

**The Nicholas Criscuolo Reading Award for Administrators recognizes an individual who is currently serving as an administrator (reading administrator, superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, assistant principal curriculum director, etc.) This individual demonstrates a sincere commitment to reading/language arts education through administrative efforts.**

***This award is presented to Michele Mullaly,  
Director of Teaching and Learning at Coventry Public Schools.***

Michele was nominated by Jen DeRagon, who wrote the following about Michele.

Michele Mullaly exemplifies the qualities of this award as the Coventry Public Schools Director of Teaching and Learning. Michele is a tireless advocate of literacy, and demonstrates this commitment throughout a variety of initiatives, professional development offerings, and committee work in the district. As a former high school English teacher for over a decade, as well as a former building principal at the middle school and high school level, Michele clearly understands the progression of literacy demands from the elementary to secondary schools.

As current Director of Teaching and Learning, Michele has cultivated several district-wide committees in our small district of to foster discussion around best literacy practices and vertical alignment K-12. The District Literacy Committees meets monthly and includes a multitude of stakeholders: Reading Consultants, reading teachers, library media specialists, building principals, district literacy specialist, and district technology director. Having all of these perspectives on the committee allows us to examine the impact of literacy instruction and assessment through various lenses. We learn from one another, as each member brings such a different perspective regarding Tier 1, 2, and 3 literacy instruction.

Michele also recently created a Literacy Intervention committee to review the process and progress of students in our Tier 2 and 3 interventions. Each school had previously conducted their own interventions and worked in isolation, but with the creation of this committee, we recently began to develop a flow chart of moving students in-and-out of intervention, including which programs should be used for which needs. Michele also advocated for the committee to analyze the achievement gap between regular education and special education students. This work in our district continues, led by Michele with her innovative and thoughtful approach to improving our intervention process.

Michele is constantly supportive of everyone in the district, and offers both the financial support and organization needed to encourage teachers to improve their literacy practices. For example, Michele has attended the CRA conference annually to watch her colleagues present, and has supported purchases for school-level book clubs. Specifically, this past year, she helped fund Jennifer Serravallo's Reading Strategies Handbook for any teacher K-5 who was interested in an after-school book club. At the middle school, she provided release time for teachers to redesign performance tasks, and at the high school provided release time for such things as: scoring and calibrating mock-AP Literature and Language exams, SAT redesign training, revision of English curricular units, and the design of a new AP Seminar course taught by the English department which is currently run by only 7 high schools in the state.

Michele also works closely with the school community to improve literacy for all students. She attends every district after school or night event to support our students and promote their achievement. Additionally, Michele is quick to showcase outstanding teachers. When teachers present at a national or state conference (such as CRA), or design innovative literacy projects for their students (such as a redesigned midterm based on project based learning), Michele invites these teachers to share in front of the Board of Education. Teachers feel recognized and rewarded by this practice, and it also informs the Board of Education of the creative and professional work that teachers conduct, above-and-beyond their regular teaching responsibilities.

Michele's heart revolves around literacy practices, and her daily work reinforces this passion. While she is a literacy expert herself and is constantly broadening her knowledge base, Michele also knows the power of "collective efficacy", as researcher John Hattie would term it. Michele is always reminding us that the work of a group is more powerful than that of an individual, and that educators working together is one of the most effective ways to improve student achievement. In is in this light that she has reorganized the structure of leadership and coaching in Coventry, and has tirelessly cultivated the work of committees to improve literacy in our district.

Please join us in congratulating Ms. Michele Mullaly for the **Nicholas Criscuolo Reading Award for Administrators.**