 students at Lynndale Elementary School. On Monday, they gathered to spring a super-sized surprise party on their principal, Paul Nash, who was selected as the state's top elementary principal of the year by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) and its elementary component, the Elementary School Principals Association of Washington (ESPAW).

For the past seven years, Nash has worked diligently with staff, parents and the community to increase student achievement and build a strong academic program for this once struggling school. Since taking the helm of the school, Nash has been instrumental in helping staff raise student scores on all portions of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).

"Paul Nash is an excellent example of a dedicated building principal," said Paul Stone, president of the Elementary School Principals Association of Washington and principal of Mullan Road Elementary in Spokane. "Through Paul's leadership, he has worked hard to establish a positive learning climate for students and staff alike. His attention to detail and his passion to help every student succeed is reflective of his professionalism and personal character," said Stone. "Paul is also very attentive to staff needs and helping provide them with the tools they need to succeed. The changes at his school would not have been possible without the relationships he has worked so hard to develop among students and staff.

"It's clear the school and the community feel fortunate to have a principal like Paul Nash. He has really turned that school around."

Lynndale's scores on the WASL have skyrocketed in recent years. In 1996-97, just 20 percent of the school met standard on the math WASL. Last year, 84.2 percent were meeting standard. The trend lines for student performance in reading and writing have also been noteworthy. During the same timeframe, scores in reading jumped from 55.6 percent meeting standard to 89.5 percent; in writing, the scores went from 51.4 percent to 75.4 percent. Approximately 31 percent of Lynndale students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

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Washington State 2004 Distinguished Elementary Principal/ add 1-1-1

As the state's 2004 Distinguished Elementary Principal, Nash will serve as the state's nominee to the National Distinguished Principals Program, an award established by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). The award serves to honor exemplary elementary and middle school principals who set the pace, character, and quality of the education children receive during their early school years.

"Paul is a leader with high skills and incredible energy," said Dr. Wayne Robertson, superintendent, Edmonds School District. "He has been a strong advocate for the development of leadership capacity in the district. He involves parents as partners both in providing classroom support and in shaping and guiding decisions in the school," he said. "We are very fortunate to have a leader like Paul in our district, and share in the celebration of this great honor."

Nash has been a principal for 14 years, and has led Lynndale as principal since 1997. Prior to that, he served as principal and assistant principal in the Anchorage (AK) School District. A former teacher, counselor and social worker, Nash holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of California Los Angeles and a master's in social work from the University of Utah. He has also completed a fellowship at the Utah Principals Academy.

Under the National Distinguished Principal Program, public school principals are nominated by their peers within their home states. The final selection for each state's candidate is made by the NAESP state affiliate (AWSP, in the case of Washington state). One principal is selected from each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The formal award ceremony for all nominees takes place in Washington D.C. each fall. Nominees participate in a series of events and activities over the course of two days, culminating in a formal awards banquet.

AWSP and the elementary board members will formally honor Nash in October at the Association's K-12 Fall Conference in Wenatchee.

For more information on the National Distinguished Principal program, visit the Web at www.naesp.org/ndp.htm. To learn more about Lynndale Elementary, visit the school's Web site at: <http://staff.edmonds.wednet.edu/lde/>.

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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 3,300 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.