



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **ACES Chase Academy Earns National Recognition with Principal and Teacher of the Year Honors**

*(Hamden, CT – April 20, 2026)* — Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) proudly announces that Dr. Frank LaBanca, Principal of ACES Chase Academy, has been named Magnet Schools of America (MSA) National Principal of the Year, and Marsha Perry, Grade 7 Language Teacher and Team Leader, has been named MSA National Teacher of the Year.

These prestigious national honors were presented at the Magnet Schools of America National Conference in San Diego, recognizing exceptional leadership, innovation, and commitment to student success.

Dr. LaBanca is recognized for his visionary leadership and forward-thinking approach to education. Under his guidance, ACES Chase Academy continues to evolve into a dynamic grades 6–12 STEAM magnet school, expanding opportunities for students to engage in innovative, real-world learning experiences.

Marsha Perry is celebrated for her unwavering dedication to students and her deeply student-centered approach to teaching. With nearly two decades of service at ACES, she has made a lasting impact by creating authentic, engaging learning environments and working to close opportunity gaps for all learners.

“To have both a national principal and national teacher recognized from the same school speaks volumes about the extraordinary work happening at ACES Chase Academy,” said Dr. Thomas Danehy, Executive Director of ACES. “Dr. LaBanca and Mrs. Perry exemplify the very best of our organization—innovative leadership, a deep commitment to students, and a relentless focus on excellence. Their achievements reflect not only their individual dedication, but the strength of the entire ACES community working together to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed.”

Magnet Schools of America's national awards recognize educators who exemplify innovation, equity, and excellence in magnet education. This dual recognition highlights ACES Chase Academy as a leading model for high-quality, student-centered STEAM programming.

ACES Chase Academy is a nationally recognized public magnet school serving students from across the region, focused on preparing learners for success through science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM).

ACES celebrates Dr. LaBanca and Mrs. Perry for their outstanding achievements and their continued dedication to students, families, and the broader school community.

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**About ACES:**

Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) is the regional educational service center for New Haven and parts of Middlesex and Fairfield Counties. ACES serves school districts through innovative programs and services that meet the needs of a changing educational landscape. ACES operates magnet, special education, and alternative schools, as well as providing a wide range of educational services including professional development, transportation, translation, and adult vocational programs. Learn more at [www.aces.org](http://www.aces.org).