

April 16, 2011

Superintendent Search, The School District of Osceola County, Florida
817 Bill Beck Boulevard
Kissimmee, FL 34744

Dear Board Members:

As I submit my application for the position of Superintendent, allow me to highlight my purpose in seeking this position. I have held leadership positions in both the private and public sectors. In both, I demonstrated proven leadership by building new programs, improving existing programs and developing strong partnerships that enhanced each organization.

An executive leader should have a broad-based background to fulfill the requirements of this position. My experience within the spectrum of education has allowed me the opportunity to cooperatively work with local leaders, media personnel, board members, post-secondary institutions, and human service agencies. As the Senior Director for Community Relations & Programs; L'Anse Creuse Public Schools, I provide instructional leadership for programs at nine locations, serving over 2,000 students annually. In this capacity, I've had the privilege of working on the design team for a 30,000 square foot building, collaborate as a negotiations team member on a new MEA contract for alternative education, created school improvement initiatives that have positively impacted student achievement, implemented a special education program within alternative education, developed new educational programming throughout the district, and implemented a comprehensive community relations plan.

L'Anse Creuse Public Schools educates 11,500 students annually within 18 school buildings and provides instruction to residents of Harrison Township, Chesterfield Township, and portions of Clinton Township, Macomb Township, Mount Clemens, and St. Clair Shores. The district has a reputation for providing excellence in education as well as opportunities that extend beyond the k-12 environment including a large adult education program, workforce development training, early childhood programming and community education. In 2010, central office staff worked collaboratively with New Haven Community Schools to develop a Shared Services Agreement, of which my department provided services in the areas of adult and alternative education and communications support.

I look forward to discussing my qualifications further with you and thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Michelle R. Irwin

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Executive Skills Summation

A visionary leader with proven accomplishments in both the public and private sectors that include experiences at Macomb Community College, Lapeer Intermediate School District and L'Anse Creuse Public Schools. The combined use of public relations skills and educational leadership have positively impacted the organizations and communities served.

Major Accomplishments

- Personnel : Supervision of 70+ employees annually including three administrative and five supervisory positions. Administration of annual performance evaluations. Negotiations team for Riverside Academy - MEA/Local 1 ; *new contract development*. Written and implemented employee work contracts for three employment groups. Creation and oversight of Teacher/Leader program at Riverside Academy. Implemented multiple professional development opportunities.
- Finance: Oversight of a budget exceeding three million dollars annually. Funding sources include: General fund, section 107, Title ID, Adult Basic Education Federal Funds under WIA II, and Workforce Investment dollars (contracted through Michigan Works!). Since 2005, increased funding by 50%.
- Curriculum & Instruction : Oversight of NCA accreditation process for adult and alternative education. Developed and implemented professional learning communities within adult and alternative education. Implemented restructured day to accommodate professional learning communities. Led instructional team to align curriculum with the Michigan Merit Curriculum for Riverside Academy. Introduced and trained staff on new instructional methods that include lab development and project based learning. Expanded non-traditional programs throughout Macomb County due to high academic performance in adult education. Expanded career focused programming, district wide for economically disadvantaged students. Implemented building wide, positive behavior support model. Developed and implemented at-risk programs for middle school and Freshmen. Current member of the State of Michigan, adult education accountability task force. Implemented special education in alternative education.
- Community Relations: Member of LCPS, Community Action Coalition. LCPS Foundation administrator. Oversight of all district events. Attend and/or present at various school building functions. Received rewards from Apex Communications, National School Public Relations Association and Michigan School Public Relations Associations for the past five years. Oversight of annual report. Team member that helped pass the Non-Homestead Renewal and 2005 Bond for \$210 million.
- Media Relations: Developed and implemented crisis communications plan. District spokesperson. Board of Education media liaison.
- Management : Building design team member for the DiAnne M. Pellerin Center for Alternative Education. Supervision of nine educational sites.
- Partnerships : Through a shared services agreement with New Haven Community Schools, expanded alternative education program by implementing extension site (Riverside Academy – North) as well as contracting media relations for New Haven. Increased In School Youth Programming through Michigan Works ! Added adult basic education learning sites via Michigan Works ! Developed and implemented retraining programs through Michigan Works ! Partnership. Submitted JROTC application on behalf of LCPS. Articulated college credit through Macomb Community College for adult and alternative education. Partnered with St. Clair Shores Adult Education for career courses. Partnered with

Macomb Community College on Department of Defense grant for retraining programs. Team member to bring Wayne State University courses on site.

- Central Office : Secondary level reform team. Curriculum facilitator. Board Workshops presenter. Schools of Choice planning and recruitment. Presenter at community functions on issues such as financial status of the district, Schools of Choice status, and communications training.

Works Experiences

2005-Present L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Harrison, MI
Sr. Director of Community Relations & Programs - In addition to oversight of programming that has increased enrollment to over 2,000 students annually, additional responsibilities were added to include: Crisis Communications and all Media Relations, Community Education Programs, all Workforce Development Programs, Schools of Choice Recruitment, Elections oversight, L'Anse Creuse Foundation administrator, marketing projects, Board of Education media and community liaison, and District Strategic Planning member.

2004-2005 L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Mt. Clemens, MI
Director of Alternative Education – Educational leader and program manager for Adult, Alternative and Correctional Education. Student enrollment of 1,200 students annually.

2008 - Present Concordia University Ann Arbor, MI
Adjunct Professor: Masters in Educational Leadership – Taught Masters level courses in instructional leadership, public policy, curriculum & instruction, and professional learning communities both in the classroom and online. Developed online course, EDU660.

2001-2004 Lapeer County ISD Lapeer, MI
Adult & Community Relations - Serving as director, working strategically with Central Office Administration and upper administration of the five local districts supported to provide countywide oversight of Adult Education, Alternative Education, Assessment, Continuing Education, Workforce Development Board Liaison & Communications/Public Relations.

1998 - 2001 DMT Technologies, Inc. Macomb, MI
Marketing Director - A member of the entrepreneurial team focusing on initial business development, focusing on marketing, customer relations and sales.

1996 - 1998 Macomb Community College Fraser, MI
Media Relations for Continuing Education - Through innovative public awareness campaigning, assisted the program to increase in enrollment by 30% during the tenure of employment. Directly responsible for all print materials from design to distribution and media relations.

Education

1983 - 1987 Central Michigan University Mt. Pleasant, MI
BSS - Journalism - Public Relations

2003 - 2005 Capella University Minneapolis, MN
Master of Science in Education – Professional Studies In Education

2009-2010 Saginaw Valley State University Macomb, MI
Education Specialist Degree

References

Included in packet

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REFERENCES:

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