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Dr. Zabrina Cannady Named a Finalist for National Leadership Award



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – Dr. Zabrina Cannady, assistant superintendent for student services with the Houston County School District, was recently named by AASA, The School Superintendents Association as a finalist for the 2022 Women in School Leadership Award. This award pays tribute to the talent, creativity and vision of outstanding women educational administrators in the nation's public schools.

Cannady has been an educator for 28 years, with ten years spent supporting students with emotional and behavioral disorders, as well as mild cognitive and learning disabilities. Throughout this time, she has worked to put programs in place that support the well-being of students. The school district was awarded a grant to put the Second Step social and emotional learning curriculum in all Pre-K through 8th grade classrooms. Cannady has worked closely with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to offer mental health services through the APEX Program. In October of 2020, Houston County was chosen as one of three districts in the state to be awarded the Project

AWARE grant. This is a five year grant valued at approximately \$2M, and promotes the mental health and well-being of students while preventing youth violence.

In 2018, Cannady contributed to the *13 Reasons Why Not*, a video series that featured 13 courageous teens and adults who shared their personal tales of adversity and hope. *13 Reasons Why Not* gained state and national attention, winning awards at the state level, as well as the 2019 Golden Achievement Award from the National School Public Relations Association.

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Cannady expanded opportunities for students through the opening of the Houston County Transition Academy. The Transition Academy serves students who have met high school graduation requirements, but continue to be eligible for special education services. The goal is to provide real world opportunities that address independent daily living and self-care skills, social and behavioral skills; communication; motor skills; academic skills and work readiness.

Cannady is a product of the Houston County School System, and a proud graduate of Warner Robins High School. She currently serves as Treasurer of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), President-Elect for Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL), and Past-President of Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education (GCASE). She holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology; a master's degree in both Special Education and Family Services; a Specialist in Special Education; and a Doctorate in Educational Administration from Georgia Southern University. She and her husband Chris have been married for 28 years and they have four sons.

Candidates for the Women in School Leadership Award were judged on leadership in meeting the learning needs of students, personal and organizational communication strength, constant professional improvement of knowledge and skills, and active community involvement. The final award recipient will be announced during the AASA National Conference on Education in February 2022. To learn more about the Women in School Leadership Awards, please visit <https://womensleadership.aasa.org/> or contact Jennifer Rooney at jrooney@aasa.org.

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