



# PIPER USD 203

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## **Piper USD 203 Superintendent Dr. Jessica Dain Announces Retirement**

Kansas City, Kan. — Piper Unified School District 203 Superintendent Dr. Jessica Dain has announced her intention to retire at the conclusion of the 2025–26 school year, marking the culmination of a distinguished career in public education defined by courageous leadership, systems-level transformation, and an unwavering commitment to students.

Dr. Dain has served as superintendent of Piper USD 203 since 2020, guiding the district through a period of historic growth, innovation, and community trust. Her tenure has been marked by bold, student-centered redesign efforts that positioned Piper as a state and national leader in real-world learning, equity-centered systems, and future-ready education.

“Public education is, at its core, an act of hope,” Dr. Dain shared. “Every day, educators and staff choose to believe in what is possible for students and communities. To serve alongside the people of Piper who show up with commitment, heart, and an unwavering focus on all kids has been the greatest privilege of my career.”

Under Dr. Dain's leadership, Piper USD 203 achieved a 98.5% graduation rate and a 98% Market Value Asset (MVA) rate, among the highest in Kansas and Missouri, by launching Kansas's first fully inclusive, application-free Wall-to-Wall Career Academies. Piper also became one of only 24 districts nationwide selected to partner with the Carnegie Foundation to reimagine the future of high school education.

Dr. Dain successfully led the district through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, established Piper as an independent special education district, and partnered with the community to pass and deliver a \$64 million bond initiative to construct the new Piper High School and address critical facility needs throughout the district. The bond effort was supported by a significant increase in community trust and confidence in district leadership.

“Dr. Dain has led Piper with courage, clarity, and an unwavering focus on what is best for students,” said Julian Wells, President of the Piper USD 203 Board of Education. “Her leadership strengthened our district academically, operationally, and culturally, while building trust with our community and

Board. We are deeply grateful for her service and the lasting systems she helped put in place to support Piper's future."

A former English teacher, coach, and building principal, Dr. Dain's career spans over three decades and includes leadership roles in Blue Valley, DeSoto, Olathe, and Piper school districts. She holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Saint Louis University and has been nationally recognized for her work in equity-driven systems design, superintendent leadership, and governance ethics.

Beyond Piper, Dr. Dain has served on numerous state and national education committees, mentored aspiring superintendents through AASA, the American School Superintendents Association, and the Kansas School Superintendents Association, and served on the AASA Executive Committee. Her leadership has earned multiple honors, including National School Public Relations Association recognition, Kansas State Department of Education distinctions, Kansas Superintendent of the Year Finalist, and national superintendent leadership awards.

Reflecting on her decision, Dr. Dain shared that retirement represents a moment of gratitude and trust, confident that the Piper community stands on a strong foundation and is ready to embrace its next chapter with purpose and momentum.

"While I may be stepping away from the superintendent role, I will never step away from Piper," she said. "I will always be Pirate Nation's biggest fan."

The Piper USD 203 Board of Education will share details regarding the superintendent transition process at a future date. Dr. Dain will continue to serve in her role through the end of the school year, ensuring continuity and a thoughtful leadership transition.

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