



The Gloucester Public Schools

Every Day Matters, Everybody Belongs. Every Student Learns

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Kathy Clancy
Chair, Gloucester School Committee
2 Blackburn Road
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Kathy,

It is an honor and privilege to serve our schools and the great city of Gloucester. And, after much thought and personal reflection with my family, I have decided that the 2025-2026 school year, my sixth year as superintendent of the Gloucester Public Schools, will be my last as a superintendent.

Despite many challenges, I'm incredibly proud of the significant accomplishments we've achieved together - staff, school and district leaders, and the School Committee. To start, we navigated the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic by providing more in-school instruction than almost all other districts in the Commonwealth.

We have made important advancements in improving instruction and student support:

- We successfully implemented a new, knowledge-based literacy curriculum in all of our elementary schools.
- We implemented new English and math curricula at the middle school that O'Maley teachers were fully involved in piloting and selecting.
- We are actively working on strengthening our special education instructions and district-wide programs.
- We are providing more professional learning than ever before for paraprofessionals that is tied directly to skills and practices that help them in the classroom
- We've extended benchmark assessments to all schools so every school can better assess and address student learning needs.
- We've introduced universal screening to identify students needing counseling or intervention support.

Our district has also seen meaningful long-term investments in our facilities:

- We built East Veterans Elementary School on time and under budget, replacing two buildings that were both more than 60 years old and named it using a student-led, community process.
- We installed new playgrounds at Plum Cove and Beeman and refurbished their exteriors and modular classrooms.
- We replaced O'Maley's original windows with more energy efficient ones that improve heating, cooling, and natural light.
- We improved safety and security at Gloucester High and O'Maley by creating more secure school entrances.

After a difficult transition off of federal covid relief dollars and by addressing rapidly increasing special education costs, we have put the district quickly back on stronger financial footing including working with the City to establish a special education reserve fund to ensure we are able to pay for mandatory special education costs. In the past year we completed negotiating seven labor contracts with most agreements now settled through at least FY 2027. We have also stabilized enrollment by decreasing the number of students using school choice by 22% and realigning elementary attendance zones.

We have invested in and strengthened our Career, Vocational and Technical programs by:

- Expanding enrollment in all programs and launching a new exploratory program open to all 9th graders;
- Creating additional partnerships and internships in all programs so students can work offsite in their chosen field;
- Planning, designing, and launching our new medical assisting program; and
- Securing nearly \$2 million in grants to expand and strengthen our CVTE programs and improve and modernize our facilities

I am letting the School Committee know now of my plans to retire as a superintendent, so the committee can decide on and follow a process that will identify the right leader for our public schools.

In addition to continuing to lead all of our schools and staff forward this year, I will do all I can to support the district's next leader and make sure they are ready to lead our schools, our staff, and our students from their first day on the job.

We're off to a great start this school year. I am grateful for all our staff and school leaders who continue to rebuild a sense of camaraderie, positivity, and purpose in our schools. And there is always important work to do and challenges to face, especially deepening student learning and improving academic achievement.

While there are many paths ahead for me professionally, I am positive that I will always look at my time as the Superintendent of the Gloucester Public Schools as one of the high points in my professional career. This has been the most rewarding, challenging, and fulfilling job of my life. There is no second place.

For now, we have important work to do together to ensure "every day matters, everybody belongs, and every student learns."

Sincerely,



Ben Lummis
Superintendent

CC: Members. Gloucester School Committee
Mayor Greg Verga