



GSSA
Georgia School Superintendents Association

Marvin E. Lewis Sr. Trailblazer Award

Award in Honor of Marvin E. Lewis Sr.:

The first black Superintendent in the State of Georgia was Mr. Marvin E. Lewis Sr. of Hancock County Schools (January 1, 1972-Elected).

In the state of Georgia, no African-American had ever held the position of Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Lewis, born and raised in rural Hancock County. Born Oct. 23, 1924, to parents Floyd Lewis and Lela Lewis, he shared a household with a dozen siblings, 10 of which were boys. He served as a teacher, principal and superintendent in the same school system in which he grew up and went to school in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Marvin Lewis joined the U.S. Army after graduation where he served honorably. After returning to Hancock County, he served as a teacher, principal and as superintendent from 1973 and retired in 1995. Marvin endured and flourished during the most difficult times in Georgia history. He continued to grow professionally and personally during segregation and led the school district through desegregation with class. During his tenure, he was responsible for the construction of two new schools, M.E. Lewis Sr. Elementary and Hancock Central High School. He devoted his life to the education of Black children of Hancock County and did whatever he could to create better lives for the black people in the county that he loved.

Mr. Lewis said, "It was difficult for teachers to teach, but it was also difficult to convince poor black children that they could be anything they wanted to be."

Marvin E. Lewis Jr. passed away on November 20, 2002 at the age of 78. He was married for 51 years to Lillie Skrine Lewis and they had four children.

Many Georgia African-American Superintendents say, "Thank you for your service and setting the standard that African-American Superintendents can lead school systems and districts effectively and efficiently when given the opportunity."

Description of the purpose of the award:

To recognize a minority or underrepresented superintendent who served as a minority or underrepresented superintendent in a school district in the State of Georgia. One who broke through a barrier of a lack of diversity and/or equity in a school district in Georgia. One who provided experiences and perspectives which increased the productivity of all students through a diverse perspective. One who served all children from all races, creeds, religions in Georgia. One who demonstrates the ability to teach, mentor, guide, and facilitate staff in the local school districts. One who provides advocacy for and leads in the process of equitable and equal education for all students. One who advocates for public education and supports leadership development in our profession.

Nominations:

A TRAILBLAZER nominating form will be sent to all superintendents, board chairs, and RESA Directors annually for consideration. Completed nominations should be emailed to GSSA Executive Director John Zauner (jzauner@gssaweb.com). Once all nominations have been received by the designated due date, the Trailblazer Awards Committee will select a winner and the award will be presented at the GSSA Spring Bootstrap Conference annually.

Additional Eligibility: Currently serves as a Georgia superintendent or has served as a Georgia public school superintendent. Has served for at least 3 or more years currently or less than 3 if retired. Must be a retired member or past member of the Georgia School Superintendents Association as permitted.

THIS FORM CAN BE PHOTOCOPIED.

All applications must be received no later than March 8, 2024. Failure to complete all portions of this form will result in disqualification. The form may be scanned and emailed to jzauner@gssaweb.com or mail the completed form to:

GSSA
9 Jefferson Street
Newnan, GA

For questions, please call (678) 857-3642.

Superintendent Nominee's Name _____

School System _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Years as a public-school superintendent (through 2022 - 2023) _____ years

Vita attached yes no

Please attach your reasoning for nominating this Superintendent for the Marvin E. Lewis Sr. Trailblazer Award along with any supporting documents you deem necessary. Please refer back to the eligibility and purpose of the award listed to be included in your nomination.