

Shawn A. Smith, Ph.D.

Indianapolis native Dr. Shawn A. Smith has served as Superintendent of the Metropolitan School District (MSD) of Lawrence Township since January 2014, leading one of Indiana's largest and most diverse school districts. Under his leadership, the district has earned and sustained a reputation for academic excellence, innovation, fiscal responsibility, and community partnership.

Academic Leadership and Innovation

Dr. Smith has driven academic achievement through cutting-edge initiatives, launching a Teacher Leadership Academy and opening Lawrence Advance Academy in 2014, initiating new era of innovation and progressive leadership. In 2018, district-wide 1:1 device rollout extended digital access K–12. His tenure also saw the expansion of Spanish Dual Immersion programs and STEM initiatives district wide. Graduation rates surged from 86% to 96%, and early childhood education was strengthened through NAEYC accreditation and the expansion of year-round preschool.

Facilities and Strategic Planning

Smith successfully implemented a transformative Blue-Ribbon Facilities Plan, overseeing \$374 million in renovations across the district. Under his leadership, the district passed its first-ever \$230M capital referendum in 2019 and approved a second Blue Ribbon Facilities Plan in 2024. His facilities planning prioritizes safety and reflects both academic and community needs.

Fiscal Management and Operational Success

Without an operating referendum, Dr. Smith has maintained a strong financial position for the district, increasing cash reserves and delivering consistent staff raises. His collaborative approach has led to over 1,600 new student enrollments and 200+ business and nonprofit partnerships.

Recognition & Community Impact

Dr. Smith's influence extends beyond district boundaries. He has received numerous accolades, including the 2025 Central States Simon Award, the 2024 NNELL Award, and the MSD of Lawrence Township was recognized as Best Public Schools in the 2024 & 2025 Best Things Community Choice Awards. As a thought leader, he has presented at education conferences and served on advisory boards for education, community, health, and youth development nationwide.

Prior Experience

Before becoming superintendent, Dr. Smith served in various building and district level leadership roles in the MSD of Pike Township and the MSD of Washington Township. He began his career as a social studies teacher in both MSD of Washington Township and Indianapolis Public Schools.

Education

Dr. Smith holds a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and an Ed.S. in School Administration from Indiana State University. He earned his M.S. in Secondary School Administration & Supervision from Indiana University, and his B.S. in Secondary Education with a focus on Social Studies from Indiana University Bloomington.

He is not only committed to educating students and serving the community but is also dedicated to his family. He has three adult children, Dr. Olivia Smith, Maya Smith, and Jordan Smith.