



## News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06.22.20

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## Region One ESC Selects Regional Superintendent of the Year

*McAllen ISD Superintendent, Dr. J.A. Gonzalez, Receives Top Honor*

Dr. J.A. Gonzalez, Superintendent of the McAllen Independent School District has been selected as the 2020 Regional Superintendent of the Year. As a regional winner, Dr. Gonzalez will represent the Region One area in the statewide Superintendent of the Year Award Program. Under the direction of the Texas Association of School Boards, the Superintendent of the Year Program (SOTY) recognizes exemplary superintendents for excellence and achievement in educational leadership.

Under the guidance of Dr. J.A. Gonzalez, McAllen ISD has been the recipient of numerous regional, state, and national awards including an “A” rating in the State’s Accountability Ratings two years in a row (on track for three), a District Post-Secondary Readiness Distinction three years in a row, eight years of perfect scores in the Financial Integrity Rating System, National Best Community for Music Education 8 straight years (placing it among the nation’s top six percent), all McAllen ISD schools named “America’s Healthiest Schools” since 2014, and all McAllen ISD high schools ranked “America’s Best High Schools” six straight years. But, it has been his demonstrated leadership skills and ability to meet challenges head on during the nation’s current pandemic that he has embodied the characteristics of an effective leader.

As noted in his nomination essay, Marco Suarez, McAllen ISD Board President points out that during this time of uncertainty, Dr. Gonzalez’s leadership skills shone brightly, “It was during this challenging time that Dr. Gonzalez marshalled the troops in order to create new learning platforms and opportunities for students, mobilizing all hands to swiftly create and implement a three-tiered action plan that guided the process to transition to across-the-board distance learning in just one week!” Additionally, Suarez adds, he led the district team to create systems and processes to launch a new high-end working and learning environment to enable continued district operations without interruption.

Dr. Gonzalez is afforded a unique viewpoint as the district’s leader having been a member of the McAllen ISD team for 22 years. He began his educational career at the district he now leads as a 6<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher at De Leon Middle School. He rose through the ranks until he was named Superintendent of Schools in 2016. “He (Gonzalez) has seen the district from the ground

**Region One Education Service Center** ([www.esc1.net](http://www.esc1.net)) serves over 439,000 students and educators in eight counties in south Texas including Brooks, Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Willacy and Zapata counties. Region One works to assist school districts in improving student performance, assist districts to operate more efficiently and economically, and implement initiatives assigned by the legislature or the Commissioner of Education.

up. He understands each component of the organization.” It is this perspective that has shaped the positive climate at McAllen ISD, “Dr. Gonzalez works to give everyone a sense of belonging, valuing everyone as an important contributor to the greater whole. It is about inclusiveness and not any one single individual.”

“The McAllen ISD community should be extremely proud of Dr. Gonzalez for receiving this honor; it is recognition not only for Dr. Gonzalez as the district’s educational leader, but for the McAllen ISD community, as well,” says Region One ESC Executive Director, Dr. Cornelio Gonzalez. “He is a model educational leader who is worthy of this recognition. We are proud to have him represent our region in the State Superintendent of the Year program.”

To be considered for the regional Superintendent of the Year award, a superintendent must be nominated by his/her school board and the board must pass a resolution confirming their superintendent’s nomination. Nominations for the regional award were submitted to Region One Education Service Center and reviewed by a select committee consisting of Region One School Board members who completed Leadership TASB training.

Since 1984, the SOTY program has honored outstanding administrators for achievement and excellence in public school administration. The selection of the Superintendent of the Year honor is based on a superintendent’s dedication to improving educational quality, ability to build effective employee relations, and a commitment to public involvement in education.

The State Superintendent of the Year Committee will select five state finalists in late-August and the Superintendent of the Year will be announced during the annual joint convention of the Texas Association of School Boards and Texas Association of School Administrators on October 2, 2020, at the TASA/TASB Convention.

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