

OASE Superintendent of the Year

Nomination Form

Nominee's Name Dr. Karen F. Gray
District Parkrose School Dist #3
Address: 10636 WE Prescott Portland, OR 97220
Phone 503-408-2135 e-mail Karen_Gray@parkrose.k12.or.us

Please answer all six questions below. 2 pages maximum (not including this form).

1. Please list their Administrative Experience Title, district, length of service.
2. Leadership for Learning – Explain a strategy they have employed to close a district-level gap in one of the following areas: socioeconomic status, ethnicity, special education or gender.
3. Communication – Explain what they have done to clearly communicate to all constituencies the purpose of their district, the future it is creating and the indicators of progress they are tracking.
4. Professionalism – Describe what they have done and/or the process they have used in their district to improve/change the teacher and principal evaluation system.
5. Resource Management – Across the nation, school districts continue to struggle with the lack of appropriate funding. What action have they taken to continue to provide a quality education for their students in spite of these shortages? How did they engage your community stakeholders to win their support? What innovative solutions have they implemented in their district?
6. Supporting evidence and/or pertinent information that may aide the committee in their selection.

I submit that the nominee name above is an OASE member who has met the above criteria to be recognized as the recipient of the OASE Superintendent of the Year Award.

Nominator's Name Marylu Baetkey Position Board Chair
District Parkrose School Dist. #3
Phone 503-253-4423 e-mail Marylu_baetkey@parkrose.k12.or.us
Nominator's signature Marylu Baetkey

Return by no later than Friday, September 15, 2017

COSA, Attention: Joanne Fey, 707 13th St. SE, Suite 100, Salem, OR 97301 or email joanne@cosa.k12.or.us

OASE Superintendent of the Year

Administrative Experience:

- 1996 to 2007 Assistant Principal Curriculum & Assessment & Dean of Students at Marshfield High School, Coos Bay, Oregon,
- Principal Destination Charter High School, Coos Bay, Oregon
- Director of Student Services, Coos Bay, Oregon
- Superintendent, Coos Bay, Oregon
- 2007 to present, Superintendent Parkrose School District #3

"Where Mt. Hood's mighty shadow meets the Columbia's Plain," there sits the Parkrose School District, a District that has been in its history a leader in education, at one time having one of the highest Tax Bases in the State; having to work through funding loss due to Urban Renewal, combined with Measure 5 and Equalization. Toss in the Board War that received national media coverage in the 90s and you have a District in need of renewal. Demographics transformation from a basically all white upper middle class to a very diverse community; currently Parkrose High School is the most diverse in the State. When Dr. Gray came to Parkrose the Board told her to reestablish the Greatest of Parkrose!

With steadfast determination focusing on the needs of Parkrose Students Dr. Gray has artfully and with tenacity gone about putting the pieces together. A different looking District then in the Glory Days; in particular the last four years there has been acceleration in moving us into another Golden Age where all can be proud of the schools they go to and the Community we live. Dual Credits and Students taking Advanced Placement courses at the High School have increased, resulting in more students going on to Secondary Education or Career Training.

Leadership for Learning:

Dr. Gray has modeled the practice of having a vision and using that vision to guide her leadership, she has been a champion in highlighting strategies for closing the achievement and opportunity gap in Parkrose, she artfully models and demonstrates her ability to reflect and learn from herself and her peers. Most importantly, Dr. Gray is committed in supporting her staff, thereby ensuring alignment between buildings so all our students have an equitable experience at our schools

- **Parkrose** is the only true K-12 Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) school district in the State
- **Parkrose Middle School** one of only a few National AVID Demonstration sites in the State, puts us in the top 1% of AVID schools
- **Parkrose Sacramento Elementary** is considered one of the only elementary AVID showcase schools in Oregon
- **Parkrose** has trained all staff including the School Board in Restorative Justice and uses it
- **Parkrose** has an Equity and Data committee made up of staff, parents, helping agencies and School Board members, resulting in an Equity Lens
- **Parkrose** has SUN Schools in all of its building
- **Parkrose** has pre-school in three of its four elementary schools and working to get one in the fourth
- **Parkrose** has an aligned 6-12 curriculum

Communication:

Let's remember communication is not a one-way process, Dr. Gray is in constant communication with staff and patrons of Parkrose receiving and providing information. She points out the successes such as both Shaver and Russell have been used as turnarounds models for Oregon Department of Education. Our High School graduation rate is among the 10 best High Schools for graduation rates in the State, are students of color percentage outranks the state. Our ELL scores are so high we have lost additional funding. Our student growth has been statistically significant in the last 4 years. All of Parkrose schools are out of focus status. Dr. Gray has been an equity champion highlighting strategies to close the achievement gap and opportunity gap.

Dr. Gray uses the following methods to communicate our successes and includes that in Parkrose equity issues and opportunities for our students are paramount.

- **Dr. Gray** created Parent Groups for the different ethnic groups where they work on building connection to the schools and discuss parent's needs.

- **Dr. Gray** and the Board send to all addresses in the District, twice a year a colored newsletter (see copies on the District web-site).
- **Dr. Gray** does the Superintendent's Corner in the local paper, where the District also posts events that are coming up and at the end of the year take out a full page where we Celebrate Parkrose Students.
- **Dr. Gray** attends each building's PTOs at least once a year if not more.
- **Dr. Gray** worked on the budget to realign the expenses so they are more transparent to the public and unions.
- **Dr. Gray** has worked with certified staff in creating choices for individual Professional Development and designing a new teacher mentorship program.
- **Dr. Gray** holds monthly meetings with both unions; problems are dealt with before they can grow into big issues. Through this process Dr. Gray was preemptively able to address staffing concerns for both unions.
- **Dr. Gray** served as spokesperson this last year in negotiations of both union contracts. The sessions were congenial and most productive without drama or going to mediation.
- **Dr. Gray** wrote with Board approval a *Safe School for Staff and Students* Resolution (see District web-site for Resolution).
- **Dr. Gray** before the start of school authored a *No Hate* letter that went out to all parents, on Facebook and had a poster created that is on display in all District buildings (see District web-site for letter).
- **Dr. Gray** and the Board piloted *Appreciative Inquiry* for Oregon School Boards Association this last year and will be working on implementing the results with the Community this coming year.

Professionalism:

There is little to do concerning improving or changing the teacher evaluation process. An Evaluation Handbook was created several years ago and each year a committee works on improving the content. The work now being addressed is consistency of the evaluators. Building principals are teaming up in doing observation and then reviewing together to improve their skills. The indicator is improved instruction.

Dr, Gray does see that her staff is having opportunities to expand their knowledge and experiences. She also has taken a leading role in working in the State on Equitable Issues. She is a member of HB 2016 Committee whose work developed a P-20 plan to ensure our African and African American students have academic success. Dr. Gray has chaired the Oregon Educator Equity Advisory Group, the group is charged with diversification of the Oregon workforce in education; she has taken the mandates to her own District where we are actively working on diversifying our staff to match our students body; having success! Additionally, we are putting programs in place to create our future workforce from our current students.

In the last two years the Administrative Staff has been trained in relationship building and reflective leadership.

Resources Management:

Dr. Gray was given an opportunity to hire a new Business Manager she looked for an individual that was creative, knowledgeable and knew how to form relationships. Currently the Business Department is working to automate the District's operations. They were able to realign internal controls and expenses to eliminate auditors concerns and be more transparent to the public and unions resulting in an easier and more efficient budgeting process.

How do you purchase new curriculum when there is no money? You ask the publisher to divide the cost in half and you pay half one year and half the next resulting in only a \$150,000 hit for each year. Pretty creative!

The District did pass a bond for construction of a new Middle School which has been built coming in under budget, technology and updated student and staff safety and security at all school sites. This has provided us an opportunity to improve our technology components and we will be teaching coding starting in school year 2017-2018. In 2015 we went out for a 1.3 million dollar bond to replace the bus fleet, the district utilized the QZAB funding source which will allow them to use the state school funded depreciation to pay the yearly debt, very innovative approach.

Dr. Gray this year working with OPAL Environmental Justice, TriMet and the Portland City Council for the first time ever got Youth Passes for schools east of 82nd Avenue in Portland. This was a phenomenal victory and certainly benefits Parkrose High School students.

Finally, the entire Parkrose School Board endorses this nomination. Dr. Gray truly has had a positive impact on the students' lives in Parkrose.