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Council of the Great City Schools

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Detroit Public Schools Superintendent Named Urban Educator of the Year

ORLANDO, Oct. 21 – Detroit Public Schools Community District Superintendent Nikolai P. Vitti received recognition as the 2022 Urban Superintendent of the Year by his peers at the Council of the Great City Schools’ 66th Annual Fall Conference yesterday evening.

Nine big-city school superintendents competed for the nation’s highest honor in urban education leadership, recognizing, in alternating years, an outstanding superintendent and school board member from 77 of the largest urban public-school systems in the country.

Urban school leaders applauded Vitti during the Council’s 33rd Annual Green-Garner Award Banquet, where he received the prestigious leadership award.

Sponsored by the Council and Scholastic, the global children’s publishing, education, and media company, the top prize is presented each year in memory of Richard R. Green, the first African American chancellor of the New York City school system, and businessman Edward Garner, who served on the Denver school board.

Superintendent Vitti has been at the helm of Michigan’s largest school system since 2017, and under his leadership, the district has experienced improvement for the first time in decades in the areas of enrollment and financial management; student achievement; student attendance; teacher recruitment, retention, and pay; parental engagement; and student programming, including expansion of the arts and athletics.

During the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, the district fed over two million families and in collaboration with the business community, raised more than \$20 million to provide all students with laptops and internet connection to allow students to learn from home. The district opened all of its schools in 2020-21 and returned all students back to in person learning in 2021-22, expanded summer school and after school programming, placed a nurse at all schools, and provided mental health support in each school. The district also finalized a 20-year master facility plan, which led to an initial five-year \$700 million investment in school buildings through COVID Relief Funding.

As the recipient of the 2022 Green-Garner Award, Vitti receives a \$10,000 college scholarship to present to a student in the Detroit Public Schools Community School District.

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