



Name

Yaw Obeng

Current School District and Location

Hickman Mills School District

INTRODUCTION

Education

Yaw Obeng's dedication to leadership in education and business management is grounded in a robust academic foundation, which includes:

- Doctoral studies in Advanced Undergraduate Education, Special Education, and Counseling at the University of New Brunswick, with executive training from the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto.
- A Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Administrative Guidance and Counseling Psychology from the University of Toronto.
- A Master's Certificate in Business Performance and Risk Management from the Schulich School of Business at York University.
- A Bachelor of Education, with concentrations in Biology, History, and Health Sciences, from the University of New Brunswick.

Experience

Yaw Obeng is a seasoned educational leader currently serving as the Superintendent of Hickman Mills C-1 School District a vibrant and historic community institution with a legacy spanning over a century. His unwavering commitment to preserving the community's rich heritage drives his relentless pursuit of data-driven excellence and establishing strong, quality partnerships to benefit the families within the HMC-1 school community.

With a distinguished career spanning over two decades, Yaw Obeng has worn multiple hats, including Superintendent, Principal, and District Administrator. He came to Hickman Mills C-1 Schools in July 2020, following a successful tenure as the Superintendent of the Burlington School District in Vermont, the state's largest and most diverse district. During his time there, Obeng and his Board of Education were honored with the prestigious "Excellence in Leadership" award by the Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA). He also shared his knowledge by teaching education policy at the University of Vermont.

Prior to his role in Vermont, Obeng held pivotal positions in Canadian education, notably serving as Superintendent and Senior Administrator in the Toronto District School Board and Halton District School

Board. Notably, he was the first Canadian Superintendent invited as a National Association of School Superintendents (NASS) member in the United States in 2014.

Outstanding Achievement(s)

Yaw Obeng's career is marked by a distinguished record of driving student achievement and educational excellence. He has led significant improvements in literacy and numeracy across multiple districts and successfully implemented the realignment of nine school boundaries—an initiative paired with innovative programming that boosted elementary achievement and raised secondary mathematics scores to exceed 80%. His visionary leadership has earned widespread recognition, with a few examples such as:

- **Who's Who Top Executive (2021)**
- **Exceptional School District Leadership Award (2017)**
- **Academic Achievement Award** from the Ghana News Editorial Board
- **Top 10 School Superintendents Nominee (2025)** by *Education Insider*

These honors reflect Obeng's deep commitment to educational equity, strategic innovation, and impactful community service throughout his career.

AN INTERVIEW

Tell us about how you see today's superintendent.

Today's superintendent is on a journey of leadership that extends far beyond operational tasks. It's a path defined not by the nuts and bolts of the job, but by the ability to foster collaborative cultures and empower others. As new challenges emerge, we must continuously seek out the skills and experiences that allow us to adapt and lead effectively.

The success of a district is not solely rooted in the superintendent's vision, but in the voices we uplift to help shape and share that vision. We are entrusted with the profound responsibility of shaping the futures of young people—a privilege that demands humility, dedication, and collective effort.

This mission transcends job descriptions. It requires a deep, authentic passion for transformation, and the resilience to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of our school communities.

What new understandings did you acquire after two or three years on the job?

Truly having informed consent on what you understand to be true is difficult in the beginning. There is a fundamental difference between “*what you want*” and “*what you need*”. As a leader, you may have a clear vision for a goal, action, or outcome. However, your Board may present ideas or directions shaped by political realities and perspectives that may not immediately align with your own.

True leadership lies in the ability to strategically navigate these dynamics. Finding a way to address the Board’s needs can build the trust and credibility necessary to pursue your long-term vision. In the political landscape we operate in, what we *want* isn’t always the most effective or appropriate next step—for ourselves or the organization.

Sometimes, we’re compelled to pursue actions we hadn’t planned initiatives driven not by desire, but by political necessity. In such moments, we must be willing to set aside ego, reflect with humility, and recognize the broader purpose our decisions may serve.

Always remember the wise saying: “*Those who mix politics and education are fools... but those who ignore politics in education are damn fools.*”

Share an idea to use or something you’ve learned with your colleagues.

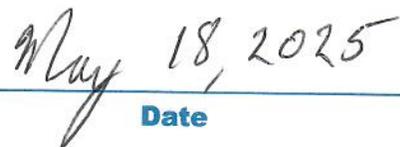
One of the most valuable professional development experiences I’ve had as a Superintendent was completing *Crucial Conversations* training. It significantly enhanced my ability to navigate difficult conversations and approach high-stakes situations with clarity, empathy, and purpose. This training helped me frame challenging issues in a way that fosters mutual understanding and shared outcomes.

In our role, we are constantly called upon to negotiate, persuade, and resolve conflicts—often under intense scrutiny. Doing so effectively requires more than just authority; it demands refined communication skills and emotional intelligence that preserve trust and reinforce confidence in your leadership.

Invest in sharpening your communication and conflict resolution skills. They are not just tools—they are leadership essentials that will serve you well throughout your journey.

Submitted by:


Name/Signature


Date