



Parkland School District
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Richard T. Sniscak, Superintendent of Parkland School District, Announces Retirement

(Allentown) - Parkland School District Superintendent, Mr. Richard T. Sniscak, announced his plans to retire at the end of the 2020-21 school year during the Parkland School Board meeting on Tuesday evening, October 20, 2020. The announcement marks a 37-year career in public education. Mr. Sniscak started his career as a mathematics teacher and coach in the Allentown School District, where he is also a proud alumnus of Dieruff High School. He was hired as the Head Football Coach at Parkland High School by Dr. Gary McCartney, then Parkland's Superintendent, in 1994. A year later, he joined the staff full-time at Parkland as the Athletic Director in 1995 and he continued to coach football through 2000 before becoming Parkland High School Principal in 2001. In 2009, he was appointed Assistant Superintendent under the leadership of Dr. Louise Donohue, Superintendent. Upon Dr. Donohue's retirement, Rich was appointed Superintendent in 2011.

In his letter to the School Board, Mr. Sniscak wrote, "In many respects, my entire life has revolved around public education. I entered the education profession with the commitment and desire to make a difference in the lives of my students. Educators in my life did as much for me and I wanted to continue this trend and be part of this life-altering behavior. I always considered it an honor of the first order to represent this District as Superintendent of Schools."

Mr. Sniscak decided to make the announcement now to give the Parkland Board of School Directors ample time to find a replacement and ensure a smooth leadership transition.

By the time he retires, Rich will have served 26 years in the Parkland School District. During his tenure, he is credited with:

- Implementing Full-day Kindergarten to help boost literacy with the goal of having every third grade student read on grade-level by the end of third grade, a statistic that has been proven to help students succeed throughout the rest of their lives.
- Establishing a K-12 initiative that assigns a personal Chromebook to every student to help foster equity and enhance skills necessary to compete in a 21st century global workforce.
- Overseeing school construction projects including the renovation of Kratzer Elementary School and the new construction of the newly opened Veterans Memorial Elementary School and current renovation of Schnecksville Elementary School.
- Navigating a crippling economic downturn in 2008 as well as the current pandemic while maintaining good financial stewardship that has helped the District maintain its prestigious AA Bond rating.

- Creating partnerships with local hospital networks that resulted in learning opportunities for students including a first-time-in-Pennsylvania high school human knee dissection experience for Parkland High School students.
- Launching *Project Lead the Way* Biomedical and Computer Science Programs at Parkland High School, both of which offer hands-on opportunities aimed at exposing teens to careers in science.
- Exploring the need to help every learner through the vibrant conversations that exist on the District's Multicultural Awareness Committee and Equity and Inclusion Committees.
- Establishing food pantries in Parkland's three secondary schools so that students can acquire confidential food assistance to help bridge the hunger gap in households during weekends and holidays.
- Upgrading school safety and security measures that include the implementation of technology in the form of video cameras, alarm bells, secured vestibules and communication systems.
- Helping to establish the Parkland Education Foundation in 2011, which has grown in size, members and donations that have totaled more than \$1M.
- Serving the Lehigh Career and Technical Institute as Superintendent of Record.

Mr. Sniscak has held many leadership positions in the community. He serves on the Board of Governors for the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce. He co-chairs Greater Lehigh Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity in Education to help create equitable environments for learning. And, during his tenure as Superintendent, Rich served on the Da Vinci Science Center Board of Trustees, the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators Board of Governors, the Skills USA Board of Governors, Lehigh Valley Business Education Partnership, West Allentown Rotary, and Lehigh County Children's Roundtable Committee.

In 2016, Rich won the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association's Superintendent of the Year Award. In 2016, 2018 and 2020, Rich earned the Top Leader Award in the *Morning Call's Top Workplace Campaign*. For 2015-16, Rich was named by the National School Public Relations Association as a Superintendent to Watch for his dynamic leadership with a strong emphasis on communication. And, in 2018, Rich was the recipient of the Lehigh University School Study Council's Cooperative Leadership Award, recognizing his exemplary efforts to establish relationships with other educational agencies. He was also highlighted as a Pennsylvania Outstanding Leader by the American Association of School Administrators as part of their "Leaders Matter" campaign for demonstrating leadership that has impacted their school communities and student learning.

Rich Sniscak earned a bachelor's degree from The Citadel – The Military College of South Carolina, where he majored in Math and Education and played football on a full scholarship. He also has a master's degree in Educational Leadership and a Superintendent's Letter of Eligibility Certificate from Lehigh University.

Parkland School District ranks in the top 20 largest public school districts in Pennsylvania (out of a total of 500 school districts state-wide) and serves approximately 9,500 students and 1,500 employees.

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