



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Johnny Key, Commissioner*

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## **Arkansas Leadership Academy Names New Master Principal**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Candie Watts, having achieved the status of Master School Principal, was recognized March 10, 2016, at the Arkansas State Board of Education meeting at the Arkansas Department of Education.

Watts completed three years of rigorous professional development plus an additional year of performance evaluations to achieve the designation this spring from the Arkansas Leadership Academy's Master Principal Program. Johnny Key, Arkansas Department of Education commissioner, and Dr. Diana Peer, Master Principal leader, presented the award.

Watts has been the principal at Mayflower Elementary School in Mayflower for six years. With Bachelor of Science in Education and Master of Education degrees from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, she also is a graduate of the Arkansas Leadership Academy Teacher and Team Institutes. Watts is dedicated to improving the school culture and results for her students, teachers and families and is well known for her leadership in professional development, curriculum, instruction and assessment leadership.

The Arkansas Leadership Academy is based in the College of Education and Health Professions at the University of Arkansas. The Academy's Master Principal Program was authorized by Act 44 of the Second Extraordinary Session of the 2003 Arkansas General Assembly.

"The Master School Principal program is an excellent opportunity for principals to build valuable instructional leadership skills, which enhance student academic performance," Key said. "I commend Ms. Watts for completing the program. She, along with previous program graduates, serves as a great example of instructional leadership in education."

According to ALA Director David Cook, "Developing principals with the talent to lead complex organizations requires giving them a broad range of leadership experiences along the way. This rigorous, four-year program enables school leaders to enhance and accelerate student and adult learning. I commend Ms. Watts for being dedicated to her students, teachers and learning communities. I also want to thank the Arkansas Legislature, the Arkansas Department of Education,

and the academy's partners for their support and vision in building the leadership capacity of principals across our great state.”

Phase I of the Master Principal Program is open to all school principals who have at least one year of experience and the support and permission of their superintendents to participate. Principals from across the state meet during the year in four multi-day sessions for intense study while applying the learning from those sessions in their schools throughout the year.

Admission to the second phase of the program requires submission of a portfolio documenting the application of the lessons learned from the first phase and the results of that work to improve student and adult learning in the school. To be admitted to the third phase, principals must complete a rigorous application process that includes evidence of their impact on education at the district, state and regional levels. These portfolios are evaluated by stakeholders in education from Arkansas as well as from out of state. Scorers receive training through the Arkansas Leadership Academy.

After successful completion of all three phases, principals may choose to participate in a rigorous assessment by a team of trained examiners with at least one member on each team from another state. The rigorous assessment process examines evidence from three primary sources:

- Student Performance: An analysis of student academic achievement data;
- Principal Performance: An analysis of a portfolio created by the principal; and
- School Performance: A site visit to gather evidence.

Successful performance in these three areas qualifies an individual for Master School Principal status. Master Principals will receive a \$9,000 per year bonus for five years upon earning the designation. They are eligible for an additional \$25,000 per year for five years if they are selected to serve at a low-performing school.

Established in 1991, the Arkansas Leadership Academy is a nationally-recognized statewide partnership of 15 universities; nine professional associations; 15 educational cooperatives; the Arkansas Departments of Education, Higher Education and Career Education; the Arkansas Educational Television Network; the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce; Tyson Foods Inc.; Walmart Stores Inc.; superintendent representatives; the Office of the Governor; and the State Board of Education – a total of 51 Partners.

For more information, visit <http://www.arkansasleadershipacademy.org/> or contact Dr. Diana Peer at the Arkansas Leadership Academy at [dpeer@uark.edu](mailto:dpeer@uark.edu) or 479-575-3030.

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