

# ECASB

## SUPERINTENDENT CONGRATULATIONS ANNOUNCEMENT!

Dr. Tonja M. Williams is a graduate of Riverside High School. Her fondest memories from attending school in Buffalo was being nominated in 11th and 12th grades as Student Council President for each of the respective grade levels. In elementary school she won the part of Abraham Lincoln (the star role) in the school play. It was then onto Medaille College where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree and Canisius College where she earned a Master of Science Degree. In 2011, Dr. Williams received her Doctoral Degree from St. John Fisher College along with her NYS Building Leader and District Leader certificates. At Harvard University she earned a 'Turnaround Principal' certificate. Dr. Williams was attracted to the Buffalo Public School system because she knew and understood the children and parents and was familiar with the obstacles and barriers that the children and families face in the community. She has a clear understanding that she is the Superintendent of the second largest school district in NYS. She is committed to giving

### *On the Fast Track ...*

*Dr. Tonja Williams began working in the Buffalo Public Schools in 1990. She began her leadership ascent in 1998 as a Supervisor, Director in 1999, Building Principal in 2011, Assistant Superintendent in 2015, Associate Superintendent in 2019, Interim Superintendent in 2022, and Superintendent in 2022.*



*"I am a recent widower with two adult daughters and one grandson. My parents Elizabeth and Anthony Benson are still living and each worked viable blue collar jobs to help make my dream of attending college come true. It is my mission to continue to make them proud of all that they sacrificed for me.*

## *Serving The City of Buffalo*

*"I am a servant leader who believes that strong leadership matters"*

110% every day and ensuring that 31,000 children and 8,000 staff have all that they need to be successful. My best moment as a school counselor was helping students to be prepared for entry into criteria based high school programs that were extremely competitive. As a school leader, my best moment was leading the change in culture in one particular school and seeing suspensions decrease by more than 40% and being the "Founder" of a 'Baby Performing Arts' program at another school.

Dr. Williams entry plan included conducting a 3 month listening tour to engage parents, caregivers, students, and community in sharing their vision for the district.

Active in the community, Dr. Williams is a member of Friendship Baptist Church, Community Foundations Equity Round Table, Say Yes Buffalo Operating Committee Meeting Group and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

"I am a servant leader who believes that strong leadership makes a difference. In the field of education, leadership is only second to class instruction amongst all school related factors that contribute to student success. The Buffalo Public School District has created a strong, community inspired strategic plan that identified five goals that we will achieve by 2025. We have updated our BPS Education Bargain and developed a new vision. We are striving to become a Model Urban School District for our nation and I believe that we are well on our way. I want to thank my village of support that I had growing up which included parents, family, teachers, church members and a host of neighbors, and concerned friend who poured into me and helped me to stay resilient and to 'trust the journey'!"

*" My favorite color is orange. I love it's vibrancy. I enjoy Motown R & B Music, which is what I grew up listening to. I love the city of Buffalo and the diversity of the residents. I am a huge Buffalo Bills fan and believe that this is our year."*

