

Mr. Gary Leighton Named SDSSA's 2019 Distinguished Service Award Recipient



The South Dakota School Superintendent's Association (SDSSA) Executive Board has selected Mr. Gary Leighton as their 2019 Distinguished Service Award recipient.

Mr. Leighton spent his entire K-12 educational career in the Florence School District. He served in the Florence School District for 43 years, 1975-2018. He was a High School Social Studies Teacher for 5 years, 1975-80. He then served as the High School Principal and Superintendent for 38 years, 1980-2018.

Mr. Leighton spent two years as an Adjunct Professor at South Dakota State University, 2016-18, teaching School Law, School Finance, and Education in a Pluralistic Society.

Mr. Leighton earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1975 and Masters of Education in 1980, both from South Dakota State University. He earned his Educational Specialist degree from the University of South Dakota in 1987.

During his career, Mr. Leighton held many leadership positions, including the Northeast Superintendent's Group President, 2007-2018; Eastern Coteau Conference Chair, 1991-2018; SDUSA School Lobbying Group President, 2015-17; Beadle Club President, 2013-15; Northeast Technical High School Board Executive Committee, 1997-2018; SD Schools Group Insurance Pool/Northern Plains Insurance Pool Executive Committee, 1983-2018; and Sanford Health Plan Board of Directors, 2008-2017.

In 2017, Mr. Leighton was recognized by the SDHSAA as a 25-year Track and Field Meet official.

Congratulations to Mr. Gary Leighton on an outstanding and distinguished educational career!