

Jeanice Kerr Swift, Ph.D.

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Experienced Educational Leader and Superintendent of Schools



Recent Leadership Experience

Interim/Appointed (March 2025) Superintendent of Schools Lawrence Public Schools, Lawrence, Kansas

August 2024 to Present

Led as Interim Superintendent of the Lawrence Public Schools, supporting students, parents and families; teachers, staff and leaders; and the Lawrence community, leading through a time of productive transition. The work during this school year has been focused on listening, engagement, connection, and conversation, to better understand the needs and desires of stakeholders in order to move forward together. A recently published report, [Lawrence Public Schools Fall 2024 Engagement: A Community Conversation](#), details the outcome of the Fall 2024 community engagement process.

Educational Leadership Consultant

January 2024 to August 2024

Directly support aspiring and established PK12 education leaders, leadership teams, and board trustees to continue development, enhancement of their leadership strengths, competencies with a focus on individual, team and organizational learning and systems implementation.

Superintendent of Schools

August 2013 - November 2023

Ann Arbor Public Schools, Ann Arbor, Michigan

- 4th largest PK12 public school district in Michigan
- Diverse, international, university community
- 17,500 student enrolled in 32 schools, 52% diversity, 25% poverty

Led as Superintendent of the Ann Arbor Public Schools over a decade of growth and innovation in the critical mission to serve students and staff, families and community in creating quality educational experiences to ensure dignity and belonging, strong achievement outcomes, equity and opportunity for *Every Student, Every Day*.

Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum, Instruction and Student Services Colorado Springs School District 11, Colorado Springs, CO

July 2011 - August 2013

- 2nd largest metro area in Colorado
- Urban, diverse school district located in central, historic Colorado Springs
- 27,500 students in 55 schools, 45% diversity, 40% poverty

Leadership Highlights

• Leadership for Student Achievement

We have realized key improvements in student achievement outcomes over time, particularly among traditionally underserved students, including: strategic increases in **4 year, on-time graduation and persistence rates**, including rates of growth at 2 to 3 times overall rate among the most vulnerable student groups, **reductions in suspension/disciplinary rates** through implementation of restorative justice practices, and maintaining continued focused attention on improving strategic support of all students.

Work continues to support teachers, support staff and leaders in **evolving instructional practice** for improved student engagement and achievement outcomes PK12, including strategic planning and staff development activities. A highlight is the work in progress to adapt early literacy practices to ensure a systems delivery of a structured literacy approach to early reading instruction as a priority across the AAPS. (For more information, see spotlight on 4 year on-time graduation data, p. 4)

• Equity Centered Leadership

Collaborative development of **AAPS Strategic Equity Plan, AAPS Framework for Equitable Instruction 3.0** and **Equity for Teaching, Leading and Learning Professional Development Cohorts**. Professional development system-wide in equity-based pedagogy, to ensure a robust approach to transform culture, practice and systems to ensure dignity and belonging in classrooms and beyond. Ensuring a culture of dignity and belonging for every student and staff member forms the foundation of the equity approach in the AAPS.

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Leadership Highlights, *continued*

- **Leadership for Fiscal Responsibility / Passage of Local Referenda**

Responsibility for oversight of approximately [\\$320M annual general fund](#), with additional capital resources to equal approximately \$400M overall annual budget; ensure critical monitoring, accountability, and reporting measures; strengthen fund equity over eight years while also working to balance critical mission for students, and competitive pay and benefits for employees.

Maintained from 6.7% to 10.2% fund equity over eight years of district leadership in the AAPS; consistently delivered monthly financial monitoring reports and clean externally conducted annual audits.

Navigating the challenging, ‘perfect storm’ realities of responsible fiscal management with increased student, school and system needs, inflationary impact, diminished enrollment revenues, maintaining quality staffing, and post-ESSR funding is critical, unprecedented work that will continue over the coming years in the AAPS.

Worked together with the Board, staff and community to successfully pass several new and recurring referenda, including [Operating Millage](#), [Sinking Fund Millages](#), and [Millages to support Special Education](#).

Innovated to develop, evolve and continue resource streams to support ongoing fiscal sustainability of the AAPS.

- **Capital Program Leadership**

Successful passage of [\\$1B Capital Bond](#), November 2019, the largest school bond passed in 25 years among Michigan schools and 2nd largest school capital bond in Michigan history.

Led methodical, disciplined preparation for the bond effort over years, including education, communication and engagement across the community; subsequently, community engagement and implementation have continued since 2020 in the **Capital Program**, now progressing in Phase II of a 20-year plan.

- **Leadership to Innovate; Enhance Programming & Student Opportunities; Increased Enrollment**

Implementation and enhancement of schools, programs and initiatives to enrich quality learning opportunities for students, including:

- significant expansion of **preschool and early learning** opportunities across the AAPS, including Young Fives programs at every K5 elementary campus;
- **STEAM** education, [A2STEAM K8 School STEAM Framework and Project Lead the Way](#);
- AAPS [International Baccalaureate PK12 continuum](#);
- expansion of **Career & Tech Ed**; **World Language**; and
- opening of [Freeman Environmental Education Center](#), enhancing longterm district commitment to environmental education.

- **Leadership in Support of Trustees and Partnership with the Board of Education**

Honored to serve alongside nineteen Trustees and seven Board Presidents during my tenure, working in collaborative partnership with the Board of Education in support of effective governance and engagement across the community, region, state and national efforts in advocacy for public PK12 education. Activities include consistent 1:1 and small group conversations, committee, planning and preparation work, district continuous improvement efforts, policy and governance processes, including school, district and community engagement.

Highlights of Board of Education evaluations of Superintendent performance:

[Superintendent Evaluation 2023 - Rated Highly Effective, 4 of 4](#)

[Superintendent Evaluation 2021-22 - Rated Highly Effective, 3.746 of 4](#)

[Superintendent Evaluation 2019 - Rated Highly Effective, 3.65 of 4](#)

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Leadership Highlights, *continued*

- **Community Engagement Leadership**

Led with ***Listen & Learn*** community engagement processes over the years, most recently [Spring 2023 Listen & Learn: We Are Ann Arbor](#) featuring more than 2,300 engagements, 500+ face-to-face conversations. Leveraged World Café, in-person conversations, and virtual formats with students, staff, parents, and community to hear from the community, engage in 2-way conversations, understand areas of challenge and success, and discover next steps together. Serve as a consistent, visible leader and presence in the Ann Arbor, state, and national PK12 school community. Previous **AAPS Listen and Learn community conversations** from prior years, including 2013, 2015, and 2018 were also conducted.

- **Policy Leadership**

Policies developed to support and protect all students: adoption of [transgender and gender nonconforming students, policy 5011](#), adoption of groundbreaking **student safety policies 5400, 5410, 5420** to improve school safety, [protect students from the open carry of guns in schools](#), a case defended in lower courts and ultimately prevailed at the Michigan Supreme Court. Developed [AAPS climate policy, Series 8000](#); climate and environmental sustainability policy development continues.

- **Leadership to Achieve Improvement in Organizational Metrics Over Time**

Achieved sustained progress in fundamental organizational metrics, measurable improvement in consistent annual reporting over time: as demonstrated in stakeholder experience data; increased student enrollment (with some loss during the pandemic that has since stabilized); fiscal strength despite ongoing funding challenges; proven success in passing several local referenda over years to strengthen fiscal health of the AAPS for the short, medium and long-term future.

- **Robust Community Participation and Engagement**

Maintained a robust, visible and continuing presence within the life of the Ann Arbor community over a decade, participating consistently in neighborhood, school district, civic and community events; partnered with local, county and state leaders as an advocate in public PK12 education efforts. Served as a visible and professional presence at local, county, state and national meetings, working effectively to learn and lead on issues important to educational excellence.

- **Leadership in Critical Thinking and Decision-Making Processes** *Better Schools Through Better Thinking*

Implemented organizational practices to achieve better schools through better thinking; established leadership proficiency in **TregoED** (Kepner-Tregoe) critical thinking and decision-making processes to engage team members, develop individual and team capability to solve complex administrative issues; ensure a consistent framework for organizational review, analysis of data, decision-making, evaluation of risk to perpetuate strong and sustainable critical thinking and decision-making and to protect decisions across the organization.

- **Leadership for Strengths-Based Individual and Team Development**

Focused, proven leadership to assemble and develop strong teams, driven by an aspirational approach in the discovery of and respect for individual strengths and talents and leveraging each individual's unique strengths to build the leadership capacity of the team. Based on the [Clifton Strengths](#) approach, work with leaders to understand talent and strength profiles to gain insight, develop a common language and working knowledge to ensure stronger team dynamics, improved connections and increased collaboration, individual and team capacity and performance. This work is based on the fundamental belief that our greatest chance for success lies in strengthening what we naturally do best and doing more of it.

Top Five Clifton Strengths: **Strategic, Learner, Connectedness, Maximizer, and Ideation**

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Leadership Highlights, *continued*

- **Pandemic Leadership**

Led the AAPS through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic time, crisis response management, establishing and adjusting COVID Readiness & Response Plan, safety mitigation protocols, addressing ongoing staffing and operations challenges. Served on Governor Whitmer's strategic COVID team, Washtenaw County. Navigated pandemic-related transitions of schools and operations, ensuring instruction transitions were achieved safely and effectively.

- **Leadership for Environmental Sustainability**

First Michigan school district to develop and launch implementation of an [AAPS Environmental Sustainability Framework](#) featuring the three focused areas of continuing work: ensuring and enhancing environmental education for all students, measuring and improving organizational practice and environmental footprint, and building for an environmentally sustainable future in the AAPS.

~ Student Achievement Data: Spotlight on 4 year On-Time Graduation Rate Over Time ~
Ann Arbor Public Schools

Student Group	2013	2023	2023 N size of group	Difference
ALL Students	86.5%	90.6%	(1,474)	+4.1%
African American	77.3%	81.3%	(230)	+4%
Asian	95.6%	98%	(199)	+2.4%
English Language Learners	76.2%	83.8%	(80)	+7.6%
Hispanic	71.4%	82.6%	(161)	+11.2%
2 or More Races	82.6%	89.1%	(128)	+6.5%
White	88.5%	93.3%	(749)	+4.8%
Economically Disadvantaged	68.2%	76.5%	(383)	+8.3%
Special Education	59.4%	71.8%	(163)	+12.4%

Bold lines represent groups of students where disparities exist and focus continues for improvement in outcomes.

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Professional Activities and Honors

Honorable Debbie Dingell, House of Representatives Congressional Recognition
In recognition of Jeanice Swift's Service to the Children of Ann Arbor
December 4, 2023

Proceedings and Debates of the 118th Congress, First Session

Featured on Superintendents & Leadership Podcast: *An Imperfect Leader, Inaugural Episode*
Introducing New Programs and Phasing in Major Change
September 2022

Hosted by Peter Stiepleman

Member and Participant, American Association of Superintendents *Equity in Action* Cohort
2020-2021

Participate in AASA Equity Cohort, a 10-month program, among approximately 100 district leaders from districts across the U.S. to learn together, to facilitate intentional and deliberate actions to address equity in school districts; participants engage in virtual site visits, develop capstone projects, action plans, resources and publications.

Member, National Superintendent Roundtable
Ongoing since 2019

Participate in the National Superintendent Roundtable, a non-profit organization with a membership of approximately 100 school superintendents from 30 states. The Roundtable believes that educators do the most important work in the world because they are committed to a public education system that serves all students.

Michigan 2018 Superintendent of the Year

Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) and American Association for School Administrators (AASA), this award is in recognition of outstanding leadership of active, front-line superintendents.

State of Michigan Special Tribute, Dr. Jeanice Kerr Swift
The Ninety-Ninth Legislature At Lansing
October 25, 2017

Signed by: Donna Lasinski, State Representative, The Fifty-Second District; Ronnie Peterson, State Representative, the Fifty-Fourth District; Rebekah Warren, State Senator, The Eighteenth District; Yousef Rabhi, State Representative, The Fifty-Third District; Adam Zemke, State Representative, the Fifty-Fifth District; Brian Calley, Lieutenant Governor; and Rick Snyder, Governor.

Dean's Advisory Council Member, University of Michigan, School of Education
Ongoing since 2017

Serve in an advisory capacity on Dean Moje's Advisory Council to support work to ensure equity, inclusion, opportunity and excellence in University of Michigan School of Education programming.

2017 Benjamin B. Trego ED Award, Strategic Leadership in Education
Presented to Jeanice Swift, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Award recognizes the district's comprehensive and diligent work in developing a fair and inclusive process to disseminate 2015 bond monies leveraging multiple stakeholder groups and transparent, meaningful community engagement.

Superintendent to Watch, 2017-18, National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)
September 2017

Selected among a group of Superintendents recognized for the use of communication technology in innovative and effective ways, engaging and informing the school community with new as well as tried-and-true techniques.

AASA National Superintendent's Leadership Cohort, 2016-2018

Successfully completed 2-year national superintendent leadership cohort study and engagement group; awarded national AASA Superintendent Certification.

Charles M. Russell Middle School Designated as a *National School To Watch*, 2008

As principal leader, successfully led the effort to achieve [*National Middle School to Watch*](#) designation, awarded by the [*National Forum for Advancing Excellence in the Middle Grades*](#).

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Prior Leadership Roles & Experience

**Assistant Superintendent
Instruction, Curriculum, and Student Services**

July 2011 – August 2013

Colorado Springs School District 11, Colorado Springs, CO

Instructional lead responsible for the critical mission of teaching and learning in District 11, the historic urban district in central Colorado Springs.

Highlights include:

- Improved student performance outcomes: increased graduation rate, reduced drop-out rate, improved reading and math performance, increased number of high-performing schools and reduced number of low-performing schools among a vulnerable student population.
- Worked to Improve teaching, learning, and student achievement outcomes: implementation of improvement initiatives including a district 'Playbook' of sound instructional practice, an aligned Unified District and School Improvement Planning process, lead an effective transition to Common Core/Colorado Academic Standards, and build system capacity for more consistent delivery of challenging, deliberate, and engaging instruction across schools.
- Direct supervision of all instructional departments and programs, including: Title I, English Language Learners, Native American Education, Gifted and Talented, Special Education, Career and Technical Education, Discipline and Attendance, and alternative education programs.
- Worked as a central lead in a community-wide school reutilization, school closure and campus redesign project, including the re-envisioning of an urban high school to deliver a wide spectrum of nontraditional learning opportunities.

Executive Director, K-12 Schools

November 2009 - June 2011

Colorado Springs School District 11

Direct responsibility for leadership and oversight of 20 schools, including recruitment and development of principal leadership, support of all facets of day-to-day operations and school improvement, including problem-solving and community relations.

Principal

July 2004 – November 2009

Charles M. Russell Middle School of the Performing Arts and Sciences

Colorado Springs School District 11

Led school improvement work and the transition of the school into a performing arts and science campus, achieving sustained improvement in academic performance and growth, including receiving the Governor's designation for sustained high achievement growth and recognition as a ***National Trailblazer School to Watch, 2008.***

Assistant Principal

July 2002 – June 2004

Charles M. Russell Middle School of the Performing Arts and Sciences

Colorado Springs School District 11

Literacy Resource Teacher Coach

July 2001 – June 2002

Jenkins Middle School

Colorado Springs School District 11

Classroom Teacher - Grades 6-12 (English and Spanish)

13 years

Colorado Springs School District 11

Through May 2001

Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD, Bedford, TX

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Education

Ph.D. Educational Leadership

June 2011

Morgridge School of Education, University of Denver

Dissertation: ***Realizing School Improvement***

Principal Preparation Program & Certification

May 2002

School of Education, University of Colorado

Masters of Education, Curriculum and Instruction

August 2000

School of Education, University of Colorado

Concentration in Gifted and Talented Education

Bachelor of Arts, English/Spanish/Secondary Education

August 1984

University of Texas, Arlington

References

The following individuals are knowledgeable and available to speak in greater detail about my education leadership work. Additional contacts for reference may also be provided from among students, Superintendents, state leaders, and Trustees as well as a list of individuals representative of many stakeholder groups with whom I worked closely during prior years.

Trustee Susan Baskett

Current, longest serving Trustee and Community Leader

Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education

Former Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent, and

AAPS Alumni

susanebaskett@gmail.com

(734) 474-5591

Representative Felicia Brabec

Michigan State Representative, 33rd House District, and

Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent

Feliciabrabec@gmail.com

(734) 223-9290

Mr. William Hampton

Community Member,

NAACP Ann Arbor Branch President

Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Partner

wvhamp@comcast.net

(734) 417-6902

Mr. Bryan Johnson

Former Board President and Trustee, long-serving Community Leader

Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education

Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent

Ann Arbor Public Schools Alumni

bryanlj@gmail.com

(734) 883-1889

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References, continued

Ms. Jessica Kelly

Former Board Vice President and long-serving Trustee, Community Leader
Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education, and
Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent
jlks29@gmail.com
(734) 769-6941

Dr. Tina Kerr

Executive Director
Michigan Association School Administrators (MASA)
tkerr@gomasa.org
(517) 327-8490

Mr. Fred Klein

President, Ann Arbor Education Association (AAEA)
mrklein@aaps.k12.mi.us
(734) 330-3462

Ms. Rebecca Lazarus

Former AAPS President & Treasurer, Capital Bond Program Community Leader
Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education
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rlazarus101@gmail.com
(313) 903-0080

Dr. Sonya Lewis

Parent, Ann Arbor Public Schools
President, Physicians for the Prevention of Gun Violence
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Ms. Naomi Norman

Superintendent
Washtenaw Intermediate School District
Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent
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(734) 994-8100

Mr. George Przygodski

Executive Director, Ann Arbor Education Association (AAEA)
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Ms. Christine Stead

Former President and Treasurer, long-serving Trustee
Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education
Former Ann Arbor Public Schools Parent
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Dr. Alena Zachery - Ross

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