

To the Board of Education, Administrators, Staff, Parents, and Patrons of the Houston R-I School District:

It is with mixed emotions, that upon the conclusion of the HHS graduation ceremony on May 9, 2015, I am tendering my resignation from the Houston R-I Board of Education. For 17 years, I have been an advocate for the students of Houston Schools and I have not taken that extraordinary responsibility lightly. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our community and I am grateful that my service on this board of education has led me to other leadership positions where I could represent Houston Schools at the state and national levels.

I have served on board of education with some exemplary leaders in our community and I have worked with some of the best and brightest school leaders in our state. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve the parents and patrons of Houston, but most importantly, I am humbled by the opportunity to serve the children of Houston.

I have watched hundreds of high school seniors walk across the stage and receive their diploma. I've had the distinct honor of handing diplomas to my two children, as well as to my father, who received his high school diploma from Houston Schools through *Operation Recognition*, the Missouri law that granted high school diplomas to veterans who left high school early to pursue a career in our armed forces.

I will leave behind board members, administrators, teachers and staff who have become close friends over the years, yet I also leave to each of you the challenge to continue being advocates for all children in Houston.

I am stepping away from service to our community to accept a larger role as Director of Member Relations for Missouri School Boards' Association, an organization whose mission of Helping School Boards Succeed is in direct alignment to my personal mission of making public education better for all children in Missouri. Working with an organization like MSBA gives me a chance to be directly involved in advocacy for over 900,000 students every year by helping school boards all over the state serve the children in their own district better and by helping board members across the state join together to be the voice of public education for this, and future generations.

Our Founding Fathers believed that public education is the responsibility of our citizens and that maintaining public education is necessary for our great nation to continue to thrive, and I whole-heartedly agree with that sentiment. Public education has its problems, but public education is also a large part of what makes our nation strong. Furthermore, in Missouri, public schools are constantly improving. I am proud to be a part of an educational system ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation in graduation improvement rates and I'm proud to be a part of a system of public education with aims to be among the best in the nation. To strive for less would be unworthy of the talent that lies within the children of Missouri.

In closing, I want to thank the patrons of the Houston School district for their confidence and support over the years. I also want to thank Scott Dill, the past and present board of education, the staff, parents, patrons, and especially the students of Houston Schools for everything being done to make us #HoustonProud!