



Name

Josh Chastain, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Current School District and Location
Harrisonville Cass R-IX School District
Harrisonville, Missouri

INTRODUCTION

I would like to introduce Josh Chastain, Superintendent of Schools for the Harrisonville Cass R-IX School district in Harrisonville, Missouri. Located on the southern outskirts of Kansas City, Harrisonville has a strong connection to their schools and immense pride for our athletics and activities. Support for the schools runs deep as evidenced by families staying in the community or coming back to the community to ensure their students can attend our top rated schools. Dr. Chastain came to the district with strong academic credentials and Professional Learning Community work that has guided his district through processes that will ensure lasting success for the school district.

Education

Dr. Chastain has a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a Masters of Science in Education Administration from Missouri State University. He earned his Specialist and Doctorate in Education Leadership from Saint Louis University.

Experience

Dr. Chastain's career has spanned over 27 years in K-12 public education. He began teaching elementary school in Springfield, Missouri. He then moved to Nixa Public Schools in Nixa, Missouri as an elementary principal. His last principalship was at the newly formed John Thomas School of Discovery. Under his leadership, the school was the first STEM accredited elementary school in the state of Missouri. After successfully leading three different schools as principal, Josh moved to central office where he was selected to become the district's first Executive Director of Digital Learning.

Dr. Chastain then moved into the role of Executive Director of Academics for Nixa Public Schools where he oversaw and supported the work of one of the highest achieving school districts in the state of Missouri. He also oversaw the implementation of Professional Learning Communities in the district with the district being awarded the coveted Model PLC District in 2022. In 2023, Dr. Chastain was awarded the superintendency in Harrisonville, Missouri. He has successfully completed three years with the Wildcats of Harrisonville.

Outstanding Achievement(s)

Dr. Chastain believes that all of the success and achievements he has been honored with is due to the teamwork and collaboration of everyone that he has had the privilege of working with. Most recently, he was awarded the Emerging Superintendent award through the Missouri Association of School

Administrators. This Greater Kansas City award recognizes superintendents within their second through fourth year as superintendent. Dr. Chastain also worked together with his board and community to pass a \$38 million dollar bond issue. In a district that has passed very few bonds over the last 25 years, this was a strong sign of support. This support was also a direct reflection of the lasting work that was put into the district's first comprehensive school improvement plan. He is also utilizing his work as a Fellow in the Education Policy Leadership Program to advocate at the local, state, and national level for support for public school funding and support.

During his time in Nixa Public Schools, Dr. Chastain was recognized as Springfield's Business Journals Men of the Year in 2022. His work with administrators and staff in Nixa was awarded with the Professional Learning Communities Model PLC District and with multiple schools receiving Model Schools distinction. All of this work and recognition couldn't have happened without strong collaboration and teamwork that was always focused on what is best for all students. As a true elementary school teacher at heart, Dr. Chastain knows that all that we do is for our kids.

AN INTERVIEW

Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

Today's superintendent has to be ready and willing to take on far more responsibilities and knowledge due to the changing landscape and sentiment of public education. Districts and the position of superintendent are under increased scrutiny from constituents and lawmakers in the state. The superintendent must be a focused advocate and communicator for public schools and their district. Trips to the state capitol are a necessary part of the job to ensure that legislative decisions keep in mind the reason public schools exist. Building relationships with your elected officials helps to keep the conversations going about the needs of public schools and our district. You must be transparent about all that you are doing in your district so that the public can see that we ultimately do what is best for all students and we teach all students no matter where they came from or what they came with.

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

After my time on the job, I acquired a great deal of understanding of the financial management of my district. I also acquired the skills and knowledge to advocate and engage legislators and elected officials. Both of these understandings did not come easily for a curriculum and instruction leader. Both of these areas pushed me to continue to be a lifelong learner and purposeful communicator. I have a responsibility to share the successes of our district, students, and staff, along with financial decisions and legislative overload with our community and elected officials so that our existence doesn't get wiped away by false narratives and assumptions.

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

Something I have learned is that communication about the work of the district must be shared with the board, staff, students, families and all stakeholders. This communication is more about the decisions and the why behind them. Decisions and actions from central office always feel like they are made too slowly and they are just adding another thing for someone to do. It is important for our stakeholders to know that most of the time we must go slow to go fast so that we keep the best interests of our students at the forefront. A former superintendent shared one of the most valuable statements I use or think about daily- Small steps in the right direction are the fastest way to get where you are going.

Submitted by:

Josh Chastain



Name/Signature

4/23/26

Date