Joplin Schools

PRESS RELEASE

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JOPLIN SCHOOLS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT DR. KERRY SACHETTA

JOPLIN, Mo. – It is with sincere appreciation that Joplin Schools announces the retirement of Superintendent Dr. Kerry Sachetta, effective June 30, 2027.

Dr. Sachetta has devoted more than 30 years to public education, including 24 years in Joplin as Joplin High School principal (2002–2016), assistant superintendent for operations (2016–2022), and superintendent since 2022. Joplin families, students, staff, and community join in thanking him for a career defined by steady leadership, deep care for people, and a proud belief in what Joplin's schools can be.

When the May 22, 2011 tornado destroyed Joplin High School, Dr. Sachetta and his staff opened an interim high school in fewer than 90 days so students could start the year on time. Together with architects, staff, and the community, they then planned the new Joplin High School and Franklin Technology Center, which opened in 2014.

"I am grateful for every opportunity I've had and for the outstanding leaders who showed me the way," said Dr. Sachetta. "Galena gave me my foundation in leadership and school improvement, and in 2002 Joplin trusted me to lead its high school. The work we did together at JHS challenged all of us to learn and grow, and I'm proud of what our staff accomplished, especially in the hardest of times."

In the years since, Dr. Sachtta has championed the collaborative culture that carries Joplin Schools forward. Working alongside teachers, leaders, and the Board of Education, the district adopted a new strategic plan, earned three consecutive Missouri School Boards Association Board Governance Awards, and most recently won voter approval of a $40 million, no-tax-rate-increase bond with 76% support.

That shared work is also evident in student results. During Dr. Sachetta's various leadership roles in Joplin Schools, the graduation rate has climbed from 72% in 2002 to 97% for the Class of 2026, and students now choose from 81 dual credit, AP, and honors courses. Joplin's youngest learners are thriving too: children who complete the district's new Transitional Kindergarten program enter kindergarten well ahead in early literacy.

"On behalf of the Joplin Schools Board of Education, we congratulate Dr. Sachetta on a remarkable career and thank him for more than two decades of service to our students, staff, and community," said Joplin Schools Board of Education President David Weaver. "His steady leadership guided Joplin through some of its most difficult days and has built a culture of collaboration that will endure long after his retirement. Because of the strong foundation he's helped build, Joplin Schools is well positioned for its next chapter, and we wish him every happiness in the years ahead."

Since 2006, Dr. Sachetta has taught graduate courses in educational leadership at five universities: Missouri Southern, Missouri State, William Woods, Northwest Missouri State, and Pittsburg State (KS), preparing many of the region's principals and teacher-leaders. He has also collaborated on more than two dozen national, state, and regional presentations and publications, including "Rebuilding a School Community" in *Principal Leadership*.

Dr. Sachetta is widely respected for his focus on transformational leadership and tireless advocacy for public schools. He was named 2009 Missouri High School Principal of the Year, served as president of the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals and of the Southwest Center for Educational Excellence, and received the Cognia 2019 Excellence in Education Award for Missouri. He has also testified before the Missouri General Assembly's Joint Education Committee. Locally, he founded Joplin's Key Communicators network to champion public education with legislators and helped launch Eagles Forward in support of Joplin Schools.

"This work has been the honor of a lifetime, thanks in large part to the phenomenal educators and community that supports our students. I've been fortunate to work alongside exceptional teams in Joplin Schools, and together we've made real progress in academics, support for teachers, and community engagement," Dr. Sachetta said. "I leave knowing Joplin Schools is in great hands, and the best is yet to come."