

Minnesota Administrators for Special Education

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News Release

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Cheryl Hall Receives MASE Special Education Administrator of the Year Award

(St. Paul, MN) – The Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE) has named Cheryl Hall, Director of Special Services of Northfield Public Schools, the 2022 Special Education Administrator of the Year. Hall has received this award for her dedication to students with disabilities and their families, and her active involvement in professional and community affairs. She will be honored at a statewide recognition ceremony during the MASA/MASE Spring Conference held March 10-11, 2022.

“Cheryl Hall’s commitment to public service is unrivaled. As an experienced administrator, Cheryl has given her all to Northfield staff, students, and families for the better part of two decades. She is a respected leader in our community and across the state,” wrote Dr. Matt Hillmann, Superintendent of Northfield Public Schools, in his nomination letter. “Cheryl’s exemplary leadership and dedication to special education students make her the correct choice for the 2022 MASE Special Education Administrator of the Year.”

Hall has served as the Director of Special Services of Northfield Public Schools since 2015 and as the district’s COVID-19 Coordinator since 2020. Before 2015, her position was shared between both Northfield and Faribault Public Schools. During her career she has been a Special Education Substitute Teacher, Special Education Evaluation Specialist, and a Due Process Handbook Editor. Hall began her career in general and special education teaching roles with Minneapolis Public Schools.

Hall has demonstrated a commitment to developing the next generation of special education teachers and leaders. Her investment in encouraging Northfield’s paraprofessionals to pursue their teaching licensure helped the district fill critical special education positions. Through Hall’s encouragement and leadership, 11 Northfield paraprofessionals have completed licensure and moved into special education teaching positions. In a time when finding special education teachers is extremely challenging, this pipeline has helped Northfield Public Schools continue to provide a high-quality staff for students.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Northfield Public Schools started the process to select a COVID-19 Coordinator. Hall stepped into the role and she tirelessly worked with the district’s incident command team, administrators, families, and the school board to develop a strong safe learning plan that allowed Northfield to navigate the first full school year of the pandemic. Continuing as the COVID-19 Coordinator through the entire pandemic, Hall’s leadership has allowed Northfield to continue following the science to keep their community safe while working to prioritize uninterrupted in-person learning.

Due to Hall’s efforts, Northfield Public Schools has become a leader in offering COVID-19 testing, serving as a pilot for school-based testing for the Minnesota Department of Health in December 2020. The district set up a drive-through COVID-19 testing clinic that has completed over 1,200 rapid molecular tests since November 1, 2021. Northfield Public Schools has amassed an inventory of 10,000 rapid antigen test kits and has one of Minnesota’s first Test to Stay programs. This program allows unvaccinated students identified as close contacts to remain in school by agreeing to be tested multiple times during what would have normally been their quarantine period. These testing programs have helped Northfield Public Schools continue to prioritize uninterrupted in-person learning for all students.

As an active member of MASE, Hall has served as the 2019-20 MASE President. She has chaired and been a member of a number of committees including the Strategic Planning, Legislative, Business Partnership, Professional Development, Nominating, and Membership.

Hall is a volunteer for the Rice County Habitat for Humanity and a board member of the Northfield Soccer Association. She also serves on the University of St. Thomas’ Educational Administration Advisory Board.

Hall received a master’s degree in Special Education from the University of St. Thomas and a bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from the University of Minnesota.

MASE is a professional association organized to promote programs and services to improve the education of children with disabilities, to foster high quality programs of professional development, and to study problems relating to serving children with disabilities and improving the leadership of administrators for special education. MASE members are administrators for special education in public or private schools, cooperative regional, state and other education administrative units, college and university professors of special education teacher or administrator preparation programs, and administrators, coordinators or consultants for the Minnesota Department of Education.

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