

Statement of Superintendent Joshua P. Starr

February 3, 2015

Many of you have heard me say that I consider being the superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools one of the best jobs in public education. Even today, I still feel that way.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the superintendent of MCPS for the past three-and-a-half years. I want to thank the Board for providing me with the opportunity to lead one of the best school districts in the country. I am very proud of the work we have done during my time here.

We have continued to focus on providing our students with access to strong academics, including AP and IB classes. We have implemented new curriculum and strategies that allow students to develop the creative problem-solving skills that are so important in the 21st century. And we have made a districtwide commitment to meeting the social emotional needs of our students and building strong relationships that support their overall success. Most importantly, we have been laser-focused on providing customized support to our schools so they can best serve our students and we have built strong community partnerships that are meeting the real needs of children and their families.

The work we have been doing is getting results. Just last week, the state released graduation rate data. I am proud that our graduation rate has risen for each of the three years I have been here and the achievement gap has narrowed for all subgroups.

I am incredibly proud of this progress, but I also know there is much more work to be done. It was my hope that I would be here to continue that work with our staff, our students, our families and our community. However, I recognize and respect that the Board has the right to choose the leader and direction of the school system. A Superintendent is the steward of the community's values, as manifested through an elected Board of Education. No superintendent is bigger than the system she or he leads, and I understand and respect this Board's desire to have a different leader and a different direction. As a Montgomery County taxpayer and parent of three kids in our schools, my sole desire is to see MCPS remain an outstanding and strong school system.

On a personal note, I want to thank those who have offered words of encouragement and support over the past several days and throughout my time in MCPS. I especially

want to thank my wife, Emma, and our wonderful kids for their support. As for the future, I will certainly continue my work in public education and my commitment to providing students with an education that prepares them to thrive in the future.

I wish nothing but the best for MCPS, its students, staff, and community. It has been an honor to be your superintendent.