

Minnesota Association of School Administrators

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News Release

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Dr. Tom Melcher Receives MASA Distinguished Service Award

(St. Paul, Minn.) – The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Dr. Tom Melcher, Retired School Finance Director of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), recipient of the 2022 MASA Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Melcher has received this award for his support of the children of Minnesota and for his contributions to activities that have improved Minnesota’s public education system. He will be honored at a statewide recognition ceremony during the MASA/MASE Spring Conference, March 11-12, 2022, at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest in Brooklyn Park.

In 2020, Dr. Melcher retired as School Finance Director at MDE after 40 years with the organization. His career in education administration began in 1974 when he worked as an Assistant Business Manager for the Collier County Public Schools in Naples, Florida. In 1979, Dr. Melcher moved to MDE and during his tenure served as Manager of the Program Finance Division and finally as School Finance Director.

Under Dr. Melcher’s leadership, MDE’s Program Finance Division provided support to state policy-makers in developing and evaluating education finance policy; implemented the state’s pre K-12 education finance program by determining state aid entitlements and property tax levy limitations for local education agencies; and maintained the state’s Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS), Minnesota Automated Reporting for Students System (MARSS) and Electronic Data Reporting System (EDRS) for special education data. The Division also administered agency programs related to school facilities, pupil transportation, and school district organization.

In each of his statewide leadership positions, Dr. Melcher has provided invaluable insight to educational leaders and MASA members. He traveled across the state to present at MASA’s regional meetings and he was an annual presenter at the MASA Great Start Cohort workshop series for new superintendents and administrators. During his 40-year career with MDE, Dr. Melcher’s dedication and commitment to school administrators’ understanding of funding policies will benefit educators, students, and families in Minnesota for many years to come.

Dr. Melcher's accolades include the Association of Metropolitan School Districts’ 2019 Friend of Public Education Award, Minnesota Rural Education Association’s 2015 Distinguished Service Award, and MASA's 2001 Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Melcher holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Florida.

Each year, MASA recognizes members for their contribution to public education. MASA is a professional organization of Minnesota’s school leaders, including superintendents, assistant superintendents, directors of special education, and other central office administrators, as well as state department administrators, college and university professors, and other educators throughout Minnesota dedicated to educational leadership for students.

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