



District 113 Names Superintendent of Schools

Township High School District 113 is pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Christopher Dignam as the new Superintendent of Schools, effective June 28, 2016. The Board of Education voted February 8 to approve Dr. Dignam's three-year contract. He will succeed Dr. Daryl Herrick, who is serving as interim superintendent for District 113 for the 2015-16 school year.

Dr. Dignam has been serving as principal of Deerfield High School since July 2015. Prior to being named principal at DHS, Dr. Dignam spent three years as principal of Lane Tech College Prep, a public four-year selective enrollment magnet school in Chicago. Dr. Dignam also served as assistant principal at Lane Tech for five years, as a science coach for the Chicago Board of Education's District Area 23 Office for two years, and as a biology teacher at Lane Tech for six years. Dr. Dignam, an alumnus of Lane Tech, began his educational career as a biology teacher at Prosser Career Academy.



"Given the size and scope of Lane Tech, Dr. Dignam's experience leading that organization aligns well with the expectations of a superintendent of a district of this size. We were incredibly impressed with Dr. Dignam's in-depth programmatic knowledge, his hands-on educational approach, and his commitment to putting students first. We have also been fortunate enough to witness firsthand Dr. Dignam's inclusive, collaborative and interactive approach towards leadership in his role as principal of Deerfield High School," said School Board President Annette Lidawer. "Dr. Dignam's work in District 113 this school year, particularly on the District's strategic plan, has given him an in-depth understanding of the District's mission, vision and goals. Dr. Dignam has already had such a positive impact on Deerfield High School, and we are confident that in his new role, he will infuse the entire District with cutting-edge programming and innovative ideas that benefit all of our students."

Dr. Dignam holds a master's degree in school leadership from Concordia University, a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Olivet Nazarene University, and a bachelor's degree in biological science from Northeastern Illinois University. He earned his doctorate in teacher leadership from Walden University. Dr. Dignam was named the McCormick Foundation High School Media Illinois Principal of the Year in 2014.

"I am very proud of our accomplishments as a District, and I am excited for the opportunity to work collaboratively with parents, students, and staff, as well as the communities that we serve, to ensure that all learners are provided a 21st century education that is second to none," said Dr. Dignam. "I look forward to leading with a servant's heart to ensure the academic, social and emotional success of all students, and I will focus on increased transparency in decision-making to provide opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the future success of District 113."

Dr. Dignam and his family are planning to move to the community in time for his daughters, who are currently in seventh grade, to enroll in a District 113 high school as freshmen.

“I am both excited and honored to lead the District 113 team as the next superintendent, and I look forward to living in this wonderful community, as well,” Dr. Dignam said.

This spring the Board will host receptions at HPHS and DHS to welcome Dr. Dignam to his new role in District 113; details will be announced shortly, and all staff, students, parents, community members and alumni are invited to attend.

The Board selected Dr. Dignam as District 113’s new leader following a robust search and interview process facilitated by consulting firm BWP & Associates. The Board had previously received extensive community feedback during the 2014-15 school year, via a survey, focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, regarding the characteristics most desired in the District’s next superintendent. In January the Board received 30 complete applications, and interviewed six candidates and three semi-finalists. A 38-member committee composed of students, parents, staff and community members also interviewed the semi-finalists and provided detailed feedback to the Board on each of the candidates they interviewed.

“The Board was extremely grateful for the committee’s thoughtful and detailed input into our deliberations. We are confident that we have found the right leader to continue moving our high-achieving schools forward and doing what is best for all students,” Lidawer said.

Dr. Dignam will continue in his position as principal at Deerfield High School through the end of this school year. The Board will launch an inclusive, thorough and comprehensive search for a new Deerfield High School principal almost immediately.

“That process will benefit from Dr. Dignam’s leadership and experience with the school community. Truly, DHS is not losing a principal, but rather gaining a superintendent,” Lidawer said.

