

Outstanding Administrative Support Award

This prestigious award recognizes and honors an outstanding administrator who through professional work has demonstrated exemplary support for science education at the school, district, and/or county level. This award honors an administrator whose primary responsibility is outside the area of science instruction. This year the \$1000 award and plaque will be presented to Dr. Rachel Ruggirello during the NSELA Summer Leadership Institute.



Rachel Ruggirello, Ph.D.
Associate Director
Institute for School
Partnership at Washington
University in St. Louis

Dr. Ruggirello has demonstrated outstanding leadership in science education starting as a New Jersey-based high school science teacher in 2004 to her current role as associate director of the institute for school partnership at Washington University in St. Louis. Her passion and support of science education has impacted many parts of the science education spectrum: K-12 settings, higher education, outreach, curriculum and professional development, to name a few.

Dr. Ruggirello has been instrumental in establishing and scaling *mySci*, a comprehensive curriculum program including online instructional materials, integrated professional learning, and an innovative leasing model for hands-on activity supplies, equipping school districts in the St. Louis area with everything needed for rigorous and joyful science and engineering teaching and learning. In 2005, she was part of the partnership between Washington University's and informal science institutions and educators from across the region to solve a common problem of practice: a lack of science teaching at the elementary level. With the release of NGSS and Missouri Learning Standards, Dr. Ruggirello led a process driven by theory and grounded in research to co-design the mySci program with local stakeholders. She has grown the mySci K-8 partnerships from ten to fifty district partners. Across the St. Louis region, over 3,500 educators use mySci to teach more than 100,000 students annually. This unique regional research-practice curriculum partnership has transformed K-8 science teaching and learning in the St. Louis region, making NGSS-aligned science instruction accessible for rural, urban, and suburban students across the socioeconomic spectrum, which is in great part due to Dr. Ruggirello's vision, determination, and stalwart science leadership.

Throughout Dr. Ruggirello's science education leadership journey, she has been and continues to be actively engaged with science education organizations such as 100Kin10, the American Educational Research Association, the Association for Science Teacher Education, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the National Association for Research in Science Teaching, the National Science Education Leadership Association, the National Science Teaching Association, and the Science Teachers of Missouri. Dr. Ruggirello is also an active scholar, with her peer-reviewed research appearing in *the Cultural Studies of Science Education Journal* and presentations at the *European Science Education Research Association Conference*.

NSELA is proud to present the 2022 OASA Award to Dr. Rachel Ruggirello. Her nominator described her as having "a brilliant mind, [an] ability to visualize and implement strategic plans, and [the] capability of reaching teachers in a way that honors them and moves them forward in practice; she does all of this without ego or self-promotion in mind. She is an ultimate mission-driven researcher and practitioner, and she somehow is able to manage many programs and just as easily be seen in the trenches doing the actual curriculum writing or professional development facilitation."