

Sponsored Content



Talent Recruitment & Retention

The science of recruitment and retention

In this week's Thought Leadership, Carla Johnson, the Chief of Human Resources for the Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township, discusses the district's approach to hiring and delivering the best experience possible for teachers and students.

Q: How does your organization work with higher education institutions to promote education as a career and to develop a pipeline of candidates for future employment?

Carla Johnson: Guided by the 2016 and 2023 Strategic Plans, the MSD of Lawrence Township is committed to recruiting and retaining the best educators for our students. We partner with area universities, providing practicum and student teaching experiences for education majors. The district is also committed to working with current employees to provide opportunities for professional growth and teaching certifications through on-site experiences and training with area universities.

Through a partnership with IUPUI, the district offers an alternative licensure

program for staff and community members who hold an undergraduate degree. The elementary 16-month and secondary 12-month programs culminate in a district-based student teaching experience. Opportunities exist for additional credentialing in English as a Second Language and Special Education.

The MSD of Lawrence Township also has preferred partner status with Indiana State University, offering reduced tuition for district employees wishing to further their education.

Q: How has your organization positioned itself as an industry leader as competition for employees increases across the country?

Carla Johnson: As a publicly funded school district, the MSD of Lawrence Township has an obligation to be

fiscally responsible with all funds provided. With a balanced budget and increasing enrollment, the district is able to provide competitive salaries to all employees. The district has given raises for the past nine years, keeping the district at the top of the state salary scale. The district is also proud to be one of two public school districts in Marion County without an operating referendum. The district successfully ran a capital referendum in 2019, winning all precincts and committing to state-of-the-art learning and working spaces for students and staff. The district is currently hiring for both certified and classified positions. All interested candidates are encouraged to visit the district website at LTschools.org. Or call the HR office for specialized customer service and assistance in finding a job that is a match.

Q: What do you expect of teachers once they've joined your staff?

Carla Johnson: The MSD of Lawrence Township is unwilling to settle. Only highly qualified teachers will provide direct instruction to students. With an internal system of continuous and job-embedded professional development, staff members have ample opportunity to hone their skills and become teacher-leaders in their schools. This model of distributive leadership allows administrators to truly serve as the instructional leader for the building and to support novice educators. The MSD of Lawrence Township understands that the days of having numerous applicants per position are over. When hiring staff, building leaders must be succinct, compelling, and ready to provide competitive compensation, particularly if the educator has experience. It is our objective to retain new hires with competitive wages and benefits and to provide a healthy school/work culture in which an employee can thrive.

Q: In what ways have Human Resources departments had to shift as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workforce development?

Carla Johnson: The pandemic forced all industries to re-evaluate the employee experience, emphasizing



CARLA JOHNSON
Chief of Human Resources
Metropolitan School District of
Lawrence Township

engagement, productivity, work-life balance and support. Just as students and teachers did, our Human Resources staff had to pivot during the height of the pandemic, conducting all business virtually. While there is no substitute for in-person dialog, we now know there is room for engagement in a virtual space. This engagement has supported efforts to analyze all functions, ensuring efficiency and prioritizing people. With the door to flexible work environments wide open, teacher shortages have increased. Districts must get creative, connecting with people in local communities, meeting people where they are, and celebrating employee efforts on behalf of students. The district is committed to a personalized experience for all employees, including timely response and individual engagement. Through a lens of equity and commitment to excellence, Human Resources attracts, retains, invests in, and develops a talented and diverse workforce to serve the MSD of Lawrence Township.

Q: How does Human Resources partner with other division leaders in recruitment and retention of high-quality staff?

Carla Johnson: Education is a people business. Our customers are our students and families. There is not a division in the MSD of Lawrence Township with which Human Resources does not partner, as every initiative involves people.

With student achievement and student and staff well-being at the forefront of everything we do, collaboration with divisions includes supporting, guiding, brainstorming, coaching, and sometimes engaging in challenging conversations. It is our vision to have all MSD of Lawrence Township employees operating at the highest level throughout the Human Resources life cycle of Recruiting, Hiring, Onboarding, Professional Development, and Resignation/Retirement/Termination. ●



**STRONG SCHOOLS.
STRONG COMMUNITY.
STRONG STAFF.**
Now Hiring All Positions.

With over 16,000 students and 2,300 employees, the MSD of Lawrence Township offers a wide range of opportunities Pre-K through Grade 12. We are currently seeking high quality candidates for all positions.

The MSD of Lawrence Township provides competitive compensation, opportunity for professional growth, continuing education hours, and a comprehensive benefits package.

View current openings at LTschools.org and apply today.



Carla Johnson is proud to be from a Hoosier family in which she is a fifth generation educator. She just completed her 35th year in the MSD of Lawrence Township, where she has served as a teacher, principal, and district administrator. She currently serves as the Chief of Human Resources, where she focuses on recruiting and retaining the very best educators for students while valuing, empowering, and serving employees. She holds a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Purdue University and a Master of Science in School Administration from Indiana University.

Content paid for by Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township.