



DR. MICHAEL J. MARTIRANO

Superintendent



Dr. Michael J. Martirano was named superintendent for the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in July 2018 after serving as interim superintendent (July 2017–June 2018) and as acting superintendent (May–June 2017). He considers himself a teacher first and foremost, and believes children must be at the center of all decision-making. Guided by the principle “to teach a child well, you must know a child well,” he is committed to leading with equity and giving every child an opportunity to succeed.

Dr. Martirano is leading Howard County public schools with the Strategic Call to Action, which strives to ensure the academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an inclusive and nurturing environment. Dr. Martirano regularly visits every school to connect directly with students and staff members, and continues to focus on building strong relationships and trust in the system and throughout the community. His seven advisory groups leverage the expertise and diverse perspectives of a wide spectrum of community members, staff and students to advance equity and excellence throughout the instructional program and learning environment.

Putting equity into action and building restorative cultures are the core principles of his long-term strategy for increasing student engagement and achievement, narrowing gaps among student groups, and ensuring nurturing, inclusive and safe learning environments for all students. He is committed to supporting HCPSS students and their families in meeting basic needs, including nutrition, safety and mental health. He has added new social worker positions, expanded access to healthy meals, and launched an innovative mental health service delivery model in collaboration with local partners.

Additionally, Dr. Martirano has increased dual enrollment opportunities and added innovative career preparation pathways to broaden students’ college or career preparation options. He has increased emphasis on early childhood education, partnering with county government, local service providers and the Bright Minds Foundation to provide resources and support for young families.

Dr. Martirano most recently served as West Virginia state superintendent of schools. During his tenure, West Virginia saw notable success in the areas of early childhood literacy, graduation rates and career technical education.

He previously served nine years as superintendent of St. Mary’s County Public Schools in Leonardtown, Maryland, where during his tenure, the four-year graduation rate increased from the low 80s to an all-time high of 93.5 percent.

Dr. Martirano has been an educator for more than 35 years and has a wide range of educational and administrative experience through his work as a science teacher, principal and visiting professor at Johns Hopkins University. His return to Howard County feels like coming home, because he previously served the school system as a director of School Administration and lived in the county for 19 years.

His recent honors include a 2020 Leader in Diversity Award from the Baltimore Business Journal, 2019 Most Admired CEO award from the Daily Record, Friend of the Farmer Howard County Farm Bureau award in 2019, and Education Champion award from the Howard County NAACP in 2019. Additionally, he was named a Chief Making A Difference and one of 50 people Shaping the Future of K–12 Education in America in the 2014 and 2015 Annual Smart List Awards, the 2009 Superintendent of the Year in Maryland, a 2010 Innovator of the Year by the Maryland Daily Record, and received the Distinguished West Virginian award in 2017 and the 2011 Jack Epstein Award for contribution to multicultural education in Maryland. He is a member of Leadership Maryland, Class of 2007, and served as president of the Public School Superintendent Association of Maryland.

Dr. Martirano holds a Doctorate of Education in school management and instructional leadership from Nova Southeastern University, and two Master of Education degrees and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Maryland.