April 22, 2019

Administrative Announcement

Superintendent of Schools Anthony Lewis announces the selection of Zachary Conrad as executive director of research, evaluation, and accountability, effective July 1, 2019, and pending Lawrence Board of Education approval. Conrad replaces Terry McEwen, who retired in January after 17 years with the school district.

“Ours is a data-driven organization. The decisions we make about curriculum, instruction, assessment, and student support initiatives need to be responsive to what data show meets the individual needs of students. Mr. Conrad has experience working with school districts across the state to support school improvement efforts. I look forward to him bringing that expertise to our leadership team,” said Dr. Lewis.

The executive director of research, evaluation, and accountability oversees the development and implementation of district testing and assessment programs, conducts applied research, and monitors the progress and effectiveness of educational programs. Conrad will lead student assessment activities and ensure that district practices remain in compliance with board, state, and federal policies. He also will lead grant and supplemental funding efforts for district programs and initiatives.

Conrad has served as a Kansas Technical Assistance System state trainer (2016-present) and Kansas State Department of Education educational program consultant (2014-2016). He has consulted with districts on the selection and creation of assessments to support a multi-tiered system of supports for students. Conrad has trained staff – from leadership to classroom teachers – in understanding the impact of assessments on student learning and has led the development of state assessment standards for assessment literacy. He has had the responsibility of overseeing the quality of state assessments, while ensuring that districts’ needs are met. Conrad has chaired the state’s Data Request Review Board, served on its Data Governance Board, and worked with the Kansas Assessment Advisory and Technical Advisory Committees.

Conrad previously served as a substitute teacher (2012-2013) and paraeducator (2013-2014) in Lawrence Public Schools and a research assistant for the University of Kansas Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation and the Kansas Center for Research (2012-2014). Other prior experience includes teaching fifth grade in Denton, Texas (2011-2012), and serving on the Board of Directors of a Boys Prep Charter School in Nashville, Tennessee (2009-2012), and as a research assistant for Vanderbilt University’s Special Education Department (2007-2009). As an AmeriCorps member (2006-2007), Conrad worked with at-risk, low-income, and limited English proficiency middle schoolers after school. He earned his bachelor’s degree at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and his master’s at Vanderbilt. He is completing his doctorate at KU.

“I am thrilled to return to the Lawrence school district in a new capacity,” said Conrad. “I am pleased to apply my assessment and research background to support student-centered learning and information-based, learner-driven decisions to optimize resources and programs so ALL students have an opportunity to achieve at high levels.”

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