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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sunnyside High School to receive Supported Students Award from Washington State ASCD

Olympia, WA July, 2015 – The Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (WSASCD) has announced that Sunnyside High School will receive the Supported Students Award for 2015. The Supported Students Award is intended to recognize educators who contribute to providing a school where students have access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults. The award will be accepted by Principal Ryan Maxwell at a district event this fall.

Sunnyside School District has transformed itself in the last seven years into a leader and example of how a district can meet the needs of and continue to improve achievement for all students. The school's overarching goal of supporting the success of all students – no matter their circumstance or history – has been an emphasis for the staff and students. Each year, strategic and measurable goals are developed that support the path to that overarching goal.

Sunnyside High School's success has been achieved through a relentless focus on academic press, relational trust, social support and building relationships. Specific elements to improving student achievement have been:

- Making a connection – ensuring that every youth can identify and connect with a caring adult within the school
- Providing relevance and responsibility – student know where they are in the system, where they want to go, and how they can get there.
- A data-based, early warning system – identifying students at risk as early as possible
- Tiered supports – a process to identify needs and deliver appropriate academic and non-academic supports/interventions for at-risk students
- Professional Learning Communities – a trusting support and collaboration network for staff and faculty

As a result, graduation data for the school district has been steadily increasing. This includes their largest populations including Hispanic, special education, limited English, low income and Title I migrant. The Extended Graduation Rates in Sunnyside have gone from 41 percent in 2007 to 87 percent in 2014 – an achievement that brought special attention from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's Division of Secondary Education in 2014. They worked with Sunnyside School District to identify the elements (stated above) which led to this increased student achievement for all students. With OSPI's encouragement, representatives of the school district have presented at the Washington Educators' Conference, OSPI's Dropout Prevention webinar series and the Graduation Success Summit. Sunnyside High School staff has been very open as they share the success of their systemic approach to student supports and engagement, which values the potential of every student at the core of their culture of learning.

Founded in 1956, the Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is a community of all educators committed to promoting promising practices to ensure ALL students are safe, healthy, engaged, supported and challenged.

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