

Board of Education
Osceola County School District
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Dear School Board Member,

It is with great pleasure that I make application for superintendent of Osceola County School District. Research has lead me to believe that this is a quality school system where students are the highest priority. High achieving districts are built on a continuous commitment by all staff to strive for high expectations, curriculum innovations, effective employee relations, and parent participation. The future will require continued focus and innovation. I would welcome the opportunity to continue to move the district forward and meet the challenges that public education must face to fulfill the needs of the 21st century learner. I believe every opportunity to be an exemplary superintendent in a successful district exists in Osceola County.

I have a wide range of experiences, as an administrator at every level, in both large and small districts, in both rural and urban settings. These diverse experiences have taught me no one stands alone; it takes a team of quality individuals to achieve the best for our students. The best superintendents take strategic risks that position the district for continued improvement. Ultimately, the role of the position is to create an atmosphere that allows all stakeholders the opportunity to learn and grow. I am personally committed to being that kind of superintendent.

My current position has been both challenging and rewarding, and shares many similarities with Osceola County Schools. I am currently serving as Superintendent to Plymouth-Canton Community Schools in Michigan. P-CCS is the third largest district in Michigan serving 19,000 students. The school district serves a very diverse population. The district has three comprehensive high schools and an alternative high school, five middle schools housing grades 6-8, and sixteen elementary schools with pre-k through 5th grade.

Student achievement has always been, and remains, the number one priority for any school district. The most significant factor affecting student achievement is attracting and retaining high quality employees that reflect the diversity of the community. I understand this and have made this a priority in every district where I have been superintendent. Furthermore, in these current times, a large part of the superintendent's role requires a clear understanding of the district's finances. Fiscal responsibility requires careful planning, starting with a 3-5 year financial forecasting. My extensive experiences in all areas of the school district provide me the background and knowledge to be a highly effective superintendent.

Throughout my administrative career I have worked closely with staff, maintaining positive rapport, establishing a common vision and continually working toward each district's improvement. Experiences as a teacher, building level administrator, and a district administrator has provided me unique learning opportunities. I am particularly interested in being a part of a progressive community, and a dynamic school district. I would welcome the opportunity to learn more about the Osceola County School District and discuss how I might be a part of its future.

Sincerely

Craig A. Fiegel

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Skill Highlights

- 11+ years as superintendent of schools
 - 23 years experience as a district level administrator - superintendent or assistant superintendent
 - Student focused with success in increasing student achievement
 - Promote a school culture of student learning and professional growth
 - Promote student success by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner
 - Extensive experience with district finance and budget development
 - Demonstrative leadership in long range planning efforts
 - Strong commitment to shared leadership
 - Promote a culture that treats all with fairness, dignity and respect
 - Strong belief that public education is the foundation of a democratic system
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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**Superintendent**

Plymouth –Canton Community Schools, Plymouth, MI

2008 – present

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools is Michigan's third largest public school district serving over 19,000 students in 26 schools, including 16 elementary, 5 middle schools, 3 high schools, one alternative/adult education program and one pre-school center. Currently, the P-CCS population is 73% White, 11.5% Asian, 9% African American, 1.5% Hispanic and 5% other non-white minorities. 16% of the students are eligible for free/reduced lunch and over 750 students are English Language Learners speaking 74 different languages.

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools is a high-performing suburban school district that is recognized for academic excellence and is renowned for its support of the fine and performing arts. The graduation rate is 94 percent. All 24 schools received an A for the 09-10 school year, the state of Michigan highest designation for individual schools.

Accomplishments

- I have raised expectations and improved student access and achievement throughout every level of the school district. The primary focus is on implementing standards and assessments consistent with the new Michigan graduation requirements, communicating the need and importance of all students being prepared for post secondary education and career in a global economy, establishing school accountability measures, and promoting adequate and equitable funding. This focus has resulted in improved achievement scores as measured across tested subjects and grade levels.

- Reading scores improved on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) by 3 percentage points overall in grades 3-8 respectively from 2008 to 2010 from a score of 89% to 92% meeting or exceeding.
 - Math scores improved on the MEAP by 2 percentage points in grades 3-8, respectively from 2008 to 2010 from a score of 92% to 94% meeting or exceeding state standards.
 - Science scores as measured by the MEAP test have increased district wide on average by 2 and 3 percentage points respectfully over the past three years.
 - ACT scores have remained steady with all juniors required to take this test. An average score of 22.2 compares to a state average of 19.6 and a national average of 21.
- Initiated a strategic planning process we called Setting Our Course. The process involved 60 staff and community members. The committee developed five dynamic goals that will guide the district over the next 3-5 years. The mission and vision statements were revised to reflect the state of the district for the foreseeable future. Belief statements were developed to help guide how as a district we will do our work.
 - Changed the districts hiring procedures to address the districts need to attract, hire and retain a more diverse staff. It is important that the teaching staff is reflective of the student population. We hired 85 new employees and 25% were minority candidates. This effort to put good role models in the classrooms for our minority students will aide in closing the achievement gap.
 - Promoted a new initiative to help the district address the achievement gap that exists with our minority students. Courageous Conversations was introduced in the fall of 2008 and we began by working first with our administrators. Over the past two years we have been working with building teams, engaging them in discussions about race and the causes of, and possible solutions for, the achievement gap. Our scores have increased for our black sub groups on the Michigan Merit Math Exam by 10% points.
 - Introduced a participatory budgeting process involving staff and patrons hoping to increase understanding of the district's financial situation. This process helped to identify potential budget reductions. During the past three years we have utilized cost containment, cost reduction, and program redesign strategies, as well as negotiation efforts to consistently present a balanced budget to the Board of Education for approval and in accordance with state law.
 - Redistributed general fund dollars and excess bond proceeds to purchase 1700 instructional computers, replacing 6-7 year old computers. Set up a replacement plan and earmarked general fund dollars to support an annual program for repairs and replacements. Used qualified school construction bonds for energy saving project using savings to pay off the bonds.
 - Maintain dialog with federal, state and local leaders supporting the district and public education. Stayed involved in the legislative process by addressing specific problems with proposed legislation, adequate and equitable funding, and offering solutions in support of effective school reform.

- Initiated a study committee comprised of staff and patrons to review development activities in the district. As a result of the committee's work, a long-range plan for development was proposed. Recommendations were made to the schools educational foundation to look at its organizational structure and, in addition, identified other development activists that might benefit the district.
- Promote the district by addressing school and community organizations through identification and explanation of issues involving the school district.

Superintendent

D124 – Evergreen Park Elementary District, Evergreen Park, IL

1999 – 2008

Evergreen Park D124 is located in Evergreen Park, Illinois, a south side suburb, boarded by Chicago on three sides. The district serves over 2000 students in 5 schools, 4 elementary and 1 Junior High. The population in Evergreen Park changed dramatically during my tenure, becoming increasingly more diverse. The student population is 55% white, 24% black, 16% Hispanic, 1% Asian and 4% other. A little more than 7% are English Language Learners, and 29% are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Evergreen Park D124 is known for its low class size and recognized for its quality schools.

Accomplishments

- Implemented the Models Classroom Project, a program focused on instructional strategies geared toward differentiating instruction. This program provided a common vision and language that identified one standard model for instruction across the district. We saw improved student achievement throughout every level of the school system by focusing on instructional practices and improving teacher performance. This program was designed to help teachers differentiate instruction, providing strategies to help deal with the different needs of the learners in their classrooms.
- Developed a three-year budget plan, projecting revenues and expenditures to assist in future planning efforts. Additionally, I projected enrollment and reviewed these trends to assist in our financial forecasting. With annual review and update, we were able to avoid unexpected budget short falls.
- Introduced new school/classroom management process, Positive Based Intervention System (PBIS), and implemented this district wide. Incidents of discipline declined as we focused on teaching students the types of behaviors we expected.
- Worked with administrators to develop a new tool for their evaluation, which involved feedback from staff. I also used this same type of feedback to assist the board in my evaluation.
- Consistently communicated and worked with the unions and employee groups to develop and maintain positive and productive labor relations. Negotiated several multi-year contracts, the most recent was a “wall-to-wall” contract where the teachers’ contract was combined with the non-certified contract into one comprehensive agreement.

- Planned, organized and directed a successful education fund referendum in response to declining revenue. This successful referendum was passed by over 55% with no organized opposition. We waged a positive campaign focused on the success of our schools and programs.
- Instituted a culture that promoted customer service, making every effort to make parents feel welcome in our schools. Worked with staff to encourage positive communication with students, parents and patrons.

Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services

USD 497 Lawrence Public Schools, Lawrence, Kansas

1990 - 1999

Lawrence is university community home to the University of Kansas. Lawrence is a diverse community with high expectations for its students. I was responsible for the business, facilities, technology, food service and transportation. Reported directly to the superintendent.

Accomplishments

- Introduced and provided leadership for program budgeting that facilitated development of the annual budget. This process involved over 120 patrons and staff. By truly examining every line item and spending many hours educating the community about Kansas school finance, we were able to have public support and eliminate some of the rumors and concern from the taxpayers.
- Initiated studies related to district demographics and the impact on facilities. These studies lead to a long range facilities plan and helped guide discussions regarding school boundaries.
- Oversaw new construction and renovation projects exceeding 100 million dollars. These projects included air-conditioning all district schools, as well as other much needed repairs. Also included in the project were five new schools, including a second high school. All projects were completed on time and within budget.
- Participated in development of district's technology plan and the purchase of new administrative software for both business services and human resources. The major goal was to have a seamless system that tied our personnel functions and payroll system to our accounts payable and budget systems.
- Served as the district's chief negotiator in contract negotiations with the teachers union. We settled nine annual contracts during my time in Lawrence. We introduced interest based bargaining and successfully used that process during the last 4 years that I was there.

2005 - 2008 *Adjunct Professor* College of Education *Concordia University* River Forest, IL
EDL 6120 - Supervision and Improvement of Instruction EDL 6230 – School Law

1996 *Adjunct Professor* College of Education *University of Kansas* Lawrence, KS
EPL 912 - District Finance Management

1985-1990 *Assistant Superintendent of Schools* (89-90) *Junior High Principal* (85-88)
Goddard Public Schools USD 465 Goddard, KS

1982-1985 Assistant *HS Principal / Athletic Director* *Abilene Public Schools USD 435*
Abilene, KS

1980-1982 *Elementary Principal/Math Teacher* *Wathena Public Schools USD 406*
Wathena, KS

1977-1980 *Junior High Math Instructor/Coach* *Eudora Public Schools USD 491*
Eudora, KS

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Leadership, School of Education, Kansas State University,
Manhattan, Kansas May 1989

Master of Science in Education, School Administration, University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas May 1979

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas May 1977

CIVIC/COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS (selected)

- Chamber of Commerce –
Plymouth, MI (2008-Present) -Board of Directors (2009-Present)
Canton, MI (2008-Present) -Leadership Canton (2008)
Evergreen Park, IL (1999-Present) -Board of Directors (2000-2003)
- Rotary Club (2000-Present)
Plymouth, MI (2008-Present)
Evergreen Park- (2000-2008) President (2005-06)
- American Cancer Society (1999-Present)- Board of Directors- Chairman (2001-02)
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (1993-99) - Chairman (1995 & 1998)

PROFESSIONAL

Awards

- The Larry Stilgebauer Award of Excellence - Honorable Mention for the innovative use of technology
- Blue Ribbon Award from Department of Education, Central JHS
- Kansas Association of School Librarians- Distinguished Service Award

Associations

- American Association of School Administrators (1999-Present)
Michigan Association of School Administrators (2008-Present)
Illinois Association of School Administrators (1999-Present)
United School Administrators (1982-99) Director (1998-99)
- Mid-America Association of School Superintendents (2002- Present)
- Elementary District Organization (1999-Present) Co-Chair (1999-2004)
- Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) (1993-99)
Kansas Association of School Business Officials (KASBO) (1989-Present)
Director (1993-97); President (1998-99)

Presentations

- Sodexo Diversity Conference –March 2009 - Panel participant
- State of the District - Chamber of Commerce meetings, Plymouth and Canton, MI
- *Sand Castles Belong on the Beach* – published article, *Kansas School Board Journal* Jan/Feb, 1997
- **Kansas Association of School Business Officials** - state and regional meetings
Making Budget Cuts Involving Staff and Patrons
Construction- How to Manage
Negotiations and Fact Finding
Bidding District Insurance Policies
Purchasing/Bidding - Law Requirements, Good Practices and Procedures

Certifications

- New certification program for Michigan Superintendents (MASA – Courageous Journey)
 - State of Illinois Superintendent Certification
 - State of Kansas (expired 2002)
K-12 District and Building Administrator
K-9 Elementary Teaching Certificate
9-12 Secondary Drivers Education Endorsement
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PERSONAL

Family: Wife (26 years) Lisa - RN, BSN - Washburn University
 Children: Andrew (25) – BS in Finance - University of Illinois
 Julie (24) – BS in Finance and Economics - DePaul University
 Jessica (21) - Senior - University of Notre Dame
 Jennifer (21) - Senior - Loyola University Chicago