

Board of Education
Columbia Public Schools

Dear Board of Education:

Please accept this letter as my official notification of retirement effective June 30, 2014. My five years of service to Columbia Public Schools has been the highlight of my many years in public education. This decision was more emotional than I anticipated. It has been an honor to serve this board – the best Board of Education for whom I have ever worked.

Together, we have spent the last five years managing major changes within the organization and function of Columbia Public Schools. Students will benefit from those changes for many years to come. In addition, we have worked as partners with the community to create a system that values public input and gives attention to customer satisfaction. In short, we have collaborated and provided leadership as a unified team.

I also want to thank my administrative team and the entire CPS faculty and staff for their dedication to the students and families of CPS. The daily work of a dedicated staff has been my constant inspiration and has fueled my passion to lead this district. You make a difference in the lives of the students and families you serve and I am honored to have been able to see the impact you make.

Finally, I offer my sincere appreciation to the community. This community loves its schools. It has been responsive in providing resources, support, and advocacy to move the school district forward. Public schools are the best expression of democracy. Indeed, the quality of a public school is a result of the expectations and mandates of its constituency.

There is no doubt that I will miss the day-to-day interactions with the CPS community. I am thankful that I am able to remain in Columbia as I move to the next phase in my professional career and serve as a faculty member for the University of Missouri's College of Education, a role that will allow me to stay connected with CPS through leadership development.

Thank you for all your support during my tenure as superintendent. It was a great ride.

Warmest Regards,

Chris Belcher
Superintendent
Columbia Public Schools