

Matthew R. Utterback, Superintendent of the North Clackamas School District, was recognized as the 2017 National School Superintendent of the Year.  He has over 27 distinguished years in public education, the past five years as superintendent of the North Clackamas School District.   A suburban school district serving over 17,000 students on 32 school campuses, North Clackamas Schools is continually recognized as innovative leaders in the state of Oregon and an example of what is right with public education today.

Under Utterback’s visionary leadership, North Clackamas has not only begun to close student opportunity gaps, those gaps have narrowed to nearly non-existent levels in many areas. With a laser-like focus on results, coupled with a lens of equity, the district’s overall four-year graduation rate increased from 66 percent in 2011 to 83 percent in 2015. In addition, graduation rate gains made since 2011 with students with disabilities (+24 percent), African/Black students (+52 percent), and Hispanic/Latino students (+23 percent) are tremendously encouraging.  Of significance is the 89 percent graduation rate in 2015 for the district’s African American/Black students. North Clackamas now maintains one of the highest graduation and the highest attendance rates of the state’s largest school districts.

In 2013, Utterback oversaw the development of the district’s Strategic Direction and Plan.  A community engagement process was integral to the plan’s development and success that resulted in three clearly articulated goals and action plans in the areas of student achievement, equity, and quality programs. The district continues to lower class sizes, while implementing full-day kindergarten and a five-year plan to renew all district curricula through a lens of equity and a focus on technology integration. In addition, the district passed a $433 million capital construction bond in November 2016 after two years of planning and community outreach in which Superintendent Utterback led nearly 200 public engagement and listening sessions.

Superintendent Utterback has served the students of North Clackamas Schools since he began his teaching career in 1989. As a middle school principal from 1998-2004 and working collaboratively with staff, McLoughlin Middle School recorded unprecedented student achievement gains earning the recognition as one of a handful of high achieving middle schools in the region.  Utterback served as the district’s Director of Secondary Programs and Assistant Superintendent from 2004-2008 before proudly returning to the school level to serve as the principal of Clackamas High School from 2008-2012.

During Utterback’s leadership, Clackamas High achieved 12-14 percent gains in reading, mathematics, science, and writing performance.  The school doubled its Advanced Placement enrollment while eliminating the enrollment gap for students of color.  During this time period, student participation on Advanced Placement exams increased by over 500 percent while increasing overall passing rates.  With high achievement and 90 percent of graduates pursuing post-secondary education, Clackamas High School was rated as one of the top high schools in Oregon and the United States.

A frequent presenter at state and regional conferences on cultivating equity in the classroom and leading with a sense of urgency, Utterback shares his learning and experiences with other educational leaders.  Ensuring the future success of the school district, he brings the district’s new administrators together for monthly dinners at his home for mentoring, learning, and assistance in navigating the first years of educational leadership.  Superintendent Utterback is a member of many civic organizations including the Clackamas Rotary and the North Clackamas Chamber of Commerce.  He serves as chair of the Clackamas County Superintendents and is on the advisory boards of Portland State University’s Graduate School of Education and the Chalkboard Project.

A native Oregonian, Utterback graduated from Newport High School before attending Western Oregon University to receive his Bachelor’s degree in secondary education in 1989.  He earned his Master’s of Teaching degree and his educational administrative certification from Lewis and Clark College in 1995.

Utterback has been married to his wife Nancy, a high school English teacher in North Clackamas Schools, for over 28 years.  They have one daughter, Emma, who is also a graduate of the school district.  In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, attending sporting events, and running.