



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 15, 2021

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Carolyn Stanford Taylor Receives AWSA's Distinguished Friend of Education

MADISON — The Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA) has named Carolyn Stanford Taylor as a Distinguished Friend of Education.

When Carolyn Stanford Taylor completed her term as State Superintendent of Public Instruction in July 2021, she capped off a career of more than 40 years of service as an educator. Her work has been recognized in multiple ways, including through the 2018 Virginia Hart Special Recognition, awarded to female state employees positively influencing the future of Wisconsin.

The Distinguished Friend of Education is AWSA's highest award. Recipients must have provided outstanding service to the cause of quality education for the young people of Wisconsin. Past award winners include U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, President Jimmy Carter and State Superintendent John Benson.

In January 2018, Stanford Taylor became the first leader of color to serve as Wisconsin's State Superintendent. She was previously the Assistant State Superintendent. In this position, she oversaw the Special Education Team, the Student Services/Prevention and Support Team and the residential school for visually and hearing-impaired students.

Stanford Taylor and her siblings were among just a few black families to integrate the schools in her birthplace of Marks, Mississippi. She came to Madison to attend the University of Wisconsin and pursue a degree in elementary education. She went on to serve as a classroom teacher and principal in the Madison Metropolitan School District.

"In over four decades of service to students, Carolyn Stanford Taylor provided an example of excellence in educational leadership," said Jim Lynch, AWSA Executive Director. "Over that time, her intelligence, dedication, persistence and positive mindset have positively affected students throughout Wisconsin. We are very pleased to provide her with this well-deserved award."

Stanford Taylor received AWSA's Distinguished Friend of Education at the organization's Elementary Convention on October 14 at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay.

AWSA is a professional organization made up of more than 2,200 associate principals, principals, aspiring administrators and academically oriented district administrators across the state of Wisconsin. To learn more, visit <https://www.awsa.org>.

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