



USD 497 News Release

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Administrative Announcement



Superintendent Dr. Anthony Lewis announces the selection of Dr. Waymond Ervin, principal of Northeast High School in Kansas City, Missouri, as the district's director of secondary schools, effective July 1, pending school board approval.

"Dr. Ervin has more than 22 years of experience as a teacher, mentor, and educational leader with proven strengths in school improvement, positive behavior interventions, transforming building cultures, and developing effective school leaders," said Dr. Lewis. "We look forward to his support of our secondary building administrators as they continue to focus on improving student attendance, engagement, belonging, academic performance, and well-being."

This is Dr. Ervin's fifth year in his present position. He previously served as an Intervention Assistant Team manager, assistant principal, instructional coordinator, academic coach, and English language arts teacher for 17 years in the Houston Independent School District. He earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Houston, his master's at Prairie View A&M University, and his doctorate at the University of Houston.

"I am extremely proud to be joining Lawrence Public Schools and being a part of a community that ensures that all students have the best choices and opportunities to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally. I am most looking forward to serving the secondary school leaders and empowering them to continue along the trajectory to success," said Dr. Ervin.

Elementary and secondary director positions were among \$6.4 million in staffing reductions approved by the board in March of 2022 to balance the budget and provide staff raises. From listening to the needs and concerns of principals, staff, and families; and continuous review of student achievement and behavioral data, it is evident that the pandemic negatively impacted student social-emotional and behavioral development. The board and administration understand the necessity to provide additional support to meet student needs and maintain environments conducive to learning.

After a comprehensive look at the present budget and reflection on the board's financial priorities, the district will reinstate both positions to support building principals in their role as instructional leaders. Dr. Lewis announced earlier this week his selection of Woodlawn Principal Jayci Roberson as director of elementary schools, pending board approval.

In addition to 10 contingency teaching positions added in the fall to reduce class sizes, the district plans to create lead teacher positions based on the priority needs of elementary and middle school students. Dean of students positions will support staff in the consistent implementation of effective instruction, intervention, restorative practices, and student and family support and serve as professional learning opportunities for teachers interested in becoming administrators. The board and administration will continue to work together to balance the needs of budget stability and increased support for student safety, well-being, achievement, and success.