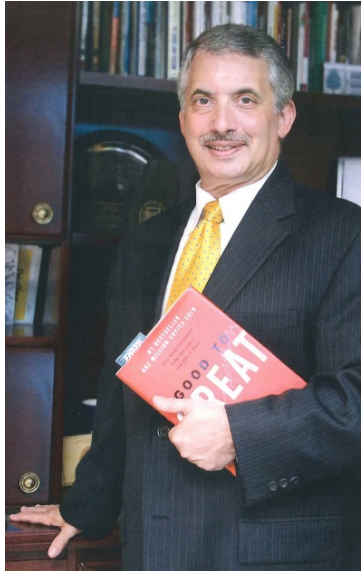


## Alumni Spotlight: Dr. James Capolupo '74



### **Please provide your biographical information.**

I majored in Music Education at West Chester. I grew up in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. I remember looking at the World Book Encyclopedia for music colleges in Pennsylvania. It was then when I first learned about West Chester State College. I got a copy of their course catalog in 7<sup>th</sup> grade from my English teacher. I attended some music camps at West Chester during my sophomore and junior years in high school. I applied only to one college, West Chester, and was accepted on November 1<sup>st</sup> of my senior year.

### **What made you go into education?**

I always liked helping students learn and I always loved music. Being a music teacher was the perfect pairing of both. I truly enjoy helping students feel and experience success.

### **What is your official title and what are your responsibilities in your current position?**

I am Superintendent of Schools for the Springfield School District in Delaware County Pennsylvania. That is like being a CEO for a company. We have 4,000 students, 500 employees, a \$72 million dollar budget and 5 school buildings and a district office. We represent two communities – Springfield and Morton which total about 30,000 community members.

### **What is a typical day like at work?**

There is no such thing as a typical day for a Superintendent!

### **What have been the biggest challenges at work?**

Staying focused on our critical mission – having EVERY student read at grade level by grade 4 and to have EVERY graduating senior attend a post-secondary school. We have been able to reach and sustain both of those goals at a 100% level. Our upcoming challenge will be to have EVERY senior graduate with some college credits BEFORE they leave Springfield and enter college. This will help keep the high cost of college down for parents. We hope to revolutionize the way high schools operate in America. Next

year we will have an Academy Model high school with students majoring in one of five areas of concentration. We are calling the model the “New American High School.” I sent a letter to President Obama and to the United States Department of Education informing them of our plans, with hopes that we can help other schools across America.

**What do you enjoy most about your current position?**

Helping students feel and experience success.

**What skills, talents, and other traits are useful and necessary to do your job?**

Creating a vision and having to generate an atmosphere for everyone to focus on what really is important is at the top of the list. The ability to really listen to people and help them problem solve. The ability to multi task and stay well informed on many topics. The ability to delegate power and authority while still keeping the organization accountable. Not letting ego get too far out in front – stay humble!

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

I enjoy spending time with my family, watching movies, exercising, being a die-hard Philadelphia Eagles fan, and being a fan of the Golden Rams!

**Where do you see yourself in five years?**

I will always see myself helping students in some capacity. Someday I would like to work at West Chester University, fulfilling my dream to come home and give back to WCU students – that would bring my career full circle.

**What advice would you give to a current student who aspires to follow in your footsteps and pursue a similar career path?**

(1) You can do anything you want if you set it as a goal and reach for it. (2) Work hard a little bit more each day. (3) Never give up, never surrender.

**How has your WCU education contributed to your success?**

West Chester helped give me the confidence and poise I needed to be the best I can be and to always step up and try a little harder each and every day.

**What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishments (both personally and professionally)?**

I have been blessed to have an amazing wife and incredible children. Beyond that I have had several professional accomplishments that include: speaking at the White House, speaking at the United States Department of Education in Washington D.C., being named the 2014 National Superintendent of the Year by the National Association of School Superintendents, and presenting at numerous State and National Conferences across the country on the amazing accomplishments we have made together in Springfield.

**What’s your favorite memory from when you were a student at WCU?**

Being a part of the Incomparable Golden Rams Marching Band and being a member of the Criteria Jazz Ensemble.