



# ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Port Angeles Leader Earns State Middle Level Principal of the Year

Chuck Lisk 'leads, guides, pushes, instructs and motivates' his way to success

**OLYMPIA**—Pick an obstacle. Any obstacle. Chances are it wouldn't derail Stevens Middle School Principal Chuck Lisk. Declining enrollment? Check. Devastating budget cuts? Check. Assessment scores well below state standards? Check. Teacher reductions, increased class size, closure of a middle school? Check, check, check.

Lisk, the 2011 Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year, met every challenge head on. He guided teachers, staff and students through a process to boost test scores and saw major increases in 2005 and 2007. He partnered with Microsoft to study outstanding schools for best practices that could be applied at home. He turned the spotlight on staff development and built time for observation, feedback and collaboration into an already overcrowded workday.

His perseverance paid off. MSP scores are now well above state standards. And in 2009 the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction gave Stevens Middle School the Washington Achievement Award for Overall Excellence. Stevens again earned the award in 2010 with an added special recognition in science.

Lisk was named this year's Middle Level Principal of the Year by the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP). A panel of principals representing the Association of Washington Middle Level Principals, a component of AWSP, selected Lisk from seven regional finalists.

Lisk, who has served as principal of Stevens Middle School (Port Angeles School District) for 14 years, says he didn't do it alone. "It is my job to lead, guide, instruct, push, support and motivate, but it is the Stevens community that makes a difference for kids."

Don Rash, AWSP's Director of Middle Level Programs, describes Lisk as one of the most unassuming people he's ever met. "He's in the background, but I tell you, he's a master at blending all the components of a school community to bring about success."

"We are very pleased Principal Chuck Lisk has been selected by AWSP as the Washington State Middle Level Principal of the Year for 2011," said Superintendent of Port Angeles Schools Jane Pryne. "He has worked extremely hard on behalf of his students, staff and colleagues. We are very proud of his accomplishments, and this is truly an honor he has received and deserves."

Lisk was honored today at a school assembly. In October, he will be honored with the elementary and high school principals of the year at AWSP's Annual 2011 Principals' Conference. Lisk earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in education from Central Washington University.

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## State Middle Level Principal of the Year Honor

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Other components that earned Lisk the honor of 2011 Middle School Principal of the Year include:

- Established an eight-period block schedule to increase student learning time while simultaneously implementing a weekly one-hour late start for staff professional development.
- After six months of study, engineered the re-structuring of Stevens Middle School in 2007 from three grades to two.
- Even with additional budget cuts, opened the “new” school with the eight-period instructional block intact. Core teachers share students allowing for 270 minutes of uninterrupted instructional time, a common team collaboration period and individual planning time.
- Shepherded the development of teams into small learning communities where teachers took leadership roles, enriched curriculum and increased communication with parents while building stronger relationships with students.
- Ensured widespread student participation by providing opportunities for leadership training and a voice in school activities. The ASB with 10 officers and a designated leadership class of 30 guide and implement 85 percent of the assemblies, after-school programs, school activities, fundraisers and even select the annual theme of the school.
- Used every available resource to get help for struggling students including AmeriCorps volunteers, parent volunteers, reading specialists, daily homework club, Thursday School (which extends the school day until 6 p.m. for students with missing assignments) and student tutors to help with academic skills.

### **Honored at the National Level**

Later this year, Lisk will travel to Washington, D.C., to represent Washington state at the national level. There, he will be recognized with other state principals of the year at an awards banquet hosted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and MetLife.

Each state, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Department of State’s Overseas Schools will send one middle level and one high school principal to the national level to compete for the 2012 MetLife/NASSP National Principals of the Year award. From the state winners, six finalists (three middle level, three high school) will be eligible for the award. The program honors principals who have demonstrated excellence in these areas: collaborative leadership; personalization; and curriculum, instruction and assessment. For more information on the National MetLife/NASSP Principal of the Year program, visit [www.principals.org](http://www.principals.org).

### **About the Association of Washington School Principals**

The Association of Washington School Principals is a professional association serving principals, assistant principals and principals in training. Formed in 1972, the association now includes more than 3,400 members from public and private elementary, middle and high schools statewide. It is governed by a board of practicing principals drawn from three grade-specific boards representing the elementary, middle and high school levels. For more information, visit [www.awsp.org](http://www.awsp.org).

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