

2000 MetLife/NASSP *National Principal of the Year*



Mr. Jay Engeln
William J. Palmer High School
Colorado Springs School District No. 11
Colorado Springs, Colorado

"Together, we can make a difference" is a school slogan wholeheartedly embraced by MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year 2000, Jay Engeln, principal of William J. Palmer High School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is the cornerstone of an educational philosophy that brings together students, staff, parents, and community members to support increased educational opportunities for all students. The slogan reflects a belief that the school can "give back" to the community and be an integral part of the environment in which it exists and expresses a commitment to fostering an atmosphere in which collaboration and teamwork are daily realities.

As a student and athlete in Evanston Township High School in Illinois, Engeln began to show signs of leadership and promise. He was elected vice-president of his class, was on the honor roll, and was active in sports, including soccer, hockey and track. Engeln credits several of his high school teachers and coaches with having a profound influence on his career choices. Following graduation from high school in 1970, he attended Colorado College, graduating in 1974 with a degree in biology. Engeln continued his education at the University of Colorado, where he earned a master's degree in science education.

In 1974, Engeln began his career in education as a science teacher and soccer coach in Colorado Springs. He taught biology and environmental science at Mitchell High School and human anatomy and physiology at Doherty High School, placing strong emphasis on student interaction and involvement in the learning experience.

While at Doherty High School, Engeln was a finalist for Colorado Teacher of the Year. He organized the first high school soccer team in Colorado Springs, playing with his team in the Men's League since there were no other high school teams to compete against. During his tenure as coach, his teams won two state high school soccer championships and five league championships. In 1985, he was named as the National High School Soccer Coach of the Year.

In 1993, following four years as assistant principal at Coronado High School, Engeln was named principal of William J. Palmer High School. The school, located in the heart of downtown Colorado Springs, included aging buildings, a declining and transient population base, a ninth grade failure rate of 45%, an overall student dropout rate of 8.4%, and a negative image within the community.

Engeln felt strongly that as the principal, his role was to provide direction and support for initiatives that focused on improving student achievement through the creation of programs that met the needs of all the students. As a "risk-taker" he has been the catalyst for positive change. However, he also strongly emphasizes the important role that each and every individual in the Palmer community played in making this progress possible. Under Engeln's leadership and with the dedicated support of staff, students, and community members, Palmer High School has become the pride of Colorado Springs. Although the facilities are dated and resources limited, staff and students display a "can do" attitude that does not let physical limitations define progress.

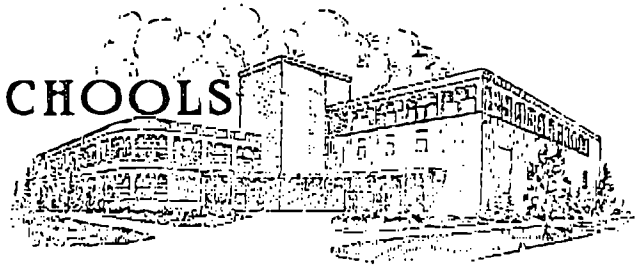
Often referred to as the "Flagship of School District 11," Palmer High School is inundated with requests to attend the school. Enrollment has almost doubled since Engeln assumed the role of principal, and construction projects are underway to provide facilities that will enhance the programs the school can offer to its clientele. The graduation rate has steadily increased and the dropout rate has declined to 3.4%. Test scores (ACT/SAT and TAP) are consistently among the highest in any public or private school in the region. The school's reputation is now one of excellence in education.

Palmer High School's more than 100 business partners support the school's educational mission. In addition, Engeln has been involved in several unusual methods of obtaining support for school programs. Three years ago, he and several students dribbled soccer balls 20 miles uphill to the 14,110-foot summit of Pike's Peak to raise funds for the school library. Last year, Engeln rode his bicycle 324 miles across the state of Colorado to raise money for programs at the school. Last fall, he promised students they could shave his head if they collected more than 16,000 pounds of food for the local food bank. Of course, they did just that.

As MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year, Engeln will receive a \$10,000 grant, which he plans to use to support staff and student initiatives that focus on continually improving student achievement and strengthening the sense of community that is embraced by the school. Because the staff, students and community members have made Palmer High School what it is today, they will play an important role in determining how the grant will be spent. Engeln plans to use his title as National Principal of the Year to reinforce the message of community involvement in the educational process.

COLORADO SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EL PASO COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 11

WILLIAM J. PALMER HIGH SCHOOL
301 N. Nevada Ave.

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80903

TO: Ann M. O'Leary
Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
Senior Advisor to the First Lady

FROM: Jay Engeln
National Principal of the Year – 2000

RE: Outline of remarks and bio

DATE: April 25, 2000

Outline of Remarks for the White House Conference on Teenagers

I. Role of schools in supporting teenagers

- A. Youth are approximately 24% of the population but 100% of our future.
- B. Our challenge is to meet the educational needs of all students in order to prepare them for satisfying and productive careers, civic responsibility and lifelong learning.

II. Role of Parents in Improved Student Achievement

- A. Increased student achievement occurs as parents are actively involved with their child's learning and the school and are given support in these areas.
 1. The school cannot do it alone – involvement of all entities of the educational community, including parents, is critical for success
 2. School motto: "Together - we can make a difference"
- B. Examples of ways to enhance parent involvement at William J. Palmer High School
 1. Outreach to community – visit churches with predominantly minority membership to dialogue with parents and community members about ways to help students achieve
 2. Dinner meetings with at risk students and their parents at locations away from the school
 3. Presence in the community – Hillside Community Center

Jay T. Engeln

Bio

I have included a copy of the introduction used for the National Principal of the Year Award Banquet – please feel free to use whatever you need from that bio.

A much shorter bio is included below.

“Together, we can make a difference” is a school slogan wholeheartedly embraced by MetLife/National Association of Secondary School Principals Principal of the Year – 2000, Jay T. Engeln. It is the cornerstone of an educational philosophy that brings together students, staff, parents, alumni and community members to support increased educational opportunities for all students. Engeln is currently completing his seventh year as principal at William J. Palmer High School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He previously worked as assistant principal for four years and taught high school science for fifteen years. Engeln received his undergraduate degree from Colorado College and his Master’s from the University of Colorado. He was selected as the National High School Soccer Coach of the Year in 1985 and a Colorado Teacher of the Year finalist in 1987.

Four years ago, Engeln and five students dribbled soccer balls 20 miles up hill to the summit of Pikes Peak to raise funds for the school library. Two years ago Engeln rode a bicycle across Colorado (through the mountains) to raise money for programs at the school.

2000 MetLife/NASSP *National Principal of the Year*



Mr. Jay Engeln
William J. Palmer High School
Colorado Springs School District No. 11
Colorado Springs, Colorado

"Together, we can make a difference" is a school slogan wholeheartedly embraced by MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year 2000, Jay Engeln, principal of William J. Palmer High School in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is the cornerstone of an educational philosophy that brings together students, staff, parents, and community members to support increased educational opportunities for all students. The slogan reflects a belief that the school can "give back" to the community and be an integral part of the environment in which it exists and expresses a commitment to fostering an atmosphere in which collaboration and teamwork are daily realities.

As a student and athlete in Evanston Township High School in Illinois, Engeln began to show signs of leadership and promise. He was elected vice-president of his class, was on the honor roll, and was active in sports, including soccer, hockey and track. Engeln credits several of his high school teachers and coaches with having a profound influence on his career choices. Following graduation from high school in 1970, he attended Colorado College, graduating in 1974 with a degree in biology. Engeln continued his education at the University of Colorado, where he earned a master's degree in science education.

In 1974, Engeln began his career in education as a science teacher and soccer coach in Colorado Springs. He taught biology and environmental science at Mitchell High School and human anatomy and physiology at Doherty High School, placing strong emphasis on student interaction and involvement in the learning experience.

While at Doherty High School, Engeln was a finalist for Colorado Teacher of the Year. He organized the first high school soccer team in Colorado Springs, playing with his team in the Men's League since there were no other high school teams to compete against. During his tenure as coach, his teams won two state high school soccer championships and five league championships. In 1985, he was named as the National High School Soccer Coach of the Year.

In 1993, following four years as assistant principal at Coronado High School, Engeln was named principal of William J. Palmer High School. The school, located in the heart of downtown Colorado Springs, included aging buildings, a declining and transient population base, a ninth grade failure rate of 45%, an overall student dropout rate of 8.4%, and a negative image within the community.

Engeln felt strongly that as the principal, his role was to provide direction and support for initiatives that focused on improving student achievement through the creation of programs that met the needs of all the students. As a "risk-taker" he has been the catalyst for positive change. However, he also strongly emphasizes the important role that each and every individual in the Palmer community played in making this progress possible. Under Engeln's leadership and with the dedicated support of staff, students, and community members, Palmer High School has become the pride of Colorado Springs. Although the facilities are dated and resources limited, staff and students display a "can do" attitude that does not let physical limitations define progress.

Often referred to as the "Flagship of School District 11," Palmer High School is inundated with requests to attend the school. Enrollment has almost doubled since Engeln assumed the role of principal, and construction projects are underway to provide facilities that will enhance the programs the school can offer to its clientele. The graduation rate has steadily increased and the dropout rate has declined to 3.4%. Test scores (ACT/SAT and TAP) are consistently among the highest in any public or private school in the region. The school's reputation is now one of excellence in education.

Palmer High School's more than 100 business partners support the school's educational mission. In addition, Engeln has been involved in several unusual methods of obtaining support for school programs. Three years ago, he and several students dribbled soccer balls 20 miles uphill to the 14,110-foot summit of Pike's Peak to raise funds for the school library. Last year, Engeln rode his bicycle 324 miles across the state of Colorado to raise money for programs at the school. Last fall, he promised students they could shave his head if they collected more than 16,000 pounds of food for the local food bank. Of course, they did just that.

As MetLife/NASSP National Principal of the Year, Engeln will receive a \$10,000 grant, which he plans to use to support staff and student initiatives that focus on continually improving student achievement and strengthening the sense of community that is embraced by the school. Because the staff, students and community members have made Palmer High School what it is today, they will play an important role in determining how the grant will be spent. Engeln plans to use his title as National Principal of the Year to reinforce the message of community involvement in the educational process.

FAX

WILLIAM J. PALMER HIGH SCHOOL
301 N. NEVADA AVENUE
COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80903Date 4/25/00Number of pages including cover sheet 4

To:

Ann M. O'Leary
Special Assistant to the President
for Domestic Policy and
Senior Advisor to the First Lady

Phone

Fax Phone

CC:

(202) 456-6244

From:

Jay Engeln

Phone

719-328-5000

Fax Phone

719-328-5001

REMARKS:

