



NEWS RELEASE

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CCS Superintendent Selected as 2020 NCSSA Dr. Samuel Houston Leadership Award Winner

Fayetteville, N.C. - The North Carolina School Superintendents' Association (NCSSA) and the North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development (NCASLD) have announced the selection of Cumberland County Schools Superintendent Dr. Marvin Connelly, Jr. as the recipient of the Dr. Samuel Houston Leadership Award. This award is presented to a graduate of the NCSSA Next Generation Superintendent Development Program, which is designed to empower transformational education leaders for North Carolina's public schools. The program covers the "Essential Leadership Competencies of a School Superintendent: visioning and goal setting, superintendent/board relationships, leading for improved teaching and learning, human resource leadership and systems leadership."

The award is named in honor of Dr. Samuel Houston, Jr. who is President and Chief Executive Officer of the North Carolina Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education Center. Dr. Houston served as superintendent of the Mooresville Graded School District for 10 years, where he opened the first year-round school in North Carolina. Dr. Houston has been a champion for strategic planning, student performance and accountability, meeting the needs of the 21st century workforce, skills for the STEM world and building education partnerships. Dr. Houston also served as the first executive director of the University of North Carolina Center for Leadership Development.

"Dr. Connelly exemplifies the traits that have guided Dr. Sam Houston's career in educational leadership," said NCSSA Executive Director Jack Hoke. "His commitment to continuous improvement, high standards of ethical conduct, strategic planning, improving student performance and meeting the needs of the 21st century workforce is very apparent. He led the Cumberland County Schools in their strategic planning process that involved all stakeholder groups. Dr. Connelly was also a member of the first cohort of the Aspiring Superintendent Program. I am very proud of Dr. Connelly and appreciate his leadership in this program and in the field of education."

"I am humbled and honored to receive the Dr. Sam Houston Leadership Award," said Dr. Connelly. "In the Next Generation Leadership Development

Program, the training, development, networking, and opportunity to discuss innovative learning for students in NC and this country have been outstanding. Receiving this award, which is named after such an amazing educational leader and giant as Dr. Houston, certainly is an honor and privilege. I appreciate Dr. Houston, Mr. Jack Hoke, and all of my superintendent colleagues for the networking and learning opportunity.”

More information about Dr. Sam Houston

Dr. Houston was awarded the Jay Robinson Leadership Award as an Exemplary Educator for his outstanding contributions to statewide public K – 12 education. He also earned the RJR-Nabisco Foundation's China Breaker Award for implementing educational change. He has been inducted into the Appalachian State University Reich College of Education's Rhododendron Society and the East Carolina University's Education Hall of Fame and has received the Distinguished Career Award from the University of North Carolina – Greensboro School of Education. Dr. Houston has also be inducted into the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics' NC STEM Hall of Fame.



Pictured (l-r) Sam Houston, Dr. Connelly and Jack Hoke

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