



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 1, 2024

### **Cris Edwards Named President of the Illinois Principals Association**

Springfield, IL - The Illinois Principals Association is pleased to announce that Cris Edwards, principal of Richland County Elementary School, Olney, will serve as President for the 2024-2025 school term.

Edwards shared, "I am so excited and very honored to be the President of the Illinois Principals Association. I look forward to working with leaders from around the state as we navigate the future for our children. We are leaving a legacy every day; whether it is working with children, staff, or mentoring others to become tomorrow's leaders. I hope all leaders will join us this October in Peoria for the IPA Annual Conference to learn, grow, and share!"

Dr. Jason Leahy, Executive Director for the Illinois Principals Association, adds, "Cris Edwards is a school leader who has already established an incredible legacy with the service she has provided her students, teachers, and community throughout her career. I look forward to her building on that legacy as President of the Illinois Principals Association."

Cris Edwards has been a member of the Illinois Principals Association since 2007. Most recently, Edwards has served as the State Director for the Wabash Valley region and a member of the IPA Board of Directors. She has also served as a member of the IPA policy committee, the WELL Summit planning committee (an event for women in educational leadership), Diversity & Equity Chairperson for the Wabash Valley Region since 2020.

In 2023, Edwards was named Illinois Elementary Principal of the Year and has been recognized by her peers in the Wabash Valley with the Reaching Out & Building Bridges award in 2021 and the Wabash Valley Herman Graves award in 2019. The Herman Graves award is considered the highest honor bestowed by the Illinois Principals Association, and honors former principal Herman Graves, who continually extolled the virtues of IPA. Edwards was also the first individual in Illinois to complete a micro-credential in leadership.

Cris Edwards began her career in education in 1992 as a Language Arts and Current Events teacher in Tuscon, AZ. She continued teaching Economics, Government and Language Arts at Edwards County High School and Social Sciences at Parkview Jr. High School. In 2007, Edwards began serving as an administrator in Richland County School District #1 as a Dean of Students and Literacy Coach at Richland County High School. Since 2009, she has served as Assistant Principal and Principal at Richland County Elementary and Middle schools.

Cris Edwards received a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Education in Educational Administration from Eastern Illinois University. She resides in Olney with her husband Greg, a retired computer programmer. She is the proud mother of three children. Andrea serves as Richland County Animal Control Officer, Grant is a teacher at Richland County High School, and Reid is a risk officer at Trust Bank.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 6,500 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois. You can find out more about the IPA at [www.ilprincipals.org](http://www.ilprincipals.org).

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