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For Immediate Release

Horace Mann and Illinois Principals Association Announce 2021 Illinois Middle School Principal of the Year

Horace Mann and the Illinois Principals Association are pleased to announce that Andy Stumpf, principal of Winchester Elementary/Junior High School, Winchester, has been named the 2021 Illinois Middle School Principal of the Year. The award recognizes middle school principals who have demonstrated a positive impact on their students and learning community. Criteria for the award include:

- Demonstrates a positive impact on education and advocacy for children
- Ensures the school climate is positive and reflects high staff and student morale
- Moves actively to implement the goals and objectives of the school
- Works collaboratively with teachers and other staff to improve the educational program and student achievement
- Involves the community in the life of the school and uses community resources for students.

Andy Stumpf has served as principal at Winchester Elementary/Junior High School for the last 5 years. He previously served as principal at Brussels Junior/Senior High School in Brussels and taught math at Carrollton Grade School. Stumpf has been an active member of the Illinois Principals Association for 8 years and is currently in his second year as Legislative Chair for the Two Rivers Region. He has also been active within the IPA by hosting two legislators at Winchester for the IPA Principal for a Day program and will be an IPA Education Leaders Annual Conference speaker this month presenting on the positive impact a building leadership team has on a school.

“Sharing leadership is a key component in any successful school building. When staff members take an active role in leading their building, there is great buy-in for everyone,” said Stumpf. During his time at Winchester, Stumpf has created the WGS Building Leadership Team (BLT) consisting of five staff members representing all grade levels as well as special education. This group established Professional Learning Communities (PLC) to help with shared leadership. He also feels it is important to visit classrooms regularly to be visible, model appropriate behavior, provide support, and make sure the entire staff knows he is supportive of them.

“Andy has an incredible work ethic and will often step in to assist staff in the kitchen, on the playground, in the office, and performing maintenance projects or clean up. Andy is often involved with before and after school activities involving parent teacher conferences, PTO fundraisers, open house, athletics, and fine art presentations,” shared Dr. Kevin Blankenship, Winchester Superintendent. As part of his goal of bringing the community into Winchester Elementary School, Andy has established “Grandparents Breakfast”, “Doughnuts with Dads” and “Muffins with Moms.”

“Our principal isn’t afraid of change, but at the same time, he realizes that change needs to happen strategically. At the beginning of 2018, Winchester Grade School was informed of its “Underperforming” status,” shared Katie Maul, 7th & 8th grade teacher at Winchester Grade School. “Mr. Stumpf knew that change was essential in improving effectiveness and efficiency throughout the school. However, he didn’t make any rash decisions or immediate changes. Instead, he, along with the assistance of the ROE, worked to set up a Building Leadership Team (BLT). As one of the members of this team, I can say its establishment has changed the way the entire school operates. This act created a domino effect that led to a shared leadership initiative that helps the school work more collaboratively in order to hone in on specifically where and how we can implement improvements.”

The Middle School Principal of the Year winner was selected from a pool of region nominees provided by the 21 Regions of the Illinois Principals Association. Andy Stumpf will be recognized at the IPA’s annual Education Leaders Annual Conference in October 2021.

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The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 5,800 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois. You can find out more about the IPA at www.ilprincipals.org. Visit <http://www.ilprincipals.org/about-ipa/awards> for more information about the IPA Principal of the Year Awards Program.

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