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Two Virginia Elementary Educators Receive \$25,000 Milken Awards *Chesterfield County and Albemarle County Teachers Honored*

A Chesterfield County third-grade teacher and an Albemarle County elementary school principal each received \$25,000 awards today from the Milken Family Foundation. Superintendent of Public Instruction Patricia I. Wright and Milken Family Foundation Senior Vice President Jane Foley presented the awards during surprise assemblies at each winner's school.

"These educators model and inspire excellence in their students, their colleagues and their schools," said Dr. Wright. "Today they are receiving recognition through the Milken Family Foundation's National Educator program for making a significant difference in the lives of Virginia students."

The Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards are designed to reward and provide recognition for elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals who promote excellence and innovation in public education. The 2008 Virginia recipients are:

- **Laura H. Marshall**, a third-grade teacher at Grange Hall Elementary School in Chesterfield County. More than 25 percent of Marshall's students achieved perfect scores on Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. Marshall serves as the school's social studies lead teacher and previously served as lead technology teacher. She was second-place winner in the Virginia Lottery's Super Teacher program and was nominated for the R.E.B. Award for Teaching Excellence. Marshall earned her bachelor's and master's degree from Virginia Tech.
- **William D. Sterrett**, principal at Woodbrook Elementary School in Albemarle County. Under his leadership, Woodbrook earned the 2008 Board of Education Virginia Index of Performance Excellence Award for making significant progress toward Governor Timothy M. Kaine's goals for increased student achievement and expanded educational opportunity. Woodbrook students consistently perform well on SOL tests and have been successful in narrowing or closing achievement gaps between subgroups. Sterrett earned a bachelor's degree from Asbury College and a doctorate from the University of Virginia.

Marshall and Sterrett join 29 other Virginia educators who have been recognized by the Milken Family Foundation since Virginia began participating in the awards program in 1999. They become members of the Milken Educator Network to share expertise to fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others shaping the future of education.

Educators are recommended for the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award without their knowledge by a blue-ribbon panel appointed by each participating state's department of education. Identification and selection procedures for the awards are confidential and the program does not include a formal nomination or application process. Recipients of the awards are selected on the basis of numerous criteria, including:

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- Exceptional educational talent as evidenced by student achievement and outstanding instructional practices in the classroom, school and profession;
- Outstanding accomplishments and potential for professional and policy leadership; and
- Engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community at-large.

The Milken Family Foundation National Educator Awards — dubbed “the Oscars of teaching” by Teacher Magazine — were first presented in 1987. Since the inception of the program, the Milken Family Foundation has distributed more than \$60 million in awards to more than 2,300 educators across the country. This month, up to 80 new recipients are being announced in surprise assemblies at their schools. This year’s award winners will receive their unrestricted \$25,000 prizes in spring 2009 at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles.

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