



EAST WHITTIER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

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East Whittier City School District Superintendent Announces Retirement

EAST WHITTIER – Following a 30-year career as an educator in the East Whittier City School District, including the last five years as superintendent, Mary Branca has announced that she will retire at the close of the 2016-17 academic year.

"It has been an absolute honor to serve the children and families of this school district," Branca said. "This community has become my family, the place where I raised my children and where I met parents, teachers, staff, administrators and a Board of Education dedicated to helping our children succeed. However, after a long and fulfilling career, I am excited to be able to enjoy more time with my family, including my five grandchildren."

Four of Branca's grandchildren attend East Whittier schools; the fifth will enter kindergarten in two years. A Whittier-area resident since 1963, Branca became a resident of the East Whittier City School District in 1980. Inspired by the time she spent volunteering in her daughters' classrooms, she left the banking industry to earn her teaching credential, and secured a job as a substitute teacher for East Whittier in 1985. After a year, she was hired as a full-time teacher at the District's Ocean View Elementary, later becoming a learning specialist at the school.

After completing her master's degree and administrative credential at Whittier College, she was hired as an assistant principal at East Whittier's Hillview Middle School. She spent a year as a principal in the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District before returning to Ocean View as principal in 1996. She was promoted to assistant superintendent of personnel in 2008, co-superintendent in 2012 and superintendent in 2014.

"Mrs. Branca has been a wonderful asset to this community and has built a strong student-centered team that will continue its work to ensure the East Whittier City School District preserves its reputation for providing high-quality programs and instruction to help our children succeed in high school and beyond," Board of Education President Paul Gardiner said. "We congratulate her on this exciting milestone and thank her for the strong leadership and commitment she provided to the District over the past 30 years."

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In her administrative capacity, Branca was instrumental in helping the District overcome challenges during tough economic conditions. In November, local voters supported two bond measures that will ensure East Whittier students have access to high-quality learning facilities for years to come.

The Board of Education during its Jan. 9 meeting decided to conduct a full search for a new superintendent to begin in 2017-18. The Board will hire a search firm to gather input from stakeholders and help the District identify the traits desired in a new superintendent.

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