

**EAST ORANGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**  
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**Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Kevin R. West  
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**Assistant Superintendent**

Dr. Deborah Harvest

December 2, 2016

Greetings East Orange School District Family,

It is with extreme pride that I greet you as the new East Orange Superintendent of Schools. I am honored, privileged and delighted to have the awesome opportunity of serving the students, staff and families of East Orange. I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to our Board of Education, parents, staff, students, and community partners for your confidence, support and trust in me as I lead our school district to a “Vision of Excellence.”

Under my leadership, the major focus of the East Orange School District is: improving student achievement and preparing **ALL** of our students for college, careers, and life in high performing East Orange public schools. Yes, we must, can, and will raise the bar, our expectations, and the standards necessary for our students to successfully compete in a global, competitive 21<sup>st</sup> Century society.

I will be working closely with and helping develop the skills and talents of our dedicated staff to ensure that we establish a solid foundation of exemplary practices and an educational program that encompasses a challenging, standards-based, aligned curriculum; a caring, personalized approach to teaching and learning; and an adherence to our core belief that **ALL** East Orange students can achieve at high levels.

Our overarching goal of continuous improvement necessitates that we relentlessly monitor and assess our work to ensure that we are intentionally meeting the needs of **ALL** students. Therefore, we will be diligently examining our practices, constantly seeking feedback from our constituents on how we can better enhance our services and schools, and measuring our progress---one child at a time. We must improve the way we do business if we expect to get better results. Albert Einstein stated, “The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” The old results we once sought are no longer good enough. We must do better, we can do better, and we will do better.

*“Developing Leaders One Student at a Time”*

Although there are already some amazing initiatives taking place in many of our schools, we still have plenty of room for improvement. I accept the challenge of leading The East Orange School District on the road to excellence, as we travel on this journey of continuous improvement together. Please join us in this race to the top.

Today is a new opportunity for each one of us to make a positive impact on the lives of our students and the East Orange community. However, words will not positively transform our school district, people and actions will. People who demand more of themselves and of each other; people who have high expectations for our students and consistently send that message; people who care, are willing to think big, prepare well, build positive relationships, work together, say no to drama, and take responsibility/accountability for results. That means all of us---superintendent, administrators, board members, teachers, staff, parents, community members, and of course students.

As we all work together intentionally planning, developing, and monitoring teaching, learning, and all other areas relative to ensuring a high performing school district, I will continue to keep a close watch on all matters of this school district to ensure that I am informed of current issues and challenges facing our school district, so that they can be addressed expeditiously.

Within the next couple of weeks, I will begin what I'm calling the Superintendent's Listening, Learning, Leading Tour which will be held at 10 of our school locations in the evening, strategically planned to encompass engagement in every ward. This tour will give me an opportunity to meet, greet, listen, and hear the concerns and ideas of all East Orange stakeholders for improvement. It will also give me an opportunity to publicly articulate the district's vision/mission, core beliefs, non-negotiables, and my priority goals as Superintendent.

Parents, we need you to get and stay involved in your children's education. You are a crucial part of our team and we can't do it without you.

As we look to the future, I am enthusiastic and excited about the extraordinary opportunities that lie before us. The work starts with a "Vision of Excellence" and an unwavering commitment to keep our promises to each other, to our students, and to the East Orange community. The best is yet to come. The Pride is Back! Mission Possible!

Educationally Yours,

Dr. Kevin R. West  
Superintendent of Schools

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