



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

## Hilton Middle School Honored as 'School to Watch'

JOSEPH E. ROBACH March 30, 2010

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**



"Essential Elements School to Watch" designation for Merton Williams Middle School from NYS Education Department; national award ceremony June 24 in Washington, DC

Principal Carol Stehm of Hilton Central School District's Merton Williams Middle School has announced that the school was designated a 2010 Essential Elements School to Watch by the New York State Education Department's Schools to Watch Leadership Team. "This really is about our staff and the work they do everyday," Principal Stehm said. "It's the dedication to the students that truly makes us a school to watch."

The Schools to Watch recognition is part of a state and national program sponsored by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. This recognition is given to middle level schools that have distinguished themselves in the areas of academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, organization and structure and commitment to continuous improvement. "There are 17 other schools in New York State and just over 200 schools nationwide honored with this designation," Principal Stehm said. "This recognition carries with it the honor of being recognized and the privilege of being identified as a model middle school for other schools across New York State and the nation. Merton Williams will be referred to as an exemplar of best practice when other schools are looking for guidance to improve their middle level programs. Last year we completed a rigorous submission process, which included a 90-page application with information about our student achievement growth and programs and practices in the areas of academics, developmental responsiveness, social equity and structural organization."

"In addition to the paper application, a two-day site visit was completed last year by a team of middle school educators from around the state, and a follow-up visit was completed this year by the New York State Schools to Watch Director," Principal Stehm said. "We are extremely proud and excited to receive this designation. The teachers and staff members of Merton Williams dedicate themselves to continuous improvement and helping all students maximize their potential. In the spring, a representative from the New York State Education Department and the New York State Middle School Association will visit Merton Williams to personally present the award to our staff, students and community."

"Through the efforts of your entire school community, Merton Williams is among an elite group of recognized schools across the nation," Marybeth Casey, Associate at the Middle School Level in the NYS Education Department said. "Your middle school is truly a model on both the state and national levels and you are to be commended for the fine work you do to

educate the students in your district."

Merton Williams joins 17 other schools in the State to receive this honor and only 200 schools nationwide to be recognized at this level. Schools to Watch will be recognized at a national conference in June 2010. Becoming a School to Watch followed a rigorous application process demonstrating excellence in academic programming, developmental responsiveness, social equity and structural organization. The national award ceremony will be held Thursday, June 24, 2010 in Washington, DC.

For more information about Merton Williams Middle School, [click here](#) to visit their website.