



Name

Dr. Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder, Ed.D.

Current School District and Location

Central Regional School District, Bayville, NJ

INTRODUCTION

Dr. Michelle CarneyRay-Yoder is a dedicated educational leader who embodies the philosophy that "The children we teach will not care how much we know until they know how much we care." With over two decades of experience in education, she has consistently demonstrated her commitment to student achievement and innovative educational practices. As Superintendent of Central Regional School District, Dr. CarneyRay-Yoder has established herself as a technology-forward leader focused on cutting-edge educational decisions with student success at the core. Her greatest passion lies in creating an upbeat climate and culture where teachers genuinely love their jobs and students are excited to come to school daily. She believes that when educators feel valued, supported, and energized in their work environment, that joy and enthusiasm naturally transfers to students, creating a thriving learning community where everyone can reach their full potential.

Education

Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) - Widener University (2006-2013)

Master of Education - Widener University (2004-2006)

Master of Education - Old Dominion University (1994-1996)

Bachelor of Arts - The College of William & Mary (1989-1993)

Experience

Administrative Leadership:

- Superintendent of Schools/Director of Special Education, Central Regional School District (current position)
- Superintendent of Schools/Director of Special Education, Somers Point School District (July 2018-December 2023)
- PreK-8th Principal/Director of Special Education, Margate City School District (July 2009-June 2018)
- Assistant Principal, Fernwood Avenue Middle School, Egg Harbor Township (2005-2009)

Teaching and Specialized Services:

- Learning Disability Teacher/Consultant and Case Manager, Galloway Township School District (2002-2005)
- Teacher of the Handicapped, Brigantine School District (1996-2002)
- Teacher of the Handicapped, SECEP Alternative High School, Norfolk, VA (1994-1996)

Higher Education:

- Adjunct Professor in Education Leadership/Special Education, Stockton University (2008-present)

Outstanding Achievement(s)

2024 District of Distinction - District Administration Leadership Institute (DALI) - in the area of health and wellness for mental health initiatives

2022 Atlantic County Superintendent of the Year - Recognition for exceptional leadership and dedication to educational excellence

2018 Jostens Renaissance Hall of Fame - Honored for outstanding contributions to education/climate and culture

2007 "Top 40 Under 40" - Recognized as an emerging leader in the community

NJASA Leadership Excellence - Served in progressive leadership roles including Atlantic County President (2023-2024), Vice President (2022-2023), Treasurer (2021-2022), and Secretary (2020-2021)

Comprehensive Certifications - Holds multiple educational certifications, including School Administrator, Principal, Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant, and Teacher of the Handicapped

Community Leadership - Extensive service including Board positions with multiple educational foundations and community organizations

AN INTERVIEW

Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

Today's superintendent must be a visionary leader who balances traditional educational values with innovative, technology-driven approaches. The modern superintendent serves as both an educational strategist and a community bridge-builder, ensuring every decision prioritizes student achievement while adapting to rapidly changing educational landscapes. We must be comfortable with cutting-edge technology and data-driven decision making, while never losing sight of the human element. These caring relationships form the foundation of practical education. The superintendent's role has evolved to include being a change agent, a strategic communicator, and a collaborative leader who can unite diverse stakeholders around a shared vision of student success.

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

After several years as a superintendent, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the complexity of systemic change and the critical importance of building sustainable partnerships. I learned that effective leadership requires patience with the process while maintaining urgency for results. The interconnectedness of all district operations became clearer - how special education services, technology integration, community relations, and academic programming must work seamlessly together. I also discovered that transparent communication and consistent presence in schools build trust more effectively than any policy or procedure. Most importantly, I learned that successful superintendents must be comfortable with ambiguity while providing clear direction, and that the most impactful changes often happen through empowering others rather than a direct mandate.

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

One transformative approach I'd recommend centers on building authentic relationships through transparent communication at every level of the organization. I've learned that transparent communication means being honest about challenges, celebrating successes openly, and ensuring that every stakeholder - board members, bus drivers, teachers, students and families - feels heard and valued. When people trust that their voices matter and that leadership is genuinely transparent about victories and struggles, it creates a foundation for collaborative problem-solving and shared ownership of our district's success.

Additionally, I strongly advocate for the "servant leadership" model where administrators regularly spend time in classrooms and common areas, not for evaluation purposes, but to understand the daily realities our educators and students face. This practice has revolutionized how I approach decision-making and resource allocation. The insights gained from this ground-level perspective inform everything from budget priorities to professional development planning. I encourage colleagues to establish regular "learning walks" where the focus is on understanding and supporting rather than evaluating – it transforms the administrative relationship with teaching staff and ultimately benefits student outcomes. This approach develops a level of trust among staff where they feel comfortable problem-solving and taking risks, which is precisely what we expect from our students, while not being afraid of change. When educators think about supporting innovation and taking calculated risks in their practice, they model the very behaviors we want to see in our students: curiosity, resilience, and a willingness to embrace new challenges.

Submitted by:

Michelle Carney-Ray-Yoder, Ed.D.

5/22/2025

Name/Signature

Date