



PENNSYLVANIA PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION

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Laura S. Tobias Named Pennsylvania's 2025 Principal of the Year

(ENOLA, PA) — **Laura S. Tobias**, Principal of State College Area High School in the State College Area School District, has been named **Pennsylvania's 2025 Principal of the Year by the Pennsylvania Principals Association**. As a state winner in the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Principal of the Year Program, Mrs. Tobias is a candidate for the National Secondary Principal of the Year. She will be recognized for this achievement by both the PA Principals Association and NASSP.

"I am thrilled that Laura Tobias, an exceptional principal and leader, has been chosen as Pennsylvania's 2025 Principal of the Year. A committee of her peers selected her for this recognition because of her outstanding leadership and contributions to her school, students and community," said Dr. Eric Eshbach, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Principals Association. "Mrs. Tobias is a strong, proactive leader who genuinely cares about the success and well-being of her students, staff and the entire school community. We are extremely proud to have her represent the PA Principals Association and secondary principals across the commonwealth."

An educator for 32 years and an administrator for 12 years, Mrs. Tobias joined State College Area High School as an assistant principal in 2016. She has been in her current position since 2021. She began her career as a history teacher at Hammondsport High School, Hammondsport, NY. In addition, she taught at Smethport Elementary School, Smethport, PA, and served as an instructional coach, history teacher and assistant principal at Penns Valley Area High School, Spring Mills, PA.

"I am honored and humbled to receive the Pennsylvania Principal of the Year award. This recognition belongs to the fantastic team of students, faculty, staff and the entire State College community I'm lucky to work with daily. To the incredible faculty, staff and students at State High, this award is as much yours as it is mine. And, of course, a heartfelt thank you to my family for always being there for me. Every leader is backed by a strong network of love and encouragement, and I couldn't do this without you."

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Under her exemplary leadership, Mrs. Tobias was instrumental in developing and implementing numerous programs and initiatives in her school, including the Safety Ambassadors Program to empower students with knowledge and skills in safety and security. This program trains students in safety protocols and situational awareness, equipping them with skills to assist during security drills and crises. She shared, "Working closely with our School Resource Officer, these ambassadors contribute to the school's security measures. By fostering leadership and collaboration, this program enhances our school's culture of safety and responsibility."

In addition, Mrs. Tobias and her team created Learning Centers (both Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Humanities) for students to access academic assistance throughout the school day. "These centers serve dual purposes: Tier I Intervention, where students can drop in for extra help or review, and Tier II Intervention, in which students with failing grades in multiple classes are assigned to the centers for targeted support," she explained.

State College Area High School is also committed to supporting mental health for both students and staff. To foster connection, and well-being, they have hosted two mental health summits that provided two hours of dedicated time for building meaningful relationships. "These summits have become an integral part of our school's efforts to promote a supportive and connected community," said Mrs. Tobias.

"We are extremely proud and excited to celebrate this well-deserved recognition of her leadership and dedication to our school community. Laura's unwavering commitment to excellence in education, her ability to inspire both students and staff and her passion for creating a positive learning environment make her an exemplary leader. This award reflects her hard work, vision and the impact she continues to make each and every day," said Curtis Johnson, Superintendent, State College Area School District.

Mrs. Tobias is most proud of being the leader of a student-centered school where the implementation of a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework has significantly transformed their building culture. They hold school-wide celebrations and recognize students through their mantras: **Represent SC Yourself & Our Community: Respect It, Own It and Advocate for It**. She said, "Every day, I am on the announcements to remind our students, "We love you, State High!"

Mrs. Tobias earned a Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy and Administration from the University of Buffalo (NY), and a Master of Science in Education in Advanced Teacher Education from St. Bonaventure University.

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In addition to her memberships in the Pennsylvania Principals Association and NASSP, Mrs. Tobias is active in her community serving on the Penns Valley "Hope Fund" Board of Directors and as a member of the staff support committee of Spring Mills Lutheran Parish. In 2011, while at Penns Valley School District, she was a Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year nominee, and in 2024, State College Area High School was one of 84 schools in the nation to be recognized as a Jostens Renaissance Platinum School of Distinction.

Mrs. Tobias and her husband, Martin, reside in Centre Hall, Pennsylvania. They have four sons, Cameron and daughter-in-law, Anna Baran Tobias, Andrew, Matthew and Aaron.



Laura S. Tobias

About the PA Principals Association: The PA Principals Association membership of approximately 3,300 is composed of elementary, middle level and secondary school principals, assistant principals and other educational leaders and is affiliated with the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

The Mission of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To ensure a quality education for every child by comprehensively supporting the educational leaders of our schools.*

The Vision of the Pennsylvania Principals Association: *To be the best service organization of its kind in the United States.*

For more information about the State College Area School District, visit: <https://www.scasd.org/>

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