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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Eagle Springs Elementary School Principal Recognized as Georgia's 2026 National Distinguished Principal



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – Dr. Jeff Washington, principal of Eagle Springs Elementary School, has been named Georgia's 2026 National Distinguished Principal by the Georgia Association of Elementary School Principals (GAESP). The recognition is one of the highest honors in educational leadership and celebrates exceptional elementary principals across the nation.

As Georgia's honoree, Dr. Washington will represent the state at the National Distinguished Principals program in Washington, D.C., this October. The program is sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and GAESP.

"Dr. Washington exemplifies the kind of servant leadership that leaves a lasting impact on those around him," said Dr. Richard Rogers, Superintendent of Schools. "He has created a culture of high expectations, collaboration, and continuous improvement at Eagle Springs Elementary while ensuring students, staff, and families feel supported and empowered. We are incredibly proud to see him recognized at the state and national level for the impact he continues to make on public education."

Dr. Washington was selected for his outstanding instructional leadership, commitment to student success, and ability to cultivate a thriving school culture rooted in collaboration and community partnerships. Under his leadership, Eagle Springs Elementary has become one of the top-performing Title I schools in the district and among the highest in student growth statewide. The school's overall academic performance increased significantly, reflecting major gains in student achievement and academic growth.

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His leadership has also strengthened professional collaboration among educators through the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), helping teachers respond more effectively to student needs and driving sustained improvement in literacy and mathematics achievement.

In addition to academic success, Dr. Washington has championed programs that connect students with mentors and community leaders, including “Ties for Guys” and “Pearls for Girls,” initiatives designed to build confidence, leadership skills, and future aspirations among students.

Beyond the school level, Dr. Washington has served as a mentor for aspiring leaders, contributed to professional organizations including the Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL) and GAESP, and presented at conferences across the state. His dedication to educational leadership was previously recognized through the Jimmy Stokes Distinguished Service Award.

“I am truly honored and humbled to be named Georgia’s National Distinguished Principal,” said Dr. Washington. “This recognition reflects the dedication of the students, staff, families, and community members of Eagle Springs Elementary. I am grateful to serve alongside such passionate educators and supportive leaders who work every day to help students succeed.”

Eagle Springs Elementary School is located at 3591 Highway 41 North in Byron. For more information about the school, visit <https://eses.hcbe.net/>.

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The National Distinguished Principals® program was established in 1984 to recognize elementary and middle-level principals who set high standards for instruction, student achievement, character, and school climate while making a lasting impact on their learning communities.

