

## Feinstein Principal Feted

# Lisi honored for commitment to FMS guidance

Principal has a background in guidance, praises efforts of school's trio of counselors



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COVENTRY — The Rhode Island School Counselor Association (RISCA) recently awarded Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School Principal Dr. Arthur Lisi the RISCA Administrator of the Year Award for his work with and dedication to his team

**Feinstein Middle School Principal Dr. Arthur Lisi was presented a plaque from the Rhode Island School Counselor Association recently.**

Submitted photo

of guidance counselors at the middle school: Patricia Dorchies, Lori LeBrun and Cheryl Frame.

"I am both honored and appreciative of this recognition. More importantly, it is an acknowledgement of the work we are doing," said Lisi. "Our school-wide initiatives could not have happened without the support and dedication of our three counselors, and their commitment to helping to design personalized learning structures at ASFMS are instrumental in propelling this work."

The three nominated Lisi because he advocates for the guidance program

and feels the role of school counselor is one of the most important in the building.

"The purpose of it is to recognize his role in supporting school counselors," LeBrun said. "He has the role of principal and administrator but that role of administrator breaks up into various areas, where this particular award just focuses on supporting counselors."

They all agree, Lisi believes that the school counselor is one of the most important advocates in schools and takes an active role when supports are discussed. Part of his support for the position could come from the fact that

he is a former guidance counselor himself.

"He encourages his counselors to be leaders in the school community and supports the process," LeBrun said. "There are a lot of great counselors in this state but their administrators don't look to them as having a lead in the building but he's always thinking about our students."

Frame explained that Lisi leads a support staff meeting that includes all support staff in the building.

"Student concerns are discussed at

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# Lisi an advocate for guidance

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this meeting, which allows all staff to be aware of any major concerns,” Frame said. “In addition, two days a week, Lisi participates in six grade-level RTI (Response to Intervention) team meetings. Along with the school counselor, he meets with team teachers to discuss struggling students.”

The counselors consider his knowledge of the individual students and their circumstances “admirable.”

“In a building of about 1,250 students,” Dorchies said, “he gets to know their names and he wants to be involved. He’s extra busy but makes the time for them.”

LeBrun has been a school counselor for eight years and pointed out how the role of school counselor has changed over the years.

“I don’t think when I was young, the school counselor left her office,” she said. It’s not just that our roles have changed, but

the state’s requirements for academics have changed,” she said. “We try to see kids who have a jam-packed schedule and there’s one counselor per grade, therefore we each have about 400 kids but we’re the largest middle school in the state.”

Dorchies and Frame, who have almost 40 years of school counseling experience between them, agreed.

“Middle school has always been a time in a child’s life for drama but with the explosion of social media, the kids don’t get enough sleep because they’re up all night and they come to school and they can’t concentrate,” she said.

“There are so many more issues out there with the constant social media,” Frame said. “If there’s something going on online about them then they come to school upset and it’s just a whole other piece.”

Dorchies said as a building principal, Lisi carries his passion for learning into his school

mission.

“The focus for all teachers and staff is the Growth Mindset and that anything is possible,” she said. “Our school mission statement portrays his commitment to this and his understanding that we need to have everyone on-board in order to create a school that looks at the whole child and personalizes accordingly.”

She explained that the Growth Mindset has become a part of the advisory program and continues to be taught and demonstrated throughout the building.

“Most recently, Lisi and a team of school leaders submitted a proposal for an NESSC grant with the focus being the Growth Mindset learning,” Dorchies added. “The middle school was accepted and is now working with NESSC for the next two years to improve personalized learning in our school.”