



## The Siena School Hosts 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration

*Honors Senator Zucker and Delegate Luedtke along with local key supporters*

**Silver Spring, Maryland, October 28, 2019-** The Siena School held its annual Siena Celebration on October 24th, 2019 at the Silver Spring Civic Center in Maryland. Each year, the Siena community comes together to celebrate school achievements and to recognize important contributions to both Siena and the field of dyslexia education.

Annually, an individual or organization is awarded The Siena Cypress Leadership Award for significant and lasting contributions to the education of children and young adults with learning differences. Siena awarded this year's Cypress Leadership Award to Senator Craig Zucker (D-Montgomery District 14) and Delegate Eric Luedtke (D-Montgomery District 14) in recognition of their work and support in the passing of the Ready to Read Screening & Interventions Bill. The Ready to Read bill took effect on July 1, 2019, requiring all school districts to have screening and interventions ready for pre-K through 1st grade students by the 2020-21 school year.

Erik Heyer, founder of The Siena School, presented Senator Zucker and Delegate Luedtke with the Cypress Leadership Award. Heyer said that "Senator Zucker and Delegate Luedtke have indeed made significant and lasting contributions for countless students across Maryland" through the passing this bill. In his acceptance speech, Delegate Luedtke said: "This bill passed because of the hard work of teachers, other educators, parents, and students across the state of Maryland." Senator Zucker shared his personal learning experiences during his speech, offering a motivational and inspiring message. "I want to be in a



place one day, where no child feels like they are a failure... and that no obstacles prevent them from succeeding.”

Key supporters Allen Perper and Milton Janitorial Service were also honored for their contributions to the Siena community. Allen Perper, father of alumni Eli '11 and Ben '13, has been an invested member of Siena's community since 2008 when his children began attending the school. Allen and his wife Ann held key roles in the Parents Association, organizing events and helping the school to grow. Allen currently holds the position of chairman of The Siena School Scholarship Fund Committee. He also volunteers yearly to address Siena's U.S. History class on the history of Woodstock, the Vietnam War, and peaceful protests.

Milton Janitorial Service, a family owned business since 1983 run by Milton Gumucio, has provided exceptional services to Siena since 2006 when the school first opened. In true entrepreneurial style, Milton opened his commercial cleaning business with only one client. Today he, along with his son Carlos, currently clean buildings and service the grounds in over 20 locations throughout the area. Ninety percent of them are churches and schools. Milton Janitorial Service has continued to work with Siena through several seasons of growth, including the transition to a new building and the addition of a new wing.

### **About The Siena School**

The Siena School in Silver Spring, Maryland serves bright, college-bound students with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia. Siena's staff and board of advisors include distinguished national, state and local education leaders and professionals. The school was established in 2006 and serves students in grades 4 – 12. Siena's program is designed for students with mild to moderate learning needs who are experiencing a discrepancy between their academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas such as reading, writing, oral expression or math. Siena delivers an individualized educational program featuring small class sizes, research-based instructional methodologies, a highly trained staff and an educational environment specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our students, with a specific emphasis on the arts. For further information, The Siena School can be contacted at (301) 244-3600 or on the web at [www.thesienaschool.org](http://www.thesienaschool.org).

### **About the Ready to Read Screenings & Interventions Bill**

The Ready to Read Screenings & Interventions Bill became Maryland law and requires all Pre-K to 1st grade students to be screened for reading difficulties, including dyslexia. The bill took effect on July 1, 2019, and school districts are required to have screening and interventions at the ready by the '20-'21 school year. Foundational reading skills that include phonological and phonemic awareness and processing will be screened. Where it is determined a student is at risk for reading difficulties, supplemental reading instruction will occur and parents notified.