

Dr. Romules Durant has a special connection to Toledo Public Schools – one like no other.

He graduated from Morrison R. Waite High School in 1994 and after earning his bachelor's degree from the University of Toledo in 1999, he became a fourth grade teacher for Toledo Public Schools. In fact, he has spent his entire professional career working for the district he now leads as Superintendent.

When he became Superintendent in December 2013, Dr. Durant has made it his mission to share the good news of TPS in the community. For him, TPS Proud isn't just a catch phrase, it's something he lives each day – plus, he wears it on his collar and sleeve.

He set aggressive goals for the district and introduced a new mission statement that shows his ultimate goal - and that is that all students become competitive college and career ready graduates.

Under Dr. Durant's leadership, the district has seen the graduation rate jump 21 percent for all students and closed the achievement gap between Caucasian and African American students. TPS has also recorded an increase in enrollment. He has also worked to add Career Technology programs that provide students with an introduction to possible career options in some of the most sought after industries in northwest Ohio.

To make sure that all students can find the best school to foster their talents, Dr. Durant has overseen the creation of thematic schools: four STEMM-based elementary schools, Jones Leadership Academy of Business and the Aerospace & Natural Science Academy of Toledo. The latter two are aimed at preparing high school students for high-tech jobs of the future. Future plans include the introduction of a high school focused on medical careers for students.

Dr. Durant is very cognizant of making sure there are attractive paths for students seeking to attend college after graduation. In addition to adding National Honor Society chapters across the district, Dr. Durant's team has expanded Advanced Placement courses from four to 23 and he has made sure 12 associate degree

tracks have been developed for high school students. This emphasis has resulted in more than 800 TPS high school students amassing college credit.

Another one of Dr. Durant's achievements is founding the Young Men of Excellence and the Young Women of Excellence mentoring groups. Members are well known for performing service projects in our community.

The continuing positive momentum throughout Toledo Public Schools can be attributed in large part to Dr. Durant's visionary approach to running an urban school district. He has never lost sight of the fact that he has the same goal for today's TPS students as he had for himself - to rise up from modest means to achieve success first in school and then in life.