

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
RECOGNITION**

**MIDDLE STATES COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES AWARDS**

**ALEXANDRA GREENWOOD, FALLSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL  
*TEACHER-TO-TEACHER NETWORKING GRANT***

**SONDRA BENDER, BAKERFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
*THE COLLINS-SKINNER AWARD***

**March 21, 2016**

**Background Information:**

Founded in 1903, the Middle States Council for the Social Studies (MSCSS) is the oldest professional organization in the country devoted solely to social studies education. MSCSS engages and supports educators in strengthening and advocating social studies as a core discipline. With members across the country, MSCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, college and university professionals, who are involved with all social studies disciplines. The mission of MSCSS is to provide leadership, service, and support for social studies educators of all levels. Members include: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C. MSCSS uses grants and awards to recognize and encourage professionalism and leadership among educators engaged in social studies education. Social studies educators play a critical role as citizens in their respective communities, states, country and the world.

**Discussion:**

Alexandra Greenwood of Fallston Middle School was awarded the Teacher-to-Teacher Networking Grant, an award instituted by MSCSS in 1986 as part of its program to encourage teachers to make known and share with their colleagues their imaginative and creative classroom projects. The grant is funded by MSCSS from the income generated at its Annual Conference. Ms. Greenwood consistently does excellent work in teaching Contemporary World Geography. She has been a leader in working with technology in the classroom, being one of the first teachers in Harford County to have an interactive white board and to use a variety of applications with her students. She creates many interactive projects to extend the curriculum, asking students to use multimedia resources and the listening and speaking skills required by Common Core.

Sondra Bender of Bakerfield Elementary School was awarded The Collins-Skinner Award, which is named for two past members of the MSCSS and is presented annually to an outstanding elementary teacher in the Middle States region who emphasizes social studies instruction in the classroom. Ms. Sondra Bender has been a member of several large social studies projects. She was a curriculum writer for our Grade 3 Curriculum and was able to bring her unique skills based in working with technology as a major infusion in the document. She also worked on a project co-sponsored by the American Flag Foundation and HCPS that

involved reviewing and updating materials in preparation for the War of 1812 Bicentennial. These materials are available from the American Flag Foundation for use across the whole of the United States. Currently, she is working on a realignment of grades 4/5 curriculum with a goal of increasing the technology applications.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County express its sincerest congratulations to Ms. Alexandra Greenwood and Ms. Sondra Bender for their Middle States Council for the Social Studies awards.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
RECOGNITION**

**MARYLAND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON GIFTED AND TALENTED  
EDUCATION AWARDS**

**VERNA HISER, MEADOWVALE ELEMENTARY & HICKORY ELEMENTARY**

**TARA RECOR, EDGEWOOD ELEMENTARY & PROSPECT MILL ELEMENTARY**

***OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR IN GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION –  
TEACHER AS LEADER***

**March 21, 2016**

**Background Information:**

The mission of the Maryland State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education is to encourage and support the education of students who are identified as gifted and talented in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland and national standards for gifted programming. The Council includes professional educators, parents, community and business stakeholders that represent all levels of education and the major geographic regions of Maryland. The Council becomes informed about best practices for gifted and talented education and its role as an integral facet of education in Maryland; advises the State Superintendent of Schools on issues and best practices relevant to the education of gifted and talented students in Maryland; supports the Maryland State Department of Education and local leadership in developing, implementing, and monitoring plans and programs for gifted and talented education; informs and educates parents and caregivers, educators, communities, and other stakeholders about the unique needs of gifted and talented students; and encourages the development and consistent implementation of comprehensive, high quality services with regard to gifted and talented education in order to assure equity of access for all children throughout the state.

**Discussion:**

The Maryland State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education recently awarded both Verna Hiser, of Meadowvale Elementary School and Hickory Elementary School, and Tara Recor, of Edgewood Elementary School and Prospect Mill Elementary School, *Outstanding Educator in Gifted and Talented Education - Teacher as Leader*.

Ms. Hiser co-plans lessons and co-teaches math and reading in grades three, four and five. By co-planning and co-teaching with general educators, Ms. Hiser has provided job embedded professional development, which has had a positive impact on student achievement. She guides teachers and staff with effective strategies for working with twice exceptional students, using the stock market game and fantasy football to teach higher-level math skills and critical thinking, and strategies to strengthen STEM connections throughout the school day. Ms.

Hiser provided an informational session for Towson University student interns at Hickory Elementary School. In addition, she has presented informational sessions at PTA meetings.

Ms. Recor consistently stays on the tip of the wave with gifted and talented (GT) strategies. She is regularly called upon to deliver professional development to her GT Specialists colleagues on a regular basis. She has presented content on identification processes and characteristics of the gifted learner, best practices in assessment, coding and robotics. She is currently assisting a team of GT specialists in writing online learning modules surrounding GT strategies for general educators who teach GT students. Additionally, Ms. Recor is a member of the Harford County Citizen's Advisory Committee on Gifted Education and the Maryland State Advisory Committee on Gifted Education. She was nominated for the award by principals Jennifer Drumgoole and Gail Dunlap and Coordinator of Accelerated Learning and Intervention Peter Carpenter.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County express its sincerest congratulations to both Ms. Verna Hiser and Ms. Tara Recor for having been named *Outstanding Educators in Gifted and Talented Education – Teachers as Leaders* and wish them continued success in their careers.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
RECOGNITION**

**CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN FINANCIAL REPORTING  
&  
DISTINGUISHED BUDGET PRESENTATION AWARD**

**March 21, 2016**

**Background Information:**

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 18,000 government finance professionals. The GFOA established the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Program in 1945 to encourage and assist state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal. Reports submitted to the CAFR program are reviewed by selected members of the GFOA professional staff and individuals with expertise in public-sector financial reporting.

The GFOA established the Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program in 1984 to encourage and assist state and local governments to prepare budget documents of the very highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA's best practices on budgeting and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal. Documents submitted to the Budget Awards Program are reviewed by selected members of the GFOA professional staff and by outside reviewers with experience in public-sector budgeting.

**Discussion:**

Harford County Public Schools' comprehensive annual financial report for the year ended June 30, 2015 was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of state and local government financial reporting. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements. This award is presented to the Finance Department, Business Services. This is the 12th consecutive award for the Excellence in Financial Reporting.

Harford County Public Schools received the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its budget. This award reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meet the highest principles of governmental budgeting. In order to receive the budget award, HCPS has to satisfy four nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation and

be rated proficient in all four categories. These guidelines assess how well the budget serves as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communications device. This award is provided to the Budget Office, Business Services. This is the 14th consecutive year for the Distinguished Budget award.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County congratulate the Office of Business Services on having earned these significant accomplishments.