

2020 Recipient of the Dr. Edward Shirley Award



Mr. Scott Murphy

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Mr. Scott W. Murphy, Director, Department of Secondary Curriculum and Districtwide Programs, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is the 2020 recipient of the Dr. Edward Shirley Award for Excellence in Educational Administration and Supervision. This prestigious award, given by MCAAP, is presented annually to an administrator or supervisor who exemplifies outstanding leadership and accomplishments in the areas of purposeful leadership, instructional or systemwide leadership, human resources development, resource management, interpersonal skills, professional involvement, and community and stakeholder involvement.

Mr. Murphy's direct impact on tens of thousands of students, staff and the community spans across many roles in MCPS, first as a teacher, then middle school principal, high school principal and now as Director for the Department of Secondary Curriculum and Districtwide Programs. An administrator for 21 years, he began his career in education as a special education teacher in Louisiana and joined MCPS in 1998.

Mr. Murphy is known by his colleagues as a visionary leader who creates an environment where everyone feels valued. He believes that if you put people first, listen, ask the right questions, and treat people right, things have a way of working out on behalf of students, schools and the community. He engages in shared leadership that starts with modeling – setting the tone with positivity, collaboration and ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued. He is known as the 'go-to-guy' because of his experience and know-how for information and advice.

Colleagues share that Mr. Murphy demonstrates exemplary leadership at a systemwide level that is innovative, courageous and grounded in his commitment to students and equity. Mr. Murphy is dedicated to fostering student achievement and empowering students and staff to succeed in a collaborative environment while providing nurturing guidance along the way.

Mr. Murphy's passion for teaching and leadership over decades has influenced others to become teachers and leaders in education. Several of his former students, who are now teachers, shared that it was because of his inspirational leadership that they decided to become educators and model his leadership style. Staff describe him as a strong administrator who recognizes potential in others and gives them opportunities to grow in their careers and develop into leaders themselves.

Mr. Murphy strives for excellence in education which can be seen both within MCPS and with community partners. He builds partnerships with multiple stakeholders based on relationships he

has cultivated over the years. The partnerships have created many opportunities for students and staff that would not have been made available without his leadership. A community partner describes Mr. Murphy as “a visionary leader and problem solver who creates a collaborative environment with great results.” He is known as an ‘out-of-the box’ thinker and willing to take bold steps to meet the needs of students and schools at a macro-level in the most cost-efficient way.

Because of Mr. Murphy’s role as a district leader, the decisions he makes have far reaching implications. Colleagues share that he continually advocates on behalf of students and staff and collaborates with stakeholders to implement change. He understands that real change comes through skillful guiding, not telling.

Mr. Murphy is among the honorees at the annual Champions for Children Celebration. He has also been honored by the MCAAP membership during the 2020 Fall Membership Meeting.