

Norman F. Ridder

Senior Executive – Mission/Systems Leadership

"As a humble servant leader, I evaluate how I can best serve the people I am called to lead. In education. This approach allows for a spirit of teamwork focused on the needs of the child." - Norm Ridder

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Management – Organizational Development
Consensus Building – Public Relations
Cultural, Ethnic, and Economically Diverse Populations
Industry Best Practices – Policy Making – Reform
Education Systems Turnarounds – Strategic Planning
Assessment – Accountability – Student Achievement
Mill Levy Overrides – Bond Issues – Budgeting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Visionary leader with a collaborative management style, student – focused philosophy, and proven record of achievement. High energy administrator with a personal commitment to excellence in education and extensive experience with diverse quality systems. Effective team player who values the freedom of the human spirit, engenders trust, and models high standards of integrity. Accomplished public speaker who knows how to work a crowd.

EDUCATION

Ed. D, ADMINISTRATION, CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION

University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

Dissertation – *The Religious Beliefs and Practices of Catholic Graduates of Catholic and Public High Schools in the State of Nebraska*

MASTER OF EDUCATION, SECONDARY EDUCATION

University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

BACHELOR OF ARTS, PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY

St. Thomas College, Denver, Colorado

MASTERS OF THEOLOGY EQUIVARIANT FOR CATHOLIC DEACON ORDINATION

Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

CERTIFICATIONS

- Endorsements – Superintendent of Schools, Principal, Teacher
- Professional, Administrative, Supervisory Certificate for K-12
- Baldrige Examiner Certificate

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT, Joplin School District, Joplin, Missouri (2015-2017)

Mehlville Public Schools, Saint Louis, Missouri (2014-2015)

Recruited as a turnaround expert to build a culture of improvement rooted in each community's desire to support its teachers and provide an outstanding education for its children. Collected performance data, researched the needs of the internal and external community, listened to stakeholders, and built a strategic focus for the district. Developed each district's strategic plan and created the foundation for a culture of improvement from the classroom to the boardroom. Led the selection of a permanent superintendent who could take the district to the next level.

Joplin School District, serves nearly 8,000 students with a 61% free/reduced lunch program and 1,286 staff members in 15 schools covering 70 square miles.

- Performed an analysis of the overall system, created a deployment plan for a nurturing, high-performing system, and drove the change required to maintain a sharp focus for the future.
- Implemented a new administrative management model that ensured transparency of spending and operations.
- Drove the election of new members to the Joplin board of Education and ensured they were aligned with the strategic plan. Led the board to become a functioning governing organization that was no longer fractured along party lines.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE**

Mehlville Public Schools, a National School District of Character, serves 11,000 students in a growing urban community.

- Built community support for a levy increase to respond to deficit spending for the first time in 29 years.
- Used forums to uncover the unique desires and needs of students, parents, teachers, and voters. Initiated a feedback cycle to constantly drive improvement.
- Tuned into what the children truly want and need, and encouraged them to own their future, innovate, and take risks.
- Identified a negative trend in teacher retention, and provided support for the needs of teachers.

SUPERINTENDENT (2005–2014)

Springfield R-12 Public Schools, Springfield, Missouri

Recruited to re-invigorate one of the largest school districts in Missouri with 25,000 students, 3,336 employees, and 53 schools. Managed a \$273 million annual budget and \$2.96 billion in assets in a fiscally conservative manner. Focused on meeting the fundamental needs of each child and on challenging students to acquire the skills and knowledge to function in the world.

Strategic Planning:

- Drove the development and implementation of a new strategic plan that served as a roadmap for the future of public education in the district. Gathered input for the plan from thousands of citizen surveys, numerous focus groups, and meetings with business leaders, teachers, students, parents, and staff. Currently integrating 21st century skills into district curricula and instruction.
- Reduced bureaucracy in the old system, minimized top-down control, and promoted servant leadership.
- Acted as a driving force to unify and build consensus among the Board of Education, staff, and community in a dynamic political and cultural environment.
- Initiated and managed the involvement of school personnel, central administration, and instruction in district policy-making, strategic planning, and accountability.

Capital Campaigns:

- Developed and passed a \$71.5 million bond and an increase of 20¢ on a levy (\$6.4 million increase) in response to district growth. The district is developing a 5- to 10-year facilities plan targeting classroom size and technology.
- Spearheaded a successful \$50 million bond initiative in 2009, which was used to provide air conditioning for all facilities, build two middle schools, improve other facilities, and add more technology to classrooms.
- Proposed and campaigned for a successful \$96.5 million bond initiative in 2006, which was used for 24 major projects throughout the district.

Program Development:

- Led the development of an innovative approach to learning rooted in every classroom and driven by a district research team that focuses on analyzing formative and summative student data in reading, writing, math, and behavior.
- Created a district education team that collaborated with the Springfield community in the development of a new learning model that provided a framework for 21st Century skills, including critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. Ensured integration of continuous improvement with the model.
- Led the development of an eighth grade science/math initiative with Mercy Health Systems, which supplied the classrooms and made resources available at the hospital itself.
- Partnered with the Discovery Center to create a fifth grade STEM program to improve the delivery of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction with classes at the Discovery Center.
- Developed a Kids First Initiative to uncover replication of services and gaps in preparation for school.
- Implemented a Web-driven data warehouse that aligned the district with state standards and made performance data accessible to teachers, students, and parents 24 hours a day. Implemented a formative assessment series (SP5) to encourage data-driven decision-making.
- Managed the development of procedures for the evaluation of curriculum, review and selection of textbooks, educational materials, and field testing of materials and techniques.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE*****Program Development:*** (continued)

- Created a district research team focused on supporting innovation in the classroom.
- Initiated and/or facilitated various choice programs, including International Baccalaureate and Pre-IB degree programs (315 high school students), Middle Years program (535 middle school students), Primary Years program (548 participants), A+ programs (3,549 participants), WINGS gifted education program (590 elementary students), Middle Years Scholars program (118 participants), BRIDGES gifted education program (75 students), WOLF, Middle College, and Project Lead the Way, among others.
- Led the development of Middle College (located on the Ozark Community College campus in Springfield) to target students dropping out of school. Combined both traditional and virtual classes with intern opportunities in diesel mechanics, health services, and child care. Graduated 60 students in 2013.

Community Interaction:

- Built a strong level of confidence and trust among the community, teachers, and administrators.
- Initiated student, parent, teacher, and senior citizen monthly advisory teams for the superintendent.
- Increased community satisfaction by 30%, according to biannual community surveys conducted by Springfield Public Schools.

Professional Development:

- Developed teacher academies in partnership with local universities/colleges to provide additional student teacher training and development in Title I schools.
- Leading the development of district and site leadership for the deployment of common core standards and smarter balance assessment in both Kansas and Missouri through the Kansas/Missouri Superintendents' Forum and in partnership with Dr. Willard Daggett of the International Center for Leadership in Education.

Continuous Improvement:

- Deployed the Malcolm Baldrige continuous improvement system, making it part of the district's DNA over the past seven years. Brought 23 Baldrige examiners on board. Focused the system on putting students in charge of their own learning.
- Partnered with the Missouri School Boards Association, Missouri Association of School Administrators, University of Missouri Department of Education, and several major school districts in the state to deploy the Baldrige system throughout the Missouri education system.
- Introduced and deployed a continuous improvement initiative based on the Plan/Do/Study/Act (PDSA) process.

Student Achievement:

- Realized significant increases in student achievement by tightly aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff development, technology, community partnerships, and governance.
- Grew the graduation rate from 78% to 85% by implementing a persistent graduation initiative.
- Recorded the district's highest student attendance rate in more than 20 years.
- Increased student engagement in the classroom by implementing an innovative entrepreneurial WOLF program, which led to creation of the Career Pathways initiative.
- The district consistently places on Missouri's "Top 10 Highest-Performing Schools" list for achievements in communication arts and math (over 10 schools).
- Springfield seniors who took the ACT achieved an average composite score of 22.6 compared with the national and Missouri average composite scores of 21.6.
- District free and reduced lunch students outperform average students in Missouri across the board.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (2000–2005)**Colorado Springs School District 11, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Led the largest school district in southern Colorado with a vision and passion for student growth through programs grounded in research and data (61 schools, 31,000 diverse students, 1,800 teachers, and 1,300 support and administrative staff). Used a systematic approach to building ownership, which was critical in shaping the district's educational vision.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE****Leadership:**

- Developed comprehensive teacher, administrator, and school board assessment programs concentrating on personal and professional development and rooted in formal and informal observation, consumer data, and self-assessment.
- Actively participated in school events and increased the visibility of administration by visiting every teacher in the classroom.
- Motivated administrative staff and teachers to commit to the common cause of educational excellence, and empowered both teachers and students with heavy accountability.
- Organized school board retreats to help bond the board and integrate newly elected members.
- Minimized conflict and developed an open working relationship with the teachers union.
- Implemented Stephen Covey leadership principles to build interdependence among teachers and staff.

Strategic Planning:

- Developed a powerful, five-year strategic plan to anchor thinking and align the system to focus on student achievement, safety, a highly qualified and diverse workforce, community, and the effective/efficient use of resources.
- Created and implemented a new capital plan, technology plan, and development plan.

Fiscal Accountability:

- Developed and managed an annual operating budget of more than \$300 million.
- Placed spending power in the hands of each school site in order to get resources as close to the students as possible.
- Championed the passage of a \$26.5 million annual mill levy override and established an oversight team to assure the community of responsible spending. Won the override in a community where 87% of households have no children in school.

Key Initiatives:

- Designed and implemented aggressive new standards for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Implemented Malcolm Baldrige continuous improvement principles to improve the delivery of service to the district's true customer—the student.
- Deployed a Professional Learning Community so that teachers were not "teaching to" but "learning with" the student.
- Encouraged the use of technology and data to improve the quality of teaching and decision-making. Facilitated a major shift in the use of technology in the classroom. Implemented Parent Connect to provide parent access to online report cards.
- Wrote *Knowing and Growing Your Kindergartner* to be used as a parent guide for preparing students for school.
- Created unique school sites that offered choice and encouraged community involvement.
- Directed and sustained the development of charter schools within the district to initiate innovation and provide alternatives for families.
- Introduced sounding boards to build consensus within the community. Met monthly with representatives from teachers, principals, support staff, parents, students, senior citizens, and the business community.
- Served as a resource for the media; convinced *The Gazette* to make education their number one priority for five years.

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT (1999–2000)**Academy School District 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Assumed responsibility for a 17,000-student district in financial trouble due to a lack of revenue and mismanagement of funds and growth. Hired specifically to strengthen staff morale and to pass the mill levy override.

- Made presentations throughout the community to explain the current state of district finances and provide some assurances of what the future would hold.
- Met with school board members and organized a board retreat to help bond the newly elected representatives.
- Campaigned for a \$12 million mill levy override that returned the district to solid financial standing.

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE****Academy School District 20 (continued)**

- Collaborated with Central Office personnel to address the issue of staff morale through honest, open communication.
- Met with parent and teacher sounding boards, Academy Education Association, student councils, school board, classified liaison group, senior volunteers, corporate CEOs, and the district accountability group to develop strategic plans and create solutions to district problems.
- Focused the staff to address the needs of students, improved morale in the district, and motivated the staff to become excited about the future.

PRINCIPAL (1998–1999)**Liberty High School, Academy School District 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Managed a high school with 1,200 students. Led initiatives to improve curriculum, instruction, administration, school climate, and academic achievement. Hired, supervised, and evaluated both teaching and administrative staff.

- Initiated a spirit of change that led to a sense of community and a new focus on student academic achievement and positive behavior.
- Created a safe academic atmosphere in a school with a very negative school climate by implementing a strategy of caring and high expectations where teachers focused on catching students doing good.
- Succeeded in revitalizing the staff and building consensus among teachers, community, and students.
- Shaped and implemented the CARES program, an initiative based on the Boys Town Education Model that helps teachers manage their classrooms and provides a proactive way to manage behavior.
- Developed and implemented innovative programs that made Liberty a magnet in the district for the advanced placement diploma program.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (1996–1998)**Archdiocese of Denver, Colorado**

Directed the operations of a school district with 15,000+ students in 40 schools.

- Launched a major capital campaign to raise \$66 million to fund the construction of three new schools.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (1987–1996)**Girls and Boys Town Schools, Omaha, Nebraska**

Led the educational programs of this historic center for the treatment and care of abused, abandoned, and neglected boys and girls. Managed the Flannigan alternative high school. Consulted with major metropolitan school districts throughout the United States to provide guidance on gang deprogramming. Consulted with Native American educators in South Dakota and New Mexico.

- Developed major reforms, restructured the system, and focused it on student achievement.
- Helped to develop the Boys Town Education Model that is now used by schools across the country for systems alignment, behavior management, and diversity integration.
- Spearheaded efforts to increase the quality of instruction and student activities.
- Implemented solid staff development and performance evaluation systems.
- Developed a reading research center that improved the reading performance of the students by two years for every one year of reading instruction.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION (part-time) (1991–1996)**Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska**

Taught graduate and undergraduate students studying for degrees or certificates in education. Developed course content, examinations, and presentation materials.

- Designed the learning environment to meet educational development requirements, adapting teaching style to accommodate both individual and group learning styles.
- Taught the Boys Town Education Model—The Well-Managed Classroom, Classrooms with Character, and Safe and Effective Secondary Schools.

HONORS

- Educator of the Year, Colorado Springs NAACP
- Entrepreneur of the Year, Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation
- Educator of the Year, Notre Dame Club of Omaha

**COMMUNITY
SERVICE**

- Missouri Quality Award, Board of Directors
- Missouri School Boards Association (MSBA), Superintendents Advisory Council
- Missouri-Kansas Superintendents' Forum, Board of Directors, President (2011–present)
- Southwest Missouri School Administrators, Board of Directors
- Mercy Hospital, Board of Directors, Ethics Committee, Quality Committee
- The Kitchen, Board of Directors
- Drury University, Board of Trustees
- Every Child Initiative, Advisory Board—A *Springfield News-Leader* Initiative
- Springfield Civility Committee
- Springfield Early Childhood Coalition, Board of Directors
- YMCA, Board of Directors
- Urban Development, Board of Directors
- Community Leadership Forum
- Discovery Center, Board of Directors
- Catholic Campus Ministry, Board of Directors
- United Way, Board of Directors
- US Bank, Advisory Board
- Deacon, St. Joseph's Catholic Church

**CONTINUING
EDUCATION**

- Certified as a Malcolm Baldrige Examiner
- Boy's Town Education Model (motivation systems, effective teaching strategies, administrative intervention, and cooperative learning)
- Cognitive Coach / Executive Coach
- Common Core and Smarter Balance Training (Sue Gendron and Willard Daggett)
- Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP)
- Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA)
- Diversity Training (Springfield Chamber of Commerce)
- Dale Carnegie Courses
- Whole Brain Assessment
- Kansas University Learning Strategies
- Leadership Forum, Center for Creative Leadership
- Stephen Covey Certified Trainer
- Equivalent to a Master of Theology Degree, Creighton University (1988–1991)