

# Nancy S. Grasmick

## Maryland State Superintendent of Schools

### **First Lady of Education**

**A woman of courage who dared to make a difference**

**A tireless advocate for education**

These are just a few of the phrases Maryland's media and civic leaders have used to describe Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, Maryland's first female state superintendent and the U.S.'s longest serving appointed schools chief. Dr. Grasmick is known for her strong focus on student achievement, teacher quality, parent involvement, public school funding, and early childhood education.

Under Dr. Grasmick's leadership, Maryland is nationally recognized for its many achievements. In January 2009, *Education Week*—the U.S.'s leading education newspaper—ranked Maryland's public school system 1<sup>st</sup>—in the nation and said that Maryland is the country's *most consistently* high-performing state. The ranking is based on more than 150 indicators, including scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); high school graduation rates; Advanced Placement performance (an indicator on which Maryland also ranks #1 nationwide); and the alignment of preK–12 education with early learning, college, and workplace expectations.

Many of the pioneering policies enacted over Dr. Grasmick's 17-year tenure—instituting an explicit preK–12 curriculum; developing statewide assessments and holding schools and school systems accountable for their results; disaggregating performance data by race, poverty, disability, and English fluency—have become commonplace in American classrooms.

Dr. Grasmick's career in education began as a teacher of deaf children at the William S. Baer School in Baltimore City. She subsequently served as a classroom and resource teacher, principal, supervisor, assistant superintendent, and associate superintendent in the Baltimore County Public Schools. In 1989, Governor William Donald Schaefer appointed her Special Secretary for Children, Youth, and Families and, in 1991, the Maryland State Board of Education appointed her State Superintendent of Schools.

Dr. Grasmick received her doctorate from the Johns Hopkins University, her master's degree from Gallaudet University, and her bachelor's degree from Towson University. Her numerous board and commission appointments include the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, the U.S. Army War College Board of Visitors, the Towson University Board of Visitors, and the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education. In 2005, she was appointed to the National Academy of Sciences committee responsible for *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, the landmark report on U.S. economic competitiveness.

Dr. Grasmick has received many awards for her visionary leadership, including the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education. She was named a 2009 Influential Marylander by The Daily Record, and received a Daily Record *2009 Innovator of the Year Award*. She also was presented the 2009 *Presidential Citation Award* from the National Association of School Resource Officers. The Education Committee of the Maryland Chapter of the NAACP honored her with a *2009 Award of Appreciation*. In 2008, Dr. Grasmick was given the Civitas International Leader Award for her commitment to expanding civic literacy throughout the world, and the National PTA Life Achievement Award for her exemplary advocacy on behalf of children. In 2007, Loyola College in Maryland awarded Dr. Grasmick its President's Medal in honor of her professional accomplishments and service to the community.

Dr. Grasmick is the 2006 recipient of the prestigious Education Commission of the States' James Bryant Conant Award for her outstanding contributions to American education. In 2005, Maryland's education headquarters was renamed the Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building.

In 2004, Dr. Grasmick was inducted into the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. She also received the Johns Hopkins Woodrow Wilson Award for Government Service. In 2003, the Education Commission of the States gave Maryland its State Innovation Award for excellence in education policy development. That same year, Dr. Grasmick was inducted into *The Daily Record's* Circle of Excellence, an honor bestowed only on those named to the newspaper's Top 100 Women list more than three times.

In 2001, Dr. Grasmick was presented the Ronald McDonald Foundation's Spirit of Children Award for her advocacy and support of young children.

Dr. Grasmick is a frequent guest columnist in such journals as *Education Week*, *Educational Leadership*, and *School Administrator*. Her innovative ideas and proven successes have been featured in such media outlets as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and the BBC.

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