



Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA) 2015 Rural Administrator of the Year Award Winner

Patricia Vickman | [Southern Door School District](#)



Patricia Vickman, District Superintendent, Southern Door School District was honored by the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA), a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping address challenges faced by rural school districts, at the annual Rural Schools Conference on Nov. 12, 2015.

Ms. Vickman has been the Southern Door District Superintendent for 3.5 years. In those 3.5 years, Ms. Vickman has promoted Southern Door and connected the Southern Door community with the school. Ms. Vickman's passion and expertise have kept the Southern Door District alive!

The Southern Door District mission is to “Engage, Empower and Excel.” With Ms. Vickman's personal conviction attached to this mission, the school district has expanded its current programs to engage our students, staff and community to come together. Ms. Vickman connected the YMCA to the school so families could utilize wrap-around services as well as “Let's Go Southern Door” which is an opportunity for rural families to utilize YMCA classes. Ms. Vickman made both of these opportunities for rural families happen through her connections with the YMCA and grant writing expertise.

Other examples of Superintendent Vickman's successes include bringing Mind Trekkers to Southern Door which involved a coordinated effort between all Door County Schools, Door County businesses, and the Women's Fund– Door County Science and Engineering. Ms. Vickman also connected Southern Door with the local Big Brothers and Big Sisters program which is now a “model school” for other school districts. Other initiatives that Patti supports are a school yard garden, Lego Robotics, Formula Race Car, Math and Reading Family nights, and a mentoring program. All initiatives Patti continuously utilizes her innovation, her collaborative efforts with local agencies and businesses as well as her drive for student engagement.



One of Patti's most recent successes is bringing the local hospital/clinic, Ministry Health, to rural Southern Door. After many months of planning, Southern Door community will now have an onsite clinic at the school. Families will be able to use the clinic during school hours and on weekends. Her personal motto is just say "yes" and connect the right people to make it happen.

Patti is also involved with having a voice for rural public school districts by presenting at Wisconsin Rural Schools Conference where she presented on Healthy Lifestyles, Engaging Students, Staff, and Community. Patti was also a panelist for Wisconsin State Reading Association Administrators in Reading and a panelist at the legislative level for the Northeast Wisconsin Legislative Press Conference in spring of 2015. She is one of the biggest cheerleaders for rural public schools.

Of course what you really need to know is that Patti puts in tireless hours knowing that if the students and community are engaged in school, the academic, social and career readiness will follow and ultimately the community will grow. Her character speaks volumes and I have witnessed her continuously "take the high road" when she could have easily pointed fingers. As a role model and leader she exhibits every part of the word integrity. Without her leadership, our community would not have grown in the same positive direction that she has taken us.

The Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance was formed to help rural school districts address the unique issues that affect rural schools as they seek to achieve the highest quality education for every student. Members include a cross-section of administrators, educators, school board members, post-secondary representatives, rural community members, business leaders, and other concerned individuals who want a strong voice for rural education.