



South Carolina School Leader Recognized as 2019 National Principal of the Year

*River Bluff High School's Dr. Lucas Clamp
honored during National Principals Month*

EMBARGOED UNTIL THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2018, 11:30 AM (ET)

Watch the surprise announcement live at www.facebook.com/principals



Lexington, SC – Dr. Lucas Clamp, principal at River Bluff High School in Lexington, South Carolina, has been named the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) 2019 National Principal of the Year. The announcement took place at a surprise ceremony at his school attended by South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster, State Superintendent Molly Spearman, and numerous local dignitaries. The announcement is part of the 2018 celebration of [National Principals Month](#).

Dr. Clamp was selected as the founding principal of River Bluff High School in 2011 and spent the next two years designing an innovative high school experience. Central to that experience, River Bluff's modular scheduling allows students to create schedules with instructional periods of varying sizes mixed with

independent learning time. Early in his tenure, Dr. Clamp led the launch of two Centers for Advanced Study--the Center for Media Arts, Design and Production and Center for Law and Global Policy Development--which provide honors level courses designed to connect learning and hands-on experiences within these fields. Hands-on learning is central to Dr. Clamp's vision, leading to River Bluff becoming the first South Carolina school to adopt the project based-learning model provided by EL Education.

Dr. Clamp fosters a culture that stems from a unique desire to connect with each person, developing their skills and talents, and believing their individual and collective contribution to a local and global community will change the world. River Bluff students meet weekly in small groups called a CREW (Creating Relationships, Exploring Within) that focus on academic drive, character development and establishing shared understandings. The CREW experience helps students build confidence in a safe environment that allows them to learn, reflect and identify their own quality work.

The panel of judges was particularly impressed with Dr. Clamp's focus on student connections as a catalyst for confidently leading their own education. "Luke is a champion for community building and for groups that are often disenfranchised--which can be a challenge for principals serving communities with wide economic diversity," said Annette E. Wallace, Assistant Superintendent of Worcester County (MD) Board of Education, who served as a judge. "His strategy for creating a robust culture and welcoming community while building River Bluff High School was visionary. He models the kind of intentional behavior it takes to include all children and amplify their voices through a variety of clubs, organizations, and informal structures. Luke will be a passionate voice for principals in the coming year."

With a commitment to closing the achievement gap, Dr. Clamp prompted teachers to provide unique, differentiated learning experiences to Black students in particular, and over three years scores have risen from 42.9 percent to 68.6 percent in ELA and 65.8 percent to 87.9 percent in math. Dr. Clamp has also strived to ensure teachers feel supported. He facilitates teacher collaboration by working with lead teachers and works with the scheduling team to ensure that teachers have one hour of collaborative planning time built in their schedules for every course that two or more teachers teach.

Prior to joining Lexington County as an assistant principal in 2006, Dr. Clamp taught chemistry and environmental science and coached football and baseball at Irmo High School. Later as the Dean of Studies for Smaller Learning Communities, he developed curriculum for incoming freshmen, a Peer Mentoring Program, Peer Tutoring Center and school-wide staff development.

Dr. Clamp received his bachelor's degree in science from Clemson University and his master's degree, educational specialist degree in educational administration and doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of South Carolina. He is also a graduate of the South Carolina State Department of Education Developing Aspiring Principals Program.

"You can't have real student learning without real student empowerment, and Dr. Clamp shows us what empowering students can really achieve," stated JoAnn Bartoletti, executive director of NASSP. "As a powerful multiple of effective practice, he dedicates his focus to the student and uses compassionate relationships to build trust, provide support, and give them the resources they need to take control of their own education."

"Dr. Clamp is a true champion for all children," said Lexington School District One superintendent Dr. Gregory Little. "I am thrilled that the hard work, dedication, and commitment he demonstrates on a daily basis is being recognized by such a prestigious award."

"South Carolina is blessed with tremendous school leaders and we could not be more proud that Dr. Luke Clamp will represent our state and nation as the 2019 National Principal of the Year," said State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman. "Dr. Clamp has set a climate at River Bluff that supports teachers and fosters student learning. There is no one more deserving of this honor."

The NASSP National Principal of the Year (POY) program annually recognizes outstanding middle level and high school principals who have made exemplary contributions to their profession and to their students' learning. Each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity, and the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Schools selects one principal to represent their state. Of these, three finalists are named as contenders for the award, with one being recognized as the NASSP National Principal of the Year.

"We are thrilled that Dr. Luke Clamp has been named the 2019 NASSP National Principal of the

Year,” stated Beth Phibbs, executive director of the South Carolina Association of School Administrators, which first identified Dr. Clamp as 2018 state principal of the year. “He is an outstanding school leader and will represent his district, our association and NASSP well throughout the year. South Carolina is extremely proud to have back to back national winners!”

With sponsorship from Jostens, each state winner is eligible to enroll in the McKinsey Management Program for School Leaders, a leading-edge, online program that offers breakthrough content covering the most important aspects of organizational leadership.

For more information on the POY program, please visit www.nassp.org/poy.

About NASSP

The [National Association of Secondary School Principals \(NASSP\)](#) is the leading organization of and voice for middle level and high school principals, assistant principals, and school leaders from across the United States. The association connects and engages school leaders through advocacy, research, education, and student programs. NASSP advocates on behalf of all school leaders to ensure the success of each student and strengthens school leadership practices through the design and delivery of high-quality professional learning experiences. Reflecting its long-standing commitment to student leadership development, NASSP administers the [National Honor Society](#), [National Junior Honor Society](#), [National Elementary Honor Society](#), and [National Student Council](#).

About Lexington County School District One

[Lexington County School District One](#) serves more than 26,800 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 with more than 3,747 employees and 30 schools (17 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, 5 high schools, 1 technology center). The district also has an alternative learning program called Alternative Educational Services. As one of the fastest-growing school districts in the state, ranking sixth in total enrollment, we are proud of the excellent academic reputation we have established. During the past 10 years (2008–2018), the district grew 5,052 students, an average of 505 new students per year.