



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

Name

Glenn Robbins

Current School District and Location

Brigantine Public School District

Brigantine, NJ

INTRODUCTION

Meet Glenn Robbins, Superintendent of the Brigantine Public School District, in Brigantine, New Jersey. The district is known for being located at the beautiful New Jersey Shore, it's strong community involvement, high achieving scholars, outstanding culture for staff and scholars, and it's innovative technology advancements in pedagogical practices in all grade levels.

Glenn has been recognized across the globe for his innovative school and district improvement methods, and has been featured in numerous conferences, books, podcasts, and other publications. Glenn is passionate about helping give every scholar and educator the opportunity to succeed to their utmost potential in a VUCA world of tomorrow.

Education

Glenn has a Bachelor of Arts in Education and History from Rider University, and a Master Education in Education Leadership and Administration from Jones International University, and has received a National Superintendent Certification from AASA.

Experience

Glenn is the proud Superintendent of the Brigantine Public School District in Brigantine, New Jersey since 2020. He has served as a public school superintendent in New Jersey since 2016, starting at the Tabernacle Township School District. Prior to becoming a superintendent, he was a middle school principal at the Northfield Community School District (2012-2016), and a high school assistant principal (2007-2012), a high school social studies teacher (2003-2007) and a high school varsity coach (2004-2007) at the Egg Harbor Township School District.

Outstanding Achievement(s)

Glenn has been awarded numerous administrative international, national, and state recognitions including the EDTECH Digest International Finalist, National Exemplar of Education Award Winner, Named Top 100 Educational Influencer in the US, Northeast Innovative Superintendent

Award, NJ Visionary Superintendent Award, Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools Member, NASSP Digital Principal of the Year, Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Winner, and SETDA Student Voice Award Winner. He has been invited to the White House and to the US Department of Education several times. He is also the proud recipient of a National Superintendent Certification, and serves as an AASA National Governing Board Member, AASA Aspiring Superintendent Mentor, and Co-Chair of the NJASA Technology Committee. He is also a best-selling author of “Calm In The Chaos: Ancient Stoic Wisdom for Successful School Leadership”, and sought after speaker.

AN INTERVIEW

Tell us about how you see today’s superintendent.

The role of today’s school superintendent is multifaceted and ever-evolving, reflecting the complexities and demands of modern education. Unlike in the past, where superintendents were primarily focused on administrative and operational duties, today’s superintendents must be visionary leaders, adept at navigating a myriad of challenges. They are tasked with ensuring academic excellence while addressing diverse student needs, managing tight budgets, and implementing innovative educational technologies. Superintendents must also be adept at crisis management, as schools face issues ranging from cybersecurity threats, to public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. This expanded role requires superintendents to possess a blend of skills in strategic planning, community engagement, and educational leadership.

In addition to their administrative responsibilities, today’s superintendents must be strong advocates for equity and inclusion. They play a crucial role in addressing inequalities within the education system, ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education regardless of their socio-economic background, race, or ethnicity. This involves not only policy-making and resource allocation but also fostering a culture of inclusivity within schools. Superintendents must work closely with teachers, parents, and community leaders to create an environment where every student feels valued and supported. They must also stay abreast of educational research and best practices to continually improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the modern school superintendent must be an effective communicator and coalition-builder. Engaging with a diverse array of stakeholders—including school boards, parents, teachers, students, and local government officials—requires diplomacy, transparency, and empathy. Superintendents must articulate a clear vision for their district and rally support for initiatives that drive educational improvement. They must also be responsive to feedback and adaptive to change, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement. In essence, today’s school superintendent is not just an administrator but a dynamic leader who must balance a wide range of responsibilities while striving to create a more equitable and effective educational system.

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

After two or three years as a school superintendent, the journey often reveals profound insights that reshape one's understanding of educational leadership. The initial years on the job serve as a crucible, forging a deeper appreciation for the complexity of the role and the multifaceted nature of the educational system. This period brings new understandings about the importance of community engagement, the need for adaptive leadership, and the critical role of empathy in driving meaningful change.

One of the most significant realizations is the paramount importance of community engagement. Early on, superintendents might believe that policy changes and administrative decisions are sufficient to drive improvement. However, genuine progress is often rooted in the strength of relationships with parents, teachers, students, and community stakeholders. Effective superintendents learn that listening to the community's concerns, aspirations, and feedback is essential. Building trust and fostering a sense of shared purpose can transform schools into vibrant learning communities. This understanding underscores the necessity of transparent communication and inclusive decision-making processes, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

Another crucial insight is the need for adaptive leadership. The educational landscape is continuously evolving, influenced by technological advancements, shifting societal needs, and unexpected challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. Superintendents come to understand that flexibility and resilience are vital attributes. Successful leaders are those who can navigate uncertainty, pivot strategies when necessary, and inspire confidence even in turbulent times. This adaptive mindset extends to embracing innovation in teaching and learning, recognizing that traditional approaches may not always meet the needs of contemporary students. By fostering a culture of innovation through AI, Cybersecurity and other technology advancements, superintendents can better prepare their schools for future challenges and opportunities.

Empathy emerges as a critical leadership quality through the experiences of dealing with diverse student populations, staff members, and community issues. Superintendents quickly realize that behind every policy decision are individuals with unique stories and needs. This understanding compels leaders to approach their roles with compassion and sensitivity, ensuring that policies and practices are equitable and inclusive. Empathy also plays a crucial role in supporting and mentoring school staff, recognizing their efforts, and addressing their concerns. By cultivating an empathetic approach, superintendents can create a more supportive and positive school environment, ultimately enhancing student outcomes and staff satisfaction.

In conclusion, the first few years as a school superintendent are a transformative period that brings new understandings about the importance of community engagement, adaptive leadership, and empathy. These insights not only shape the effectiveness of superintendents in their current roles but also contribute to their growth as leaders capable of navigating the complexities of the educational landscape. By embracing these lessons, superintendents can foster stronger, more resilient, and more inclusive educational communities, paving the way for lasting and meaningful improvements in the field of education.

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

In the rapidly changing landscape of education, the role of school leadership has never been more critical. As we look toward the future, it becomes evident that effective school leadership hinges on three key pillars: networking, visionary thinking, and mentoring. Each of these components plays a vital role in shaping a dynamic and responsive educational environment that can meet the needs of all students while fostering the development of future leaders.

Networking is essential for superintendents to stay connected with their peers, share best practices, and collaborate on solutions to common challenges. The exchange of ideas and experiences through professional networks can lead to innovative approaches to education. For instance, a superintendent might learn about a successful strategy for integrating technology into the classroom from a colleague in another district. This shared knowledge can be transformative, enabling superintendents to implement similar initiatives in their own schools. Furthermore, networking provides a support system where superintendents can seek advice and encouragement, making the demanding role more manageable.

Looking toward the future of education, superintendents must adopt a forward-thinking mindset. This involves not only embracing current trends, such as personalized learning, AI, cybersecurity, and data-driven instruction, but also anticipating future developments and preparing their districts accordingly. Visionary leaders understand the importance of fostering a culture of innovation within their schools, encouraging teachers and students to experiment with new methods and technologies. By staying ahead of the curve, superintendents can ensure that their schools are not only meeting today's educational standards but are also equipped to handle the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.

Mentoring and serving future school leaders is perhaps one of the most impactful ways superintendents can contribute to the field of school leadership. By sharing their knowledge, experiences, and insights, they help develop the next generation of educational leaders. Mentorship can take many forms, from one-on-one coaching to formal leadership development programs. Superintendents who actively mentor others not only help to build a robust pipeline of future leaders but also foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within their districts. An idea that can be shared with superintendent colleagues is the establishment of a leadership academy within the district, as well as joining one with an outside organization for your own growth as well. This academy could provide aspiring leaders with training, resources, and mentorship opportunities, preparing them to take on leadership roles and drive educational success.

In conclusion, the future of school leadership hinges on the ability of superintendents to network, think strategically about the future of education, and mentor the next generation of leaders. By fostering strong professional connections, staying ahead of educational trends, and investing in the development of future leaders, superintendents can create a more dynamic, innovative, and effective educational system. Sharing ideas and best practices within the superintendent community can further enhance these efforts, leading to a collective improvement in educational leadership and student outcomes.

Submitted by:

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Name/Signature

Date