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CONTACT: Herb B. Berkowitz

hberkowitzpr@gmail.com

(910) 763-4064

ND's Northern Cass School District Awarded \$500,000 in Annual Yass Prize Competition Honoring America's Most Innovative and Effective Education Providers

NEW YORK, Dec. 14, 2022— The Northern Cass School District, serving students in six rural North Dakota communities each comprising fewer than 250 people, has won national recognition as one of America's most innovative and effective education providers in the annual competition for the \$1 million [Yass Prize](#), education's largest and most prestigious award.

One of nine finalists for the top award, the [district](#) received a \$500,000 STOP Award, recognizing highly successful education programs that are sustainable, transformational, outstanding and permissionless. The award was presented at a banquet at the New York Hilton in midtown Manhattan earlier tonight.

Led by Superintendent Cory Steiner, Northern Cass was cited for being among the first school districts to create blended learning models for its students, reimagining education not only for its students but for all rural districts. Its personalized approach to education "meets students where they are and not the other way around." Dr. Steiner, the awards committee said, forgoes the "traditional" education label, developing instead personalized career pathways for students, such as medical technicians, nurses, child caretakers, and other in-demand occupations needed to help solve problems for those around them. Northern Cass's approach could be emulated everywhere.

"We were thrilled to find these education changemakers and are grateful to be able to reward their extraordinary creativity, tenacity and achievements, and to help them build for the future. We should be giving every educator in the nation the freedom the Yass Prize winners have to tailor education to the needs of children, and give every parent the opportunity to choose specialized learning environments like these," said Janine Yass, Founder with her husband Jeff, of the Yass Prize.

"After 25 years and countless dollars in charitable giving, this is by far the most impactful thing we have ever done with our resources," added Mrs. Yass.

Formally called the [Yass Prize for Sustainable, Transformational, Outstanding and Permissionless Education](#), the annual prize exists to recognize and reward outstanding education providers and to amplify their work through financial support, collaboration, coaching, encouragement and an extensive mentorship network.

The Center for Education Reform (CER), Washington, DC, administers the prize and houses the Yass Foundation for Education.

Jeanne Allen, director of the Yass Foundation and founder and CEO of CER, said the awards program is helping to build a “critical mass of innovation and success” beyond the confines of America’s troubled public-school systems and capturing the attention and interest of thousands of educators and parents who want to be freed from bureaucracy to serve students in unique and innovative ways.

“Through Janine and Jeff’s extraordinary generosity, we can not only reward the best-in-class providers who deliver outstanding education when it is most needed, but provide a benchmark for all to emulate,” said Allen. “We are proud to celebrate the type of innovative work that will chart the future for sustainable and transformational opportunities for students—in permissionless settings.”

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