

CHRISTOPHER S. BERNIER Ed.D.

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

CREATING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE ♦ LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES ♦ INSPIRING PERFORMANCE

An educational leader with a remarkable history of success supporting diverse communities of students, families, and employees with an established record advancing organizational outcomes and operational efficiencies with a strong focus on student achievement and community involvement. Transformational and facilitative expert who brings an outstanding track record of leading large cross-functional school district operations to the next level of growth and efficiency by analyzing conditions, evaluating current processes, and implementing solutions that enhance the student experience, attract quality teachers, and elevate school ratings. Forward-thinking visionary motivated by challenge, executing and implementing programs, processes, and structures to drive action, innovation, and growth. Passionate servant-leader and communicator with the ability to energize and inspire students, parents, faculty/staff, school boards, and the community.

NOTABLE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Improved student achievement outcomes and district graduation rate while removing all BSI schools from state oversight in the first year of leadership
- Developed and led the School District of Lee County (SDLC) Hurricane Ian pre-storm planning, as well as the immediate and long-term District recovery from this historic event
- Leading the SDLC student/school enrollment plans, creating solutions and efficiencies for a decade-long concern involving student assignment, school choice, and student transportation
- Transformed employee salary and compensation packages for the SDLC increasing regional and state competitiveness (14.5% in 2 years)
- Improved student safety by leading the adoption of the Florida Guardian Program and Entry Technology for each school site
- Re-envisioned the role of senior leadership and cabinet members utilizing proven internal and external candidates to support a student-focused approach maximizing team effectiveness and outcomes
- Selected as one of ten national school districts to participate in the Carnegie Foundation Leader Learner Network (LNN)
- SDLC honored as the National Cambridge Large School District of the Year in 2022
- Created and implemented the SDLC universal screening approach and process for gifted assessment
- Led the Clark County emergency and crisis team supporting continuity of operations, COVID-19 response, and reopening of schools for 310,000 students
- Established the Innovative 8 Middle School Project focused on teacher retention and student performance for eight underperforming middle schools by attracting and retaining talent through bonus structures and awarding performance bonuses based on increases in student achievement in reading and mathematics
- Oversaw 200,000 students as Associate Superintendent developing and leading 20 sites and programs including virtual school, magnets, student enrollment, alternative education, home education, charter schools extended day/after school programs, and teen parenting
- Created the first Junior Achievement Entrepreneurial and Laser Photonics magnet programs in the nation
- Developed a semester-based intervention program enabling overage students to complete one year of middle school in a semester, creating an accelerated two-year middle school program
- Realigned intervention resources and contractual providers creating efficiencies >\$1.7M for the ninth-largest school district in the United States.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Executive & Organizational Leadership | Family & Community Engagement | School Improvement & Accountability
High Student Achievement | Data-Driven Decision Making | Business Community Partnerships | High Performing
Culturally Diverse Workforce | Fiscal Responsibility & Management | Strategic Planning & Execution | Systems
Development | Continuous Process Improvement | Risk Management | Change Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY | Fort Myers, Florida | 2022 - Present

The School District of Lee County is the nation's thirty-second largest school district and eighth largest in Florida with over 100,000 students, 13,000 team members, offering various nationally recognized programs, including magnet schools, career and technical academies, as well as Cambridge and International Baccalaureate programs in 119 diverse educational environments.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Highly effective and dedicated superintendent leading the thirty-second largest school District in the nation and eighth largest in Florida with unwavering integrity. A devoted advocate of student achievement and safety, with an emphasis on fostering and maintaining a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment for all stakeholders. A skillful student-centered decision maker, foundationally committed to servant leadership and community engagement. A communicator and innovator adept at facilitating educational and operational improvement efforts, through shared leadership and accountability, resulting in increased student achievement and improved organizational outcomes. A fiscally responsible leader, utilizing an annual budget of \$2.2B, to ensure organizational results that influence the upward trajectory of all students.

- Leads a diverse organization toward the realization of the vision of a world-class school system focused on educational excellence
- Actively cultivates trust and communication supporting professional relationships and effective governance with seven School Board Members
- Directed the budgeting process resulting in a balanced and sustainable budget over 2.2B dollars
- Re-envisioned and defined the role of senior leadership and cabinet members to embrace a systems approach to support student-based outcomes, servant leadership, and effective and efficient operations
- Promotes and recruits proven leaders to vital leadership positions
- Actively models the core values of the organization by personal example and recognition of employee actions focusing on integrity, excellence, accountability, and professionalism
- Analyzes data, identifies trends, and pinpoints root causes by asking probing questions to leverage improvement in performance and conditions that support student learning
- Involves internal stakeholders in formal and informal processes to lend vital voice to ideas and plans prior to implementation
- Engages students, families, and community stakeholders in town halls, dialogs, and advisory exchanges to inform leadership regarding plans and projects prior to implementation and decisions
- Drives the performance, effectiveness, and accountability of the executive office, cabinet, central office, and schools
- Initiates and monitors school-based/principal student achievement and graduation accountability process
- Implements best practices, utilizing data-driven decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving expertise at a systems level to identify solutions, set goals, and track resources
- Plans, monitors, and executes the strategic plan; Envision 2030
- Created and directed preparation and immediate recovery from Hurricane Ian
- Executing the \$270M immediate and long-term recovery plan from Hurricane Ian
- Transformed employee salary and compensation packages for the SDLC increasing regional and state competitiveness (14.5% in 2 years)
- Negotiated competitive regional and state employee compensation packages realizing Florida's 4th highest entry pay level for bus operators
- Increased employer insurance contribution resulting in an additional \$3,600.00 of income for impacted employees
- Rebuilt the SDLC student/school enrollment plans (Proximity Plan) to create solutions for student assignment, choice, and transportation resulting in greater on time school percentages, reduction in school bus routes and operational savings, while maintaining choice options for parents and the community

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT | Las Vegas, Nevada | 2019 - 2022

The Clark County School district is the nation's fifth largest school district with 310,000+ students and 40,000+ employees offering various nationally recognized programs, including magnet schools, career and technical academies, and advanced placement programs in more than 300+ diverse educational environments.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Proven and dedicated educator supporting the fifth-largest school district in the nation with an annual budget of \$5.3B. A committed instructional innovator, student advocate, communicator, and servant leader focused on academic achievement, student safety and fostering respectful learning environments. Adept at leading and directing educational improvement efforts and operational outcomes that result in improved student achievement and increased efficiencies through a shared leadership model.

- Advocated and implemented best practices, data-driven decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving at a systems level to create solutions, devise metrics, and track resources
- Drove the performance and effectiveness of the Executive Office, Audit, and Government Relations departments
- Planned, monitored, and executed the strategic plan; Focus 2024
- Built consensus among diverse internal and external stakeholders to lead and drive change
- Cultivated trust and supported effective governance with a seven-member board
- Led emergency and crisis team supporting continuity of operations, COVID-19 response, and reopening of schools
- Established the Innovative 8 Middle School Project focused on eight underperforming middle schools, attracting and retaining the teachers, and improving retention by 15%
- Negotiated with five separate labor unions as a member of the negotiation team
- Devised and implemented the first system for ethical violations and whistleblower reporting
- Provided strategic project management oversight for short and long-term district programs and initiatives from strategy formation and development through execution and outcome measurement
- Represented the Superintendent with government councils, commissions, business community, civic groups, and legislators

ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS | Orlando, Florida | 1987 - 2019

Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) is the ninth largest school district in the United States serving over 206,000+ students and is one of the largest employers in Central Florida, with 25,000+ employees and 212+ diverse educational environments.

OCPS ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT | 2010-2019

Led from a student-centric perspective, motivating administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and the community to improve student performance, including equitable educational outcomes for all students.

- Created the vision, leadership, and budgetary direction for instructional programs within positional purview
- Developed and led all initiatives related to >20 school sites and programs, including Virtual School, Magnets, Student Enrollment, Alternative Education, Home Education, Charter Schools, Extended Day/After School Programs, and Teen Parenting
- Initiated innovative programs that improved graduation rates by 12.6% from 2013-2019 in non-traditional sites
- Improved student achievement, examined all programs for efficiencies providing exceptional service to students, families, staff, and internal and external stakeholders
- Developed and monitored the budget and expenditures for instructional and operational programs >\$151.M
- Launched, led, and supervised the largest Florida district virtual school
- Created the first Junior Achievement Entrepreneurial and Laser Photonics magnet programs in the nation.
- Developed a semester-based intervention program enabling overage students to complete one year of middle school in a semester, creating an accelerated two-year middle school program
- Realigned intervention resources and contractual providers creating efficiencies >\$1.7M for the ninth-largest school district in the United States.

- Authored the Federal Teacher Incentive Grants (\$27M) and Bridge Leadership Grant (\$3.75M), receiving both awards
- Led the development, assessment, and evaluation of >25 principals and district leaders
- Negotiated corporate and collegiate partnerships to enhance the Magnet and Alternative Education Programs

ADDITIONAL OCPS LEADERSHIP POSTIONS | 1998 -2010

SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Developed and led advanced professional leadership training and initiatives for all job classifications improving the effectiveness and career trajectories for district personnel. Outcomes included: researching and adopting Canvas, the first OCPS online learning platform; establishing the Aspiring Leadership and Preparing New Principal programs; creating district approach to teacher and staff retention, increasing retention 8% in the first three years of implementation; rejuvenating the principal certification program increasing the number of viable principal candidates.

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

William R Boone H.S., Chain of Lakes M.S., Odyssey M.S., and Union Park M.S.

Created and led high-performing school educational environments transforming instructional cultures to increase student learning opportunities and organizational outcomes. Developed inclusive educational environments, creating intervention programs for ESE and ELL, as well as struggling secondary readers resulting in greater student achievement for all students.

- Enhanced the performance and student achievement in four diverse student environments with enrollments ranging from 1300 to >3000
- Instituted a collaborative approach impacting the culture, instructional models, and curriculum to align with current standards, instructional practices, and accountability measures
- Removed high school pre-requisite barriers; expanding advanced placement enrollment opportunities to students with AP potential resulting in equitable access and increased student performance
- Increased high school magnet enrollment and performance, resulting in national recognition
- Improved educational climates, data-driven instructional practices, increasing student graduation rates (92%)
- Made instructional modifications leading to improved student achievement for all middle school students
- Built and opened a new middle school; orchestrating construction, staffing, culture, and vision
- Removed a Title 1 site from the state critically low list, while others obtained or maintained "A" grades

Previous Roles: Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, Athletic Director, U.S. History Teacher, and Interscholastic Coach (1987-1998)

EDUCATION

Ed.D. | EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA | ORLANDO, FL | 2011

Awarded the Worth McClure Scholarship from AASA

Dissertation Topic: Florida Superintendents' View Related to the Involuntary Removal of School Principals

MASTERS OF SCIENCE | EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY | FT. LAUDERDALE, FL | 1995

Thesis: Multicultural Education

BACHELORS OF ARTS | US HISTORY

LEMOYNE COLLEGE | SYRACUSE, NY | 1987

Minors in Education, Psychology

Awarded Elizabeth Sclerth Medal in Education

Awarded History Department Honors

CERTIFICATIONS

FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP- ALL LEVELS-SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, HISTORY 9-12

NEVADA PROFESSIONAL LICENSE

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR- ALL LEVELS, SOCIAL STUDIES 7-9

AWARDS | HONORS | RECOGNITION | COMMITTEES

- ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM COHEN EDUCATION CENTER: 2023-Present
- BOARD MEMBER OF THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA UNITED WAY: 2022-Present
- MEMBER DISTRICT OF THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION LEADER LEARNER NETWORK: 2022-Present
- EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER OF THE HORIZON COUNCIL: 2022-Present
- EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER OF THE FOUNDATION FOR LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS: 2022-Present
- CAMBRIDGE LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE YEAR: 2022
- MEMBER OF THE WEST LAS VEGAS PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE: 2019-2022
- MEMBER OF THE CCSD DIVERSITY COMMITTEE: 2019- 2022
- EOC INCIDENT COMMANDER FOR COVID-19 RESPONSE AND REOPENING OF SCHOOLS: 2020- 2022
- SUPERINTENDENT DESIGNEE FOR CCSD UNION NEGOTIATIONS: 2019- 2022
- CHAIR OF SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE: 2019-2022
- CHAIR OF THE SUPERINTENDENT’S STUDENT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE: 2019- 2022
- KIPP LEADERSHIP DESIGN FELLOW: 2017
- HARVARD INSTITUTE FOR SUPERINTENDENTS AND DISTRICT LEADERS: 2016-2017
- MEMBER FLORIDA JUDICIAL OVERSIGHT BOARD: 2013-2019
- DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL APPEALS COMMISSIONER FOR THE STATE OF FLORIDA: 2012-2019
- RECIPIENT OF THE WORTH MCCLURE AASA SCHOLARSHIP: 2010
- PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR, FLORIDA PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION: 2010
- ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR, ORANGE COUNTY GUIDANCE COUNSELORS: 2006
- NOMINATED FOR THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS GOVERNING BOARD: 2006
- ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR, ORANGE COUNTY MEDIA SPECIALISTS: 2005
- PRESIDENT, OCPS MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION: 2003-2005

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST
