

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

Contact:

Nancy Leuenhagen
775.333.3789

Calli Fisher
775.325.2083

Nevada Middle School Principal of the Year Visits the Nation's Capitol

Reno, NV (Nov. 19, 2010) – Principal Ken Cervantes is not only leading the way to success at Billingshurst Middle School, he also is making impressions around the country. As the Nevada 2010 Middle School Principal of the Year, Cervantes recently returned from a trip to Washington, D.C., where he had the opportunity to discuss education legislation with the Senate Majority Leader and other lawmakers and to swap ideas with other principals from around the country.

Cervantes was named the Nevada 2010 Middle School Principal of the Year in the spring by the Secondary School Principals Association of Nevada. He traveled to the nation's capitol last month with other principals who won their state titles.

"I was extremely honored to be a part of the group that went to Washington. You are representing the values and passion of so many talented administrators from the Washoe County School District and in Nevada," Cervantes said. "I was really humbled by the once-in-a-lifetime experience."

During his trip to Washington, D.C., Cervantes met with some of Nevada's congressional representatives, allowing him to share his stories from Billingshurst and to discuss education legislation.

"I congratulate Ken on this extraordinary honor, which recognizes his service to the students of Washoe County. It was a pleasure to meet with him and to learn more about what he and the staff at Billingshurst Middle School do every day to ensure students are succeeding," Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) said.

"The conversation with the congressional representatives was stimulating because we were talking about what's best for kids and it's always nice to have input. While meeting with them, I realized that our district's strategic plan truly puts us ahead of the curve when looking at all the educational bills on Capitol Hill. Our district is progressive in using research-based best practices with high quality teachers in each classroom and data-driven decisions," Cervantes said.

Cervantes also said his discussions with the other principals were enlightening as they talked about ideas for successful schools. He shared the District's new reform plan, *Envision WCSD 2015 – Investing In Our Future*, with the other principals and discussed the future of education in the country. They also talked about ways to improve education at secondary schools, including interdisciplinary teaming cultures.

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Billingshurst Middle School has been using this model for 20 years. Sixth grade students are put into mini-teams with two teachers for their core subjects. Seventh and eighth grade students have the same core teachers for science, social studies and language arts for two years. This allows teams of teachers to work in professional learning communities where they create common assessments, interventions and interdisciplinary thematic units. Along with helping students master the academic standards, Cervantes says interdisciplinary teaming teaches students to develop collaboration skills, leadership, a strong work ethic, a positive attitude, conflict resolution skills and other intangibles that will help them become competitive as they apply for college and careers.

“We all have big dreams for the students of Washoe County and I’m proud to be part of such a dynamic district,” Cervantes said.

Area Superintendent Nancy Sanger said she is extremely proud of Ken and the Billingshurst Bighorns. “Ken has a strong commitment to the learning and success of all students. He is a world-class leader in our school district,” she said.

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About Washoe County School District: The Washoe County School District includes the Reno/Sparks metropolitan area, Incline Village, Gerlach, Empire and Wadsworth, Nevada. The District provides each of its 63,000 students with a superior education in a safe and challenging environment and is committed to graduate every child career and college ready. For more information visit: www.washoecountyschools.org. Follow us on Twitter at WCSDTweet.

Washoe County School District
425 East Ninth Street
Reno, NV 89512