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State Superintendent of Schools

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TO: Members of the State Board of Education
FROM: Lillian M. Lowery, Ed.D. *Lillian M. Lowery*
DATE: March 28, 2013
SUBJECT: Recognition of Maryland's 2012-13 Milken National Educator

BACKGROUND:

On December 12, 2012, Dr. Lillian Lowery, Dr. Robert Tomback, and County Executive David Craig joined Dr. Jane Foley, Senior Vice President of the Milken Family Foundation, in announcing to a surprised teacher at William Paca Elementary School in Harford County, that she had been selected as a winner of the prestigious Milken National Educator Award. The announcement took place at an assembly with the entire student body.

Maryland has had a partnership with the Milken Family Foundation for twenty years, and has successfully identified fifty-seven Maryland educators who have won the Milken prize, a non-restricted cash award of \$25,000. With this year's honoree, the Milken Foundation will have contributed \$1,425,000 to Maryland's Milken National Educators. Each year, the Maryland State Board of Education honors the newly selected teacher.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This year's recipient is **Lauren Hunter**, a reading specialist at William Paca Elementary School in Harford County. She will be accompanied by her superintendent, principal, local administrators, fellow teachers, and family members.

The recipient will be introduced and a brief video will be shown capturing the excitement of the surprise announcement made this past fall. Mrs. Hunter will speak briefly about the personal and professional significance of this recognition.

ACTION:

Our new Milken National Educator will be presented the Milken National Educator crystal obelisk and an MSDE/State Board Citation. Commemorative photos will be taken. State Board members will have an opportunity to congratulate the winner and her professional colleagues.

BRIEF BIO

Lauren Duell Hunter

Grade 5 Reading Specialist
William Paca Elementary School
Harford County Public Schools
Abingdon, MD

As a child who grew up in a single-parent household and in circumstances similar to many of her students, Abingdon, Maryland's Lauren Duell Hunter possesses a unique blend of empathy and excellence. That she went on to become her high school's valedictorian, earning herself a full college scholarship, only reinforces her status as role model to a raft of young minds at William Paca/Old Post Road Elementary School.

In her classroom, tables of four are strategically placed to allow for seamless differentiation. The array also reflects Duell Hunter's keen understanding of group dynamics as well as individual learning styles. She has also developed a behavioral reward system to reinforce positive behavior, which contributes to advances in academic performance and an atmosphere of trust and respect. Students are unafraid to ask questions, and their parents, too, are an integral part of the learning process.

Her students show high levels of growth and advancement each year. 2012 reading results indicate that 17 out of 19 scored proficient or advanced.

Duell Hunter has served on the School Improvement team and as grade-level chair. She mentors new teachers and supervised an intern. For two years, she was the after-school program coordinator. An exemplary model teacher for the county, she was chosen to demonstrate a reading lesson for the superintendent so that he could observe the teacher evaluation process.