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## **Ann Arbor Public School Teacher Recognized for Creativity in the Classroom**

### **David Leach from Ann Arbor Pioneer High School Nominated for 2006 Disney Teacher Award**

David Leach, the Director of Bands at Ann Arbor Pioneer High School, is being recognized for his creativity and success in the classroom as a Disney Teacher Award Nominee. Leach joins an elite group of teachers from across the country that has been recognized by their communities. As the next step in the awards process, Leach is now submitting an application to be considered for the 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year Award.

“We are truly delighted that David Leach has been nominated for the Disney Teacher of the Year Award,” said Lynda Berg, Coordinator of Fine Arts and Physical Education for the Ann Arbor Public Schools. “David is recognized across the country as one of the premiere high school band directors. His dedication and personal commitment to our program and our students is truly extraordinary. He continually sets the standard for excellence in teaching, leadership and professionalism.”

Since 1989, Disney Teacher Awards have been presented to teachers who construct learning environments where students and teachers alike explore, imagine and engage in a variety of stimulating ideas and experiences. Specifically, the program honors those teachers whose approaches exemplify creativity in teaching and who inspire a joy of learning in their students.

“Sixteen years ago, we started celebrating local heroes by establishing the annual Disney Teacher Awards to celebrate and honor America’s finest educators,” said Terry Wick, vice president, Disney Worldwide Outreach. “This nomination process shows thousands of teachers across the country how much their work means to their students, colleagues and communities.”

In addition to letters of recommendation, Leach will submit an application that includes several professional reflection essays describing his classroom and approach to teaching, the impact of high stakes testing, how his approaches collaboration in his school and career and an event that shaped his as a teacher. A committee comprised of education experts from around the country will then review the nominee applications and select the 2006 Disney Teacher Award Honorees.

The Honorees will be announced in late spring and celebrated at a red-carpet Awards Gala in July. During the Gala four Honorees will be selected as Outstanding Teachers and one will be named the 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year. In addition, the Honorees each receive \$10,000, a \$5,000 grant for their schools and a six-day professional development institute with their principals at the Walt Disney World Resort. At the institute, teachers share ideas to refine their innovative teaching approaches and learn how to engage other teachers to build an effective collaborative teaching culture at their schools.

The Ann Arbor Public School District serves the City of Ann Arbor and parts of eight surrounding townships covering 125 square miles. The district has 20 elementary schools, one K-8 open school, five middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, three alternative high schools, one pre-school and one adult education program. As of September 2005, enrollment totaled 16,879 (excluding adult education and a portion of pre-school). The district employs 3,000 full and part-time staff members; approximately 76 percent of the teaching staff hold a master's degree or above.

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