

ODSS graduate named outstanding principal

Born and raised in Orangeville and a former Orangeville District Secondary School (ODSS) student, Patrick Hamilton has joined the ranks of the National Academy of Canada's Outstanding Principals. The Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) principal has been named as one of Canada's Outstanding Principals, joining an elite group of only 40 who will receive the award in 2016.

In response to the award, Mr. Hamilton said he feels "like the luckiest principal in Canada." He praised CDDHS's "amazing staff of teachers, office staff, educational assistants, custodians, maintenance workers, and school board officials who work tirelessly to help our students be successful."

Bestowed by the Learning Partnership, the award "offers principals ongoing networking, mentoring and professional development opportunities so they can constantly enhance their leadership skills."

Mr. Hamilton, who is one of only 18 principals from Ontario to receive the award this year, was nominated by parents, co-workers, and community and chosen by a national selection committee based on how each principal improved student achievement in their school.

"The strength of our world-renowned public education system is built on great principals, who are educators, managers and leaders in their schools and communities," said Akela Peoples, President and CEO of The Learning Partnership.

Mr. Hamilton and his wife Trisha live in Orangeville and have two sons. He holds a Masters Degree in Education from the University of Toronto in Educational Leadership.

Beginning his teaching career at Orangeville District Secondary School in 1994, Mr. Hamilton was one of the Program Leaders who worked to open the new Westside Secondary School. He was later Vice-Principal at both CDDHS and at Guelph Collegiate and Vocational Institute. Following his time in Guelph he returned to CDDHS, where he has been principal for the last four years.

Mr. Hamilton, who calls teaching "the most important job in the world" says he was "humbled and honoured that The Learning Partnership and my school community would put my name forward for such recognition."

He added, "There is no better place to work educating young people than in Dufferin County and the Upper Grand District School Board. Every day I work with an incredibly talented staff and school community who care deeply about kids and I believe our entire school community deservedly shares in this award."

The Outstanding Principal awards will be presented at a gala on February 23 at the Westin Harbour Castle hotel in Toronto.

By Marni Walsh