



BRENTWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

First Steps, Lasting Impact: **Community Engagement for New Superintendents**

Setting the Stage



Passion. Purpose. Pathways for Success.

About Us

- **Dr. Amy Zielinski, Superintendent of Schools**
 - 23 years in Missouri public schools
 - First year as a superintendent
- **Anthony Dobson, Director of Communications**
 - 15 years in Missouri public schools
 - Third year in Brentwood



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About Brentwood

- **Location:** St. Louis metro area
- **Schools:** Five schools on three campuses
- **Enrollment:** 750+ students in grades PK-12
- **Student-Teacher Ratio:** 10:1
- **Teacher Experience:** 14.6 years
- **Graduate Scholarships:** \$8.4 million since 2022
- **Best APR in St. Louis (98.9%), third statewide**



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Who Are You?

- Superintendents, administrators, communications professionals
- One word that describes how you feel about community engagement?



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Preparing for Your New Role



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Preparing for Your New Role

- **Before Your Official Start Date**
 - Meet with key stakeholders (board, admin, community)
 - Review strategic plan, budget and communication strategies
 - Attend district events before July 1
- **Balance Engagement Without Overstepping**
 - Establish “Rules of Engagement” to respect current leadership
 - Listen and gather insights, avoid assumptions and overpromising



Navigating Your Dual Role



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Navigating Your Dual Role

- **Managing Relationships with Both Districts**
 - Keep communication open and transparent
 - Express gratitude to your current community while building credibility in your new community
- **Identify Key Stakeholders Early**
 - Create opportunities for networking and get connected



Introducing Your New Leader



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Introducing Your New Leader

- **Timing and Sequencing of Announcements**
 - Be considerate of the current district
 - Establish a timeline, navigate board expectations
 - Internal first, then families and community
 - Use multiple platforms (website, social media, news release)
- **Authentic First Message to All Employees**
 - Share personal values and leadership philosophy
 - Establish a district email address



Introducing Your New Leader



Board of Education Announces New Superintendent

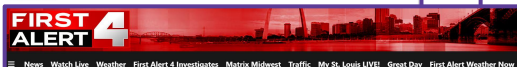
Feb. 6, 2024

The Brentwood School District Board of Education voted on Jan. 30 to hire Dr. Amy Zielinski as superintendent of schools, effective July 1, 2024. Dr. Zielinski currently serves as the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction in the Ladue School District.

"Dr. Zielinski was a clear frontrunner in an excellent pool of applicants, with a proven track record in school improvement, instructional design and coaching, data analysis, assessment and professional learning. Dr. Zielinski's enthusiasm and confidence in her strong leadership abilities that will continue to place Brentwood as one of the top schools in the region."

Dr. Zielinski brings 22 years of educational experience to her new role at Brentwood, including 12 years as a middle school and high school social studies teacher, and later served as dean of students and in various roles in the District of University City, and director of professional development in the Fox C-6 School District.

As assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction in Ladue, Dr. Zielinski oversees the district's school improvement, instructional design and coaching, data analysis, assessment and professional learning plan and worked closely with school and district administrators to develop and implement feedback to teachers on classroom best practices.



Brentwood School District announces new superintendent



By First Alert 4 Staff
Published: Feb. 6, 2024 at 2:04 PM CST

BRENTWOOD, Mo. (First Alert 4) - The Brentwood School District has a new superintendent of schools. Dr. Amy Zielinski. She will take over the role on July 1.



Dr. Amy Zielinski Named New Superintendent of Schools

The Brentwood School District Board of Education voted on Jan. 30 to hire Dr. Amy Zielinski as the district's next superintendent of schools, effective July 1, 2024. Dr. Zielinski brings 22 years of educational experience to her new role at Brentwood, including 12 years in school administration. She currently serves as the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction in the Ladue School District.

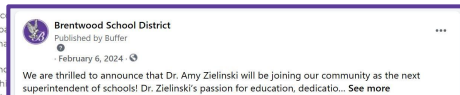
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Dr. Zielinski also facilitated districtwide diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in Brentwood, Clayton, Ladue and University City, and explore postsecondary pathways for students.

Dr. Zielinski is extremely passionate about education and building strong relationships and developing a culture of excellence. Together, we can celebrate our achievements and continue to design the future with Dr. Amy Zielinski.

Designing the Future with Dr. Amy Zielinski

Designing the Future with Dr. Amy Zielinski



You and 67 others
18 comments 8 shares
Love Comment Send Share



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Introducing Your New Leader

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A Message from New Superintendent Dr. Amy Zielinski [Archived](#)

Brentwood School District • [Anthony Dobson](#) • a year ago • Friday, Feb 9 at 7:00 AM • [Undisclosed](#)



**BRENTWOOD
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Dear Brentwood Teachers and Staff,

I am excited to have the opportunity to serve as the next superintendent of the Brentwood School District. I am truly grateful to the Board of Education for granting me the privilege to lead this amazing district!

I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself and let you know a little bit about me. First and foremost, I am a wife and mother of three wonderful children. My husband Rob is an educator and teaches seventh grade science at Sperring Middle School in Lindbergh Schools. My oldest son Dominic is in seventh grade, my daughter Cecelia is in fourth grade and my youngest son, Benjamin, is in second grade. We love traveling, game nights and running around to whatever sporting events are on the calendar.

As I join the Brentwood School District, I just want to share my excitement to work alongside such dedicated educators and to become part of this amazing community! I am committed to helping each child find their passion and purpose, and creating opportunities for our students to learn outside the four walls of the classroom. I know that by working together, we can set each child on a pathway to success!

I am also looking forward to immersing myself in the community, attending events and being present in schools. Building meaningful relationships is a top priority for me, and I can't wait to meet each one of you. While there will be scheduled opportunities for us to connect in person soon, please feel free to reach out anytime. My Brentwood email address - azielinski@brentwoodmoschools.org - has already been activated.

Thank you once again to the Board of Education for entrusting me with this important role. I am honored to be part of the Brentwood School District, and I am eager to contribute my skills and efforts toward the collective goal of providing an exceptional education for all our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amy Zielinski



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Investing in Strong Relationships



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Investing in Strong Relationships

- **Meeting Key District Leaders Early**
 - One-on-one meetings with admin team and board members
 - Meet-and-greets with teachers and support staff
 - Engage and recognize the contributions of all departments
- **Creating “Quick Wins” to Build Trust**
 - Attend events, celebrate achievements
 - Small gestures make a big impact (surprise treats, handwritten notes)





Investing in Strong Relationships

- **Engaging Students and Families**
 - Be as visible as time allows (school visits, evening events)
 - Celebrate student awards, connect with student leaders
 - Participate in interview committees, support new hires
 - Connect with parent group leadership
 - Manage expectations without overpromising
 - Clear, transparent communication about priorities and challenges





Investing in Strong Relationships

- **Connecting with Community Members**
 - Elected officials and **FIRST RESPONDERS**
 - Community organizations, faith-based groups, local businesses
 - Personal connections build stronger, long-term partnerships
 - Create opportunities for community engagement
- **State and Regional Educational Leaders**
 - Make sure your name is on their lists



MISSOURI

Brentwood says there's no safety concern after threat closes schools

by: [Chad Mira](#)

Posted: Dec 13, 2024 / 04:59 PM CST

Updated: Dec 13, 2024 / 04:59 PM CST



0:16 / 1:22



SHARE



BRENTWOOD, Mo. – The Brentwood School District says there is no immediate safety concern after closing schools Friday due to a school threat.

The district sent an email out just before 6:30 a.m. Friday, closing down all Brentwood schools for the day.

“I think it’s just creating this perpetual anxiety in the youth,” Brentwood resident Maisie Leeker said.



Maximizing Events for Engagement



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Maximizing Events for Engagement

- **Attend High-Impact Events**
 - Board meetings, student performances, athletics, fundraisers
- **Align Events with District Goals**
 - Connect participation to strategic initiatives
- **Be Present, But Avoid Burnout**
 - Set boundaries while staying accessible





Sustaining Meaningful Engagement



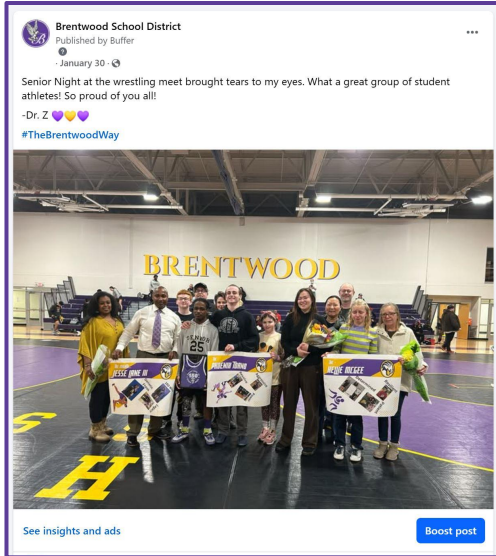
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Sustaining Meaningful Engagement

- **Find Your Authentic Communication Style**
 - Mix social media, newsletters, letters and face-to-face interactions
- **Balance Internal vs. External Engagement**
 - Prioritize students, staff and families while maintaining community ties
- **Leverage Your Communications Strategies**
 - Streamline messaging for consistency



Sustaining Meaningful Engagement



Brentwood Bulletin Board

Weekly e-Newsletter

DECEMBER 21, 2024


A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Community

Dear Brentwood Community,

As we wrap up the semester, I want to take a moment to thank you for the incredible support you've shown our students, staff and schools. Your encouragement, involvement and care have made a real difference, and I couldn't be more grateful to be part of such a wonderful community.

Your dedication to our schools shines in so many ways—from attending events and volunteering your time to supporting our teachers and staff. Every day, you help create opportunities for students to grow, discover their strengths and overcome challenges. Together, we exemplify our shared vision: **Passion. Purpose. Pathways for Success.**

This semester, your support has helped us meet the diverse needs of our students and strengthen the connections that make Brentwood such a special place to learn and grow. From cheering on our kids at performances and games to partnering with our schools on initiatives that benefit everyone, you've played a key role in creating a positive and welcoming environment for all.



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Ensuring the Safety of Our Students, Staff and Schools

Brentwood School District • Anthony Dobson • 3 months ago • Friday, Dec 13 at 6:28 AM • Undisclosed



BRENTWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear Brentwood Community,

We are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students and staff in the Brentwood School District. Out of an abundance of caution, all Brentwood schools will be closed today, Friday, Dec. 13. This decision follows a report to the Brentwood Police Department of an alleged threat involving our schools.

As soon as the threat was reported, the Brentwood Police Department began a thorough investigation and has been keeping our administrative team informed throughout the process. Due to the timing of the threat, the Brentwood Police Department needs more time to complete its investigation to ensure the safety of our schools. While we understand this decision may cause an inconvenience, we believe it is the best course of action to prioritize the safety of our school community.

As your superintendent, one of my top priorities is ensuring that our students and staff are safe and supported. This includes sharing information with you promptly and transparently, as well as taking proactive steps to protect our schools.

Thank you for your understanding, trust and support as we navigate this situation. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amy Zielinski
Superintendent of Schools

Brentwood School District

2221 High School Dr.
Brentwood, MO 63144
314-962-4507

brentwoodmoschools.org

Final Thoughts



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Final Thoughts

- **Engagement Strategies for Future Success**
 - Trust is built through visibility, listening and consistency
 - Align engagement with district goals and leadership style
 - Authentic relationships lead to long-term success
- **What's ONE engagement strategy you'll implement immediately?**



Thank You!

- **Dr. Amy Zielinski, Superintendent of Schools**
 - **Email:** azielinski@brentwoodmoschools.org
 - **Phone:** 314-962-4507

- **Anthony Dobson, Director of Communications**
 - **Email:** adobson@brentwoodmoschools.org
 - **Phone:** 314-962-4507



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