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2007 Washington State Distinguished Principal Leads Odyssey Elementary *Principal Cheryl Boze makes student achievement her top priority*

OLYMPIA—*Dynamic. Inspirational. Articulate.* These are just some of the words used to describe Odyssey Elementary Principal Cheryl Boze, the 2007 Washington State Distinguished Principal, announced today by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) and its elementary board.

“Cheryl is a great example of an administrator who looks beyond where students come from and instead, focuses on where they might go,” said Terry Barber, director of elementary programs for AWSP. “Cheryl also understands this is a team effort, and has worked diligently to provide the adults in her school, and her community, with the tools they need to be successful with students, too.”

Mukilteo Superintendent Marci Larsen said she has been impressed with Boze’s leadership and its impact on the students and staff at Odyssey.

“Cheryl is just an amazing person. Her commitment to students, community and student achievement is unwavering, which is a credit to her as a person and as an instructional leader,” said Larsen. “We are very fortunate to have Cheryl on our leadership team here in Mukilteo and know that she will continue to do great things on behalf of all students in our community.”

The proof of her hard work and dedication is, in fact, reflected in her school’s data. Nearly four years ago, when Boze first came to Odyssey, just 22.7 percent of the students passed the WASL in math; nearly 49 percent in reading and 27.3 percent in writing. After several years of focused work, the school posted significant improvements. Last spring, 63 percent met standard in math; 83.3 percent in reading and 74.3 percent in writing. She enjoyed similar success at Lake Stickney Elementary, where she served as principal prior to joining Odyssey.

Boze attributes her success to multiple factors, including community engagement, use of multiple forms of data and high expectations for students, staff and herself.

“Parents, substitutes and new staff members consistently comment on the high academic and behavioral expectations that we have for students, and the incredible dedication and strong work ethic of our staff members,” wrote Boze in her application for the award. “We know that it is not enough to work hard; we need to put our efforts into doing the right things.”

Student achievement at Lake Stickney and Odyssey showed strong, steady growth in all areas, despite vastly increasing numbers of English Language Learners and at-risk students. At Odyssey, 56 percent of students qualify for reduced meals. To help educate the students and their families, Boze has developed partnerships with groups like the YMCA and offers year-round learning opportunities for adults and students alike at the school.

“If you believe that all students can learn and if you provide the resources and support to ensure they will learn, you have the key ingredients for success,” said Boze.

An administrator for nearly 14 years, Boze will represent Washington state in the National Distinguished Principal Program. She holds a Master in Educational Administration from Central Washington University and a Bachelor of Arts in Special Education and Psychology from Seattle Pacific University.

She began her career in education, working 11 years as a teacher before transitioning into the principalship.

Boze was selected as this year's nominee from a group of 18 applicants. She will be recognized for her accomplishments by the Association of Washington School Principals and its component board, the Elementary School Principals Association of Washington, this fall at the Principals' Conference in Vancouver.

The [National Distinguished Principals Program](#) is sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education and AIG VALIC. The formal award ceremony for all state 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.

To read more about Odyssey Elementary online, visit <http://schools.mukilteo.wednet.edu/oe/>.

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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](#).