

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- She's young, energetic, and ambitious. A breath of fresh air.

Staten Island's education community had high hopes for her.

So when the Advance reported that District Schools Superintendent Jessica Jenkins is stepping down, SILive readers agreed her loss will be tough to swallow.

Although she'll be in the superintendent's position until February, Ms. Jenkins, who previously was founding principal of the Marsh Avenue Expeditionary Learning School, said she's leaving voluntarily to be founding principal of a new, small, themed 6th-to-12th-grade school in District 3 on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

She said she came to the decision after realizing she best belongs "in a single school, where I can use my talents as an educator to really help shape students and teachers." The Department of Education plans to appoint an interim-acting superintendent who'll work alongside her through the fall semester, but SILive readers -- some of them school parents and teachers -- told us she'll be a tough act to follow.

"Anyone who worked for or with Ms. Jenkins is one lucky person. Any child who attends or attended, a school run by her, is even luckier," declared **Crossfitmom**. "She is a caring, intelligent person who only has the students' best interests in mind."

"I cannot express how profoundly sad I am to hear of Ms. Jenkins leaving the students of Staten Island. She was a breath of fresh air that was sorely needed in this area. She raised the bar for both students and teachers," offered **foundingsparent**.

Teacher and reader **CGerecitano** who worked with Ms. Jenkins, called her a "caring administrator who knew the staff and students inside out and treated us with a respect that only a few principals I have seen show."

"Amazing boss, amazing person," added **Teachkidsnyc**, who said her decision to leave "speaks to her dedication to students." "Students, parents and staff of any school that gets Ms. Jenkins as a principal should consider themselves very lucky; I respect any administrator who feels their true place is among students in a small, familiar setting," wrote **lisakleo**. "The new superintendent has big shoes to fill," opined teacher and SILive reader **class1004**. "Ms. Jenkins was a pleasure to have in our schools. She had the utmost respect for teachers and the work we do. Our loss, their gain."