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Hazelwood School District Announces Three Finalists in Superintendent Search

[FLORISSANT, MO] — The Board of Education of the Hazelwood School District has announced three finalists in its search for the district’s next superintendent. The successful candidate will begin service on July 1, 2026, following the retirement of Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, who will conclude 10 years of dedicated leadership with the district at the end of the current school year.

The superintendent search represents an important opportunity to lead the second-largest school district in St. Louis County. The Board initiated the process to identify an exceptional leader who will continue advancing the district’s mission of providing high-quality education for all students.

“The Board of Education is grateful for the community engagement and thoughtful input that has helped guide this process,” said Sylvester Taylor II, president of the Hazelwood School District Board of Education. “We are excited to introduce three outstanding finalists who bring strong leadership experience and a commitment to student success.”

Finalists for Superintendent

The finalists selected to move forward in the search process are:

Bonita E. Jamison, Ed.D.



Dr. Bonita Jamison is an accomplished educational leader with more than 25 years of experience, currently serving as Superintendent of the Maplewood Richmond Heights School District. Her leadership emphasizes equity, student achievement, and whole-child support systems.

During her tenure, the district has demonstrated significant gains in student outcomes and organizational alignment, earning a 98.5% score on the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP 6) review, the highest among K–12 districts in the state. She has led efforts to increase academic achievement, close opportunity gaps, and ensure all students have access to high-quality instruction, while strengthening curriculum alignment and instructional consistency across the K–12 system.

Dr. Jamison is also committed to transparency and community engagement, fostering trust through initiatives such as community roundtables, State of the District addresses, and “Coffee with the Superintendent” events.

She brings a strong personal connection to Hazelwood as a parent of a Hazelwood West graduate and former resident. A single parent of three, she leads with empathy, high expectations, and a deep commitment to student success.

Dr. Jamison holds a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Missouri–Columbia.

Demetrus Liggins, Ph.D.



Dr. Demetrus Liggins currently serves as Superintendent of Fayette County Public Schools in Lexington, Kentucky, one of the state's largest and most diverse districts. Since 2021, he has led the district to significant academic gains, including increased ACT performance; expanded access to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual-credit coursework; and a substantial rise in students earning industry certifications. As a result, the district now exceeds state and national averages in multiple areas. Graduation rates have reached a historic high, and for the first time, none of the district's 70 schools have been identified as needing improvement or for academic achievement gaps among Black or economically disadvantaged students.

Dr. Liggins has also expanded Fayette County's nationally recognized magnet and specialized programs, including the Bluegrass School for the Creative and Performing Arts, the Math, Science and Technology Center, Maxwell Spanish Immersion School, and the Rise STEM Academy for Girls, among more than 30 programs supporting student interests in areas such as the arts, engineering, global languages, and leadership.

Previously, Dr. Liggins served as superintendent of Greenville Independent School District in Texas and has held leadership roles across elementary, middle, and high school levels. He has been recognized as the 2026 Kentucky Superintendent of the Year and is a National Superintendent of the Year finalist.

Keith M. McGee, Ed.D.



Dr. Keith M. McGee is a transformational educational leader with more than 25 years of experience in public education, recognized for driving district improvement, increasing student achievement, and leading complex school systems with a strong focus on community engagement and academic excellence. He currently serves as Superintendent of the Watson Chapel School District in Arkansas, where he oversees district operations, strategic planning, and capital projects while advancing initiatives to improve literacy, expand career pathways, and enhance student safety.

As superintendent, Dr. McGee has led curriculum redesign efforts resulting in measurable academic growth, secured key community partnerships, and directed construction of a new \$40 million state-of-the-art high school. Under his leadership, districts have established their first police department, expanded post-secondary opportunities through university partnerships, and launched innovative student support programs, including services for homeless families and plans for a new Early Childhood Center. He has been nominated for Arkansas Superintendent of the Year in 2024 and 2026.

Dr. McGee previously served as a principal, assistant principal, and teacher, earning multiple state recognitions for student growth, school safety, and academic performance. He holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Arkansas Tech University, along with specialist and master's degrees from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. A presenter at state and national conferences and published author on school leadership and district turnaround, Dr. McGee is known for uniting communities around a shared vision of student success, grounded in equity, opportunity, and access to high-quality education.

Meet the Superintendent Finalists Forum

The district is pleased to announce that all three superintendent candidates will participate in a public forum, providing the community with an opportunity to hear directly from each finalist. The forum will include brief introductions by each candidate, followed by a question-and-answer session facilitated by HYA Associates, using questions submitted in advance by the public. Community members are encouraged to submit questions using the [Superintendent Finalist Form](#), as only those received prior to the event will be presented during the forum. The “Meet the Superintendent Finalists” public forum will be held on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at East Early Childhood Center, 12555 Partridge Run Drive, Florissant, MO 63033.

About Hazelwood School District

The Hazelwood School District is a diverse suburban school district located in St. Louis County, Missouri and is fully accredited by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district spans 78 square miles and extends from Interstate 70 on the west to the Interstate 270 bridge to the east. Its northern and southern boundaries are defined by the Missouri River, the Mississippi River, and Interstate 270.

The district serves the communities of Hazelwood, Missouri, Black Jack, Missouri, and Spanish Lake, Missouri; a significant portion of Florissant, Missouri; parts of Bridgeton, Missouri, Bellefontaine Neighbors, Missouri, and Ferguson, Missouri; as well as several square miles of unincorporated St. Louis County.

The district’s mission emphasizes high expectations, excellence, and the development of culturally aware critical thinkers equipped with 21st-century skills. Its vision is to prepare students to lead and thrive in an ever-evolving global society. Core values focus on academic achievement, equity, professional growth, fiscal responsibility, and family and community engagement.