



National Association of  
School Superintendents  
United in Common Purpose: Each Other's Success

**Chris Bohula, Director of Instructional Technology**  
**Orland School District 135**  
**Orland Park, Illinois**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Education**

Mr. Bohula holds a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Governors State University, a Master of Education in Educational Technology from Concordia University, a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, and an Education Specialist in Administration and Supervision from National-Louis University.

### **Experience**

Mr. Bohula brings over 25 years of education experience to his role leading the Instructional Technology Department in Orland School District 135. After starting his career as a paraprofessional and classroom teacher, Mr. Bohula transitioned to a technology teacher and into the district's first Instructional Technology Coaches. He has been in his current role, Director of Instructional Technology, for more than 8 years where he oversees both the instructional integration of technology into the classroom and the technical infrastructure, devices and security of the district. During this tenure Mr. Bohula has transformed District 135 from having a single isolated computer in each classroom to a robust and instructionally purposeful districtwide 1:1 program with four internationally recognized Apple Distinguished Schools.

### **Outstanding Achievement(s)**

From the very beginning of his career, Mr. Bohula has consistently set exceptionally high standards for himself. His dedication was recognized early on when he was named **Governor's State University Student Teacher of the Year in 2000**. Later, his impact as an educator earned him a nomination for the **Illinois State Board of Education Teacher of the Year in 2014**, where he received the esteemed **Those Who Excel Award of Merit**. In 2015, he was further honored with a nomination for the **Illinois Computer Educators Administrator of the Year award**.

Mr. Bohula's leadership in technology has been truly transformative. Through **thoughtful planning and innovative procedures**, his technical support team has supported the explosive growth of technology in the classroom, all while maintaining virtually the same operational footprint since 2010. Beyond just technical support, Mr. Bohula has championed professional development that emphasizes the **transformational uses of technology in instruction**, moving beyond individual applications to focus on deeper, more impactful integration. He and his small team of instructional technology coaches have shared their expertise by presenting at **local, state, and even international technology conferences**.

His foresight proved invaluable during the COVID-19 pandemic. At its onset, Orland School District 135 already had a robust framework in place, with every teacher having **two days of instructional content online** before the first non-attendance day was even declared. Orland School District was among the first regional districts to implement **synchronous instruction**. When students eventually returned to school, it

stood out as one of the few districts that maintained continuity for students, with teachers simultaneously instructing both in-person and remote learners. Demonstrating an ongoing commitment to support, the district established **11 different support hotlines** during the first week of remote instruction, which continue to provide live technical assistance to parents, students, and staff to this day.

## AN INTERVIEW

### Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

It's curious, isn't it? The role of **mentor** is conspicuously absent from most superintendent job descriptions. Yet, whether formally or informally, intentionally or not, the superintendent is undeniably the mentor for everyone in the organization. All eyes are on them, and the lessons learned by each individual are unique yet equally important and meaningful.

Think about it:

- A **school board member** observes how you interact with a concerned parent or staff member, or how you make tough decisions about district resources.
- An **administrator** learns how to support staff, leverage accountability, or maintain a student-centered approach.
- A **teacher** can pick up cues on how to truly listen to students and take calculated risks.
- A **parent** might learn about fairness and empathy through your actions.
- The entire **community** can learn how to take ownership and learn from mistakes by watching you lead.

In education, people often identify solely as either teachers or learners. But a superintendent must embody both. They must understand that they might just be the most influential teacher in the entire district.

### What new understandings did you acquire after two or three years on the job?

Two years into my leadership role, a familiar voice echoed in my mind: my father's. "You're never going to learn anything until you stop talking." While I've cleaned up his colorful language a bit, the core of his message resonated deeply. Those initial years in leadership taught me a profound truth about how much people have to say, and more importantly, how challenging it can be to truly hear them.

It's easy to dismiss what's being said, especially when it clashes with your own opinions, feels like criticism, or even sounds completely outlandish. Our natural inclination is to disregard uncomfortable perspectives rather than consider what might have prompted them. However, I've discovered that the most significant learning often comes from the very voices that are hardest to hear. Embracing these challenging moments has been instrumental in my growth as a leader.

## Share an idea to use or something you've learned with your colleagues.

The saying, "The room is always smarter than the individual," has profoundly influenced my approach. I've applied this wisdom in two key ways:

### Get in as Many "Rooms" as Possible

First, I actively seek to **immerse myself in diverse environments**. This means engaging with professional networking groups and local organizations. These "rooms" are invaluable for sparking new ideas and providing reassurance that others are navigating similar challenges. It's a fantastic way to gauge if you're steering your ship in the right direction.

### Fill the Room with the Best and Step Aside

Second, and equally important, is to **surround yourself with the most capable people you can find and then empower them to do their best work**. Once you've assembled a strong team, your role shifts to getting out of their way and letting their collective intelligence flourish.

**Submitted by:**

Chris Bohula



**Name/Signature**

6/3/2025

**Date**