

# Dr. Marie N. Feagins

## Superintendent



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### EDUCATION

**Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership**, Samford University, Birmingham, AL

**Education Specialist/ Master of Education in School Counseling**, University of West Alabama, Livingston, AL

**Bachelor of Science in Business Administration**, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

Certificate in Education Finance, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. (February 2024)

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Detroit Public Schools Community District, Detroit, MI *106 Schools | 7000 Employees | 51,000 Students – 82% Black, 2.5% White, 14% Hispanic, 1.5% Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander | 11% English Language Learners | 15% Exceptional Learners | 60% Economically Disadvantaged | \$750M Budget*

**Chief of Leadership & High Schools/Executive Director High School Transformation/Special Assistant to Superintendent**  
June 2021 to Present

Experienced district liaison for both the Mayor's Office and Michigan Department of Education with supervision and expertise including: Athletics, Military Instruction, Office of Leadership Development, High School Counseling & College Transition Advisors, Board Policy Development, Twelve-Month Clerical Staff, K-12 Assistant Principals, Public Safety Department Oversight, Academic & Credit Recovery Programs, Special Community and College Initiatives, and High School Transformation Office management of 24 diverse schools including four K-12 campuses in Michigan's largest district.

#### *Instructional Leadership*

- Reduced district dropout rate by 0.6% and increased graduation rate by 6.6% to 71.1% – the first improvement in nearly a decade – surpassing the state average. Achieved results conducting system-wide transcript audits, spearheading the 'Operation Graduation' 13-week initiative, and rebranding an alternative school to an accelerated learning campus-- increased enrollment and support for the district's most academically vulnerable students.
- Increased graduation rates at 87% of schools, achieved double-digit growth in 9 schools, and attained a 100% graduation rate at one school within a year. This was accomplished by introducing a paid Academic Recovery Monitor role, implementing a weekly progress monitoring tool, and enhancing the principal-counselor collaboration.
- In 2022, successfully increased the graduation rate and decreased the dropout rate at 30% of schools by increasing student engagement and mobilizing community partners and resources for mentoring and support. Projected consecutive increase in graduation rates for 2023.
- In one year (2022), increased the number of students in grades 10 and 11 on track for graduation by 23%. Boosted the percentage of first-year students on track by 39% from 21% (2021) to 60% (2023); implemented an Early Warning Intervention System, increased communication with students and families, improved school and district team data analysis and monitoring practices.
- Increased SAT scores by 6% in EBRW and 3.7% in Math by implementing team-led Learning Walks, Campus Instructional Rounds, and Collegial Observations to enhance teaching methods and scale best practices.
- Increased enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses by 19%, boosted the number of students taking AP exams by 12%, raised percentage of students scoring 3 or higher by 5% through targeted College & Career Readiness initiatives.
- Increased FAFSA completion rates from 46% in 2022 to 52% in 2023. Elevated scholarship totals by \$69M from \$133.5M in 2021 to \$202.8M in 2023 by enhancing awareness of postsecondary funding and implementing school-designed action plans and targeted strategies.
- Redesigned high school summer program: 91% of enrolled seniors met graduation requirements (2022).
- Established "CTE & Me" tours, boosting student interest and enrollment in Career Technical Education courses.

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### *Human Relations*

- Conducted listening sessions with the Educational Office Employees Union President and collaborated with Labor Relations to negotiate Letter of Agreement toward improved working conditions for 12-month clerical staff.
- Designed and facilitated 'Next Level Leaders', the district's first professional learning program for aspiring central office leaders to enhance performance, establish a pipeline, and deepen understanding of the district's mission and vision through high-impact sessions with Senior Leadership, the Superintendent, and the Board President.
- Developed and led 'Transformation Tables', a cross-functional platform to strategize and implement actionable solutions from stakeholders, strengthening district supports, systems, and achievement.
- Created and coordinated the district's first 'Exemplary Employee Attendance Awards' to improve organizational climate through quarterly recognition and appreciation of employees.
- Supervised personnel across various levels, from Secondary Assistant Superintendents to twelve-month clerical staff. Achieved an 87% employee retention rate at schools under my direct supervision and a 90% retention rate for district staff under my leadership through open feedback loops, direct support, and collaborative leadership.
- Secured \$500K in funding to expand Leadership Development programs. Introduced shadowing days for aspiring administrators, implemented a coaching program for new Assistant Principals, and established a Principal Residency Opportunity to retain top talent and enhance performance.

### *Operational Excellence*

- Managed Board policy development, implementation, and agenda creation for general and committee Board meetings.
- Led district-wide crisis management as the primary contact for 106 schools and central office. Provided crucial guidance during crises and collaborated with district officials, school teams, and city & district first responders to ensure community safety.
- Designed and managed flexible academic and credit recovery programs, Twilight Academy and Saturday Lab. Introduced Credit Recovery Monitor position leading to measurable outcomes and efficient budgeting of ESSER funds.
- Expanded athletic opportunities to elementary schools resulting in +25k students having equal access to sports.
- Facilitated transition of the District's Police Department to Public Safety Department with the Superintendent and Chief of Public Safety. Established the Public Safety Council to bolster officer engagement with community stakeholders.
- Implemented school-based Crisis Teams and Central Office Floor Captains. Designed and rolled out the district's threat assessment determination framework, new communications protocols, and ongoing training for all personnel teaming with the Public Safety, Student Equity, and Communications departments.
- Key contributor to the analysis, finalization, and communication of the district's 20-year, \$2.1B facility plan prioritizing \$700M immediate infrastructure investment in essential renovations and new buildings districtwide.
- Developed and led the district's first Clerical Excellence Institute to enhance customer service from vanguard staff.
- Designed "Be Legendary" recruitment campaign, resulting in increased high school enrollment.

### *Community Engagement*

- Designed 'A Day in the D' service event, providing community enhancement services organized by school-based leaders in collaboration with students, government officials, faith-based groups, philanthropic organizations, and local business and community representatives throughout the city.
- Assisted with community and media relations, liaised with local and national media outlets, drafted statements for widespread distribution.
- Designed the 'Ride to the Polls' initiative to enhance civic engagement among students and families. Coordinated transportation to polling sites and provided voter education in collaboration with Board Members.
- Collaborated with a local organization and two-year college to expand the Chancellor's leadership program, increase student exposure to career pathways, and offer college credit to participating students.
- Collaborated with local universities to augment teacher/administrator pipeline programs purposed to increase the number of Black educators and address the educator shortage.

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Cleveland Metro Schools, Cleveland, OH 96 Schools | 36,300 Students - 47% Black, 35% White, 12% Hispanic

**Principal/Assistant Principal, 2017-2020**

Huntsville City Schools, Huntsville, AL 46 Schools | 24,000 Students – 57% White, 31% Black, 6% Hispanic

**Assistant Principal/Building Safety Coordinator, 2016-2017**

Instituted instructional rounds, common planning, 3-6-9-week short cycle assessments and Data Dives with all staff. Reinstated National Honor Society and expanded access to advanced/honors courses and the Arts through school musicals, new Ceramics course, and new Theatre Program. Increased staff leadership opportunities and pioneered iLEAD and Gamechanger of the Month recognitions to elevate staff engagement and morale.

- Implemented PrinciPALS monthly engagement with students, staff, community, and city leaders earning the school's first A+ Family and Community Engagement award.
- Designed Students Owning Achievement Results (SOAR) after-school program for grades 9 and 10 leading to a 12% decrease in course failures and .5-point increase in average GPA.
- Accomplished graduation rate increase of 4.5% from 71% (2018) to 75.5% (2019). Increased three-year SAT average score by 121 points, PSAT10 average score by 73 points, and PSAT/NMSQT average score by 67 points.
- Elevated Performance Index Score and NWEA Math proficiency scores by 2% and ELA by 4%; increased number of grade 9 students achieving College Board benchmarks in EBRW and Math by 25%.
- Designed and implemented Redirections platform and positive referrals, decreased discipline by 80%; Implemented 'Passport to Success' digital passport initiative, increased student attendance by 4%.
- Implemented Power of One initiative facilitating 100% student involvement in one or more co/extracurricular activities.
- Increased school enrollment by 20% and tripled dual enrollment and AP course participation, most significantly among Black male population.
- Influenced design process of new \$36M high school; collaborated with City Councilman, state, district, and community leaders to garner support of \$66.5M levy to fund facilities project.

Tuscaloosa County Schools | Tarrant City Schools, Birmingham, AL

**Principal Residency, 7-12 Professional School Counselor, 2015-2016**

- Increased College & Career Readiness by 14% from 21% (2015) to 35% (2016): Black/African American 12% increase, Hispanic/Latino 22% increase, Female 20% increase, Male 8% increase, Economically Disadvantaged 5% increase.
- Selected as principal candidate for statewide initiative to serve with an instructional leader in a partner district and accelerate leadership capacity as a rising school administrator.

Jefferson County Schools, Birmingham, AL 57 Schools | 36,000 Students – 58% White, 38% Black, 4% Hispanic

**Senior Professional School Counselor/Building Testing Coordinator/Department Chair, 2013-2014**

Coordinated all testing and staff training. Established Post-Secondary & Workforce Advisory Council and guided counseling department to strengthen services to students, families, and staff.

- Amplified graduation rate by 13% in one year and achieved 100% college application rate; mentored the school's first student to achieve Gates Millennium Scholar selection.
- Guided seniors to obtain \$8+M in scholarships; highest amount of scholarship dollars in school's history and accomplished second place out of 14 high schools in district.
- Increased number of students scoring 3 or higher on AP exams and number of Black college-bound students.

*Additional education experience as Professional School Counselor with Tuscaloosa City Schools (2012-2013), ACCESS Online Teacher (2011) with The University of Alabama, and Teacher/Head Coach (2006-2012) with Jefferson County Schools.*

*Founder of award-winning F.A.M.E. Network, Inc. (Educational 501c3) 2005-2015.*

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## PROFESSIONAL & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

CollegeBoard Midwestern Regional Council

Women of Tomorrow Metro Detroit Mentor

National Head Start Association

RISE Reviewer, US Department of Education

Advisory Board Member LIFT-Teacher Quality Partnership, Center for Strategic Leadership & Organizational Coherence

American School Counselor Association

Michigan Assessment Supervision and Curriculum Development

Black Women Education Leaders

Michigan Association Secondary School Principals

The University of Alabama National Alumni Association

National Alliance of Black School Educators

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

American Association School Administrators

Volunteer Crisis Counselor

Cheer, Dance, Pageant Judge

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## HONORS & AWARDS

Current Nominee, Women of Influence, Success Magazine

60 for 60 Honoree, The University of Alabama

Johnlyn Mitchell Leadership Legacy Award, Future Leaders Network

Leadership Detroit Class XLII, Detroit Regional Chamber

Presenter, Michigan Administrators Association EdCon

Presenter, Michigan Administrators Association Women's Summit

AASA Aspiring Superintendents Academy

Birmingham Project Corporate Leadership Class

Co-Host Winner, Katie Couric Show

Iconic Faculty Member, Minor High School

Outstanding Class Advisor, Erwin High School

Outstanding Coach Award, Erwin High School

Teacher of the Year, Erwin High School

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**Describe your leadership efforts and share specific outcomes that demonstrate how you have positively impacted your district's culture and climate.**

I firmly believe that a vibrant workplace shapes the experiences and futures of both students and staff. During my tenure with Michigan's largest school system, I have driven meaningful change serving in pivotal roles, including Executive Director of High School Transformation, Chief of Leadership Development and High Schools, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Liaison with both the City of Detroit's Mayor's Office and Michigan Department of Education, and Assistant Superintendent. As a senior district administrator with significant internal and external relationships, I understand the profound effect that organizational culture and climate can have on staff and student mental wellness and safety, academic outcomes, and realizing the organization's mission and vision.

To this end, I spearheaded several key initiatives that resonate across the core fabric of the district:

### 1. **Employee Recognition**

Recognizing excellence is crucial for a positive climate. I introduced the district's first [Exemplary Employee Award](#), presented by the Board President, Superintendent, and school/department supervisors quarterly in live-streamed ceremonies. The initiative:

- Gave staff members due recognition for their commitment to attendance.
- Fostered a culture of appreciation, motivating employees to excel.
- United the district community, reinforcing unity and pride.

### 2. **Union Collaboration for Improved Conditions**

I value the vital role of our educational office employees in the operational efficiency of our district. By initiating the district's first Clerical Excellence Institute, I aimed to improve our investment in the growth and development of our 12-month clerical staff. My commitment to collaborating with the union president led to:

- A Letter of Agreement negotiated to improve working conditions for Clerical staff.
- Strengthened trust between the district administration and union leadership.
- Instilled a culture of continuous improvement among educational office employees.

### 3. **Leadership Development Program**

I launched our district's first ['Next Level Leaders' program](#), providing comprehensive professional learning and mentorship to a cohort of professional school counselors, assistant principals, and principals aspiring to central office leadership roles. This initiative:

- Cultivated a cadre of leaders with fresh perspectives and solutions to district challenges identified by Cabinet members.
- Promoted collaborative decision-making, fostering inclusivity.
- Elevated participant performance in current roles, strengthening school/district achievement.

[Feedback](#) from one participant conveys the overall sentiments provided about the experience:

**"The experience was absolutely phenomenal! Dr. Feagins is BRILLIANT, and I truly learned about being Transformational under her master tutelage. Thank you greatly for the opportunity. I am a better administrator after completing this program! Thank you."**

### 4. **Crisis Management and Communications**

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Preparedness in crisis is critical. I developed robust crisis management protocols and training programs, partnering with Public Safety, Communications, and school-based leaders, which:

- Decreased our response time to crises and the number of campus arrests.
- Enhanced our system's capability to handle emergencies correctly through a new *Threat Determination and Management Process*.
- Boosted staff confidence in crisis management by instituting School Crisis Teams, Central Office Floor Captains, and ongoing Crisis Prevention professional learning.
- Served as a model for other districts, showcasing our commitment to safety.

### 5. High School Transformation Leadership

In just two years under my leadership, the design of our targeted transformation plan and intensive collaborative efforts:

- Strengthened school-based and central office relationships.
- Improved practices and services for Emergent Bilingual and Multilingual learners.
- Implemented personalized principal/instructional leadership team supports and Learning Walks, Collegial Observations, & Data Talks to improve curriculum implementation and instructional practices.
- Enhanced district communication and collaboration with students and caregivers.
- Sharpened data analysis and executed an Early Warning Intervention System.
- Introduced Twilight Academy and Saturday Labs as flexible acceleration and recovery programs to support all students, with a heightened focus on our most academically vulnerable students.
- Facilitated critical leadership changes at high-opportunity schools.
- Instituted a 13-week ['Operation Graduation' initiative](#) rewarding schools demonstrating the highest weekly improvement.
- Rebranded the district's alternative school to an accelerated learning campus serving our most academically vulnerable students and families.
- Implemented school-based Student Advisory Councils to increase student voice in decisions and "CTE & ME" tours to increase exposure to Career Tech opportunities.

We revitalized our high schools with a renewed sense of purpose and boosted morale and pride due to our deepened commitment to student success and deployment of essential resources.

Select measurable outcomes include:

- Increased student performance on SAT and state assessments.
- Increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses and students scoring 3 or higher.
- Decreased the district dropout rate and high school chronic absenteeism rates.
- [Raised the district's graduation rate](#) for the first time in nearly a decade, outpacing the state, increasing by double-digits at 38% of high schools.
- Increased FAFSA application rates and three-year scholarship totals.
- Increased the number of first year and continuing students on track for graduation.

Along with my focus on whole-soul leadership, the initiatives I have championed have greatly impacted our district's climate and culture. I am proud of our collective energy toward refining leadership and improving schools to elevate the high school journey and educational outcomes for historically underestimated students. I anticipate the collaborative opportunity to render comparable and even better results, immediately and long-term, as Superintendent of Memphis-Shelby County Schools.