



**SCHOOL
SUPERINTENDENTS
of Alabama**

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NEWS IN EDUCATION

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Dr. Suzanne Freeman, Trussville City School Superintendent Named Alabama's 2009 Superintendent of the Year

Montgomery, AL., October 28 , 2008 -- The School Superintendents of Alabama (SSA) and Classworks, an SSA Premium Business Member, are proud to announce the selection of Dr. Suzanne Freeman as the Alabama/Classworks 2009 Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Freeman was selected from nine finalists throughout the state, each of whom is an outstanding superintendent. Dr. Freeman will be honored at the Superintendent of the Year Luncheon on February 3, 2009, held during SSA's Legislative Conference in Montgomery. Classworks will provide Dr. Freeman with a Superintendent of the Year ring and travel expenses to the AASA National Conference on Education, to be held February 19 - 21, 2009 in San Francisco, CA. At the National Conference, Dr. Freeman will represent Alabama and receive a bronze medallion with the Superintendent of the Year emblem and a plaque from the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), SSA's national affiliate and national sponsor of this program. Each state's winner will be recognized during the National Conference on Education where the national winner for 2009 will be announced.

Nominations for the award were submitted from the nine districts of the School Superintendents of Alabama membership to a committee of educators and representatives of education. All finalists were recognized last week during the SSA Fall Conference held at Ross Bridge in Hoover. The other 2009 finalists include Dr. Vic Adkison, Thomasville City School Superintendent; Mr. Luke Hallmark, Marengo County School Superintendent; Dr. Linda Ingram, Coffee County School Superintendent; Mr. Leonard Riley, Chambers County School Superintendent; Dr. Eric Mackey, Jacksonville City School Superintendent; Dr. Joyce Levey, Tuscaloosa City School Superintendent; Dr. Sam Houston, Decatur City School Superintendent; and Dr. Dee Fowler, Madison City School Superintendent. In the spring, each of the nine finalists will award a \$1,000 scholarship on behalf of School Superintendents of Alabama, to a graduating senior in their school system who meets a minimum GPA and ACT score with the intention of majoring in education and teaching in Alabama. Each of these superintendents do an outstanding job and deserve the recognition of this program.

Dr. Suzanne Freeman has had the opportunity to serve since 2004 as the first superintendent in the newly formed Trussville City School System after having served as superintendent in Cullman City Schools for four years. "Dr. Freeman has created a leadership team and worked collaboratively both within the system and within the community to create an urgency to improve the educational opportunities for children. This would be a daunting task for many, but for Dr. Freeman it was energizing and stimulating. She unleashed her innovative and creative abilities to empower her leaders and staff, to integrate technologies and technology tools throughout the system, and to continually look for improved opportunities for learning at all levels," stated Dr. Susan Lockwood, SSA Executive Director.

Prior to Dr. Freeman's Superintendency in Cullman City Schools, she served as Assistant

Superintendent in Auburn City Schools for three years and as Principal for five years. She began her career in education as a teacher in the Opelika City School System in 1986. She holds a Doctorate of Philosophy and a Master of Education from Auburn University, and her Bachelor of Arts from Asbury College.

During Dr. Freeman's tenure in Trussville, the first biomedical academy in the state was launched, as well as other academies, including engineering, law, information technology, finance, health, hospitality and culinary, business and marketing, and construction. These academies were designed to give students more options than ever, whether they choose to continue their education in college or move directly from high school into the work force. Distance learning programs are also a major component of the curriculum.

"While the system has received many academic accolades, we think Dr. Freeman's greatest strength is her commitment to building a strong faculty. She believes in equipping teachers with the kind of continuing education and workshops that will infuse them with fresh ideas and teaching methods. It's not enough to have students grasp new information; we want them to understand the broader concepts behind that information. Such programs as Working on the Work, AMSTI modules, Greater Birmingham Math Initiative, and the BellSouth Leadership Network have been used to help our faculty combine traditional teaching methods with new and innovative approaches to make learning exciting and inspiring for the 21st century student," praised the Trussville City School Board.

As a leader in her community, Dr. Freeman is a member of the First United Methodist Church of Trussville, the United Way of Central Alabama Campaign Cabinet, Leadership Alabama Class XV, and the Trussville City Schools Foundation. She was named a Paul Harris Fellow by the Trussville Rotary Club.

Dr. Freeman has also been active at the state level, serving as a role model for all superintendents. She serves as a mentor in the Executive Coaching Program that SSA provides for new superintendents; she shares her knowledge as an Instructional Leader for all new superintendent training programs; she served as Secretary for SSA for three years as we transformed our organization; and she now serves as District V President and on the Board of Directors for SSA.

A primary mission of public schools has been to unify the community around providing a quality education and striving for all children to reach their full potential. Superintendents face a challenge, for they must uphold these ideas even while pursuing reforms, meeting national standards and showing accountability. Leaders of the nation's school systems must have courage, insight, and a clear purpose--because they are the ones who lead the community in standing up for public education as the cornerstone of our democratic system. Dr. Suzanne Freeman is an exemplary superintendent who embodies these ideals.

The School Superintendents of Alabama (SSA) provides a united voice for superintendents in our state. SSA promotes public education in Alabama and the nation; is the leading advocate for children and youth in our state; provides a forum for discussion of educational issues; provides professional development for superintendents and their leadership team to promote the efficient and effective operation of the school system and the achievement of students; and is the organization for superintendents to influence policy makers and legislators.