



Dr. Brian Otott  
Superintendent

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 15, 2021

## Superintendent Brian Otott Announces Retirement After 31 Years of Serving PCSD Students

Superintendent Brian Otott announced this week he plans to retire after 31 years of serving the Paulding County School District in multiple roles, including the last three and half years as superintendent. “Leaving the place you love is never an easy decision, but I am looking forward to completing this school year and beginning a new phase of life,” Dr. Otott wrote in a letter he plans to send to the Paulding County School District community. The effective date of his retirement will be May 31, 2021.

Dr. Otott started his career teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade Georgia Studies at Herschel Jones Middle School, while also working at the After School Program at W.C. Abney Elementary School. Since then, he has worked at 11 Paulding County schools as well as the district office. The Board of Education hired Dr. Otott as interim superintendent in June of 2017, and made him full-time superintendent on Nov. 1, 2017. In September of 2019, the Board voted unanimously to give Dr. Otott a three-year contract extension.



Dr. Brian Otott

“I am happy for Brian and the entire school board wishes him the best in retirement,” said Board Chairman Jeff Fuller. “I admire the dedication he brought to the job as a life-long educator, the remarkable knowledge he has of this community, and the impressive leadership he has displayed with a calm, measured demeanor through 2020 and into 2021, which has been one of the most challenging stretches in this school district’s history. He has done a terrific job for the Paulding County School District, and he will not be easy to replace. We really have our work cut out for us.”

During Dr. Otott’s time as superintendent, the Paulding County School District has grown to be the 12<sup>th</sup> largest school district in Georgia with approximately 30,000 students and 3,600 employees. Mr. Fuller noted that under Dr. Otott’s leadership the district’s 2020 graduation rate surpassed 90 percent for the first time ever, when just five years ago it was below 80 percent. And he praised Dr. Otott’s leadership during the pandemic. When COVID-19 closed schools in the spring of 2020, Dr. Otott developed a plan that made Paulding County schools among the first in the nation to return to instruction that fall by offering parents and students a choice of in-person and virtual instruction.

Some other highlights of Dr. Otott's tenure include:

- Exceeding the state average in 22 of 24 subject areas on the Georgia Milestones assessment in 2019.
- Implementing a Literacy By Design initiative to improve reading skills at 18 schools throughout the district utilizing a \$4.5 million grant from the state, the largest of its kind awarded to any school district. In 2020, the school district learned it has been awarded an additional \$19.5 million over five years to expand the initiative to all 33 Paulding County schools.
- Hiring a District Safety Officer, expanding the district's relationship with the Paulding Sheriff's Office, and implementing more than \$1 million in safety and security enhancements at schools district-wide.
- Increasing the focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), including adding STEM teachers at the elementary level and opening the Hiram High School Academy of Computer Science and Technology in 2020.
- Opening the Paulding County College and Career Academy in 2019 to provide high school students career-focused opportunities in the Cybersecurity, Energy, Health, and Mechatronics fields.
- Receiving full district-wide accreditation in 2019 from AdvancEd for five years.
- Passing an E-SPLOST proposal to address growth and capacity needs with 70 percent approval by Paulding County voters in 2019.
- Working closely with the Board of Education to craft annual budget proposals that provide fiscally responsible millage rates, and at the same time provide competitive pay for district employees.

Mr. Fuller said the Board of Education will begin discussing the process of finding a new superintendent when it meets on January 26<sup>th</sup>. "In order to ensure the smoothest possible transition, our goal is to hire a new superintendent by the time Dr. Otott leaves on May 31<sup>st</sup>."

*Press Inquiries Please Contact:*

Paulding County School District Office of Public Information  
[communications@paulding.k12.ga.us](mailto:communications@paulding.k12.ga.us)  
(770) 443-8000