

Libertyville School District 70 Hires New Superintendent of Schools

From: District 70 Board of Education President Tom Vickers and the school board

To: The Libertyville School District 70 Community

LIBERTYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT 70

HIRES NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The Libertyville School District 70 Board of Education agreed Monday night to hire Dr. Matthew J. Barbini, currently deputy superintendent of schools in Community Consolidated School District 15 in Palatine, to be the next superintendent of schools for District 70.

During a school board meeting, board members unanimously approved a three-year contract with Barbini that will begin on July 1, 2019. He replaces Supt. Dr. Guy Schumacher, who is retiring in June after a decade in the top slot.

“I am honored to be welcomed into the District 70 family as its next superintendent of schools,” said Barbini, 43. “I will work tirelessly to build upon the reputation of excellence that District 70 enjoys by celebrating the past while seeking opportunities to continuously improve the educational experience for our children and their families by working collaboratively with all stakeholders in the district.”

The incoming superintendent said he plans on moving his family to the Libertyville area. Barbini, his wife, Laurie, 3-year-old twin sons, Brayden and Hudson, and their Goldendoodle dog, Bruce, currently live in Hoffman Estates.

Barbini is known as an educational leader with the proven ability to build the relationships, systems of support, and organizational culture necessary to produce positive outcomes for students and those who serve them.

“Dr. Barbini is very sincere, very genuine –no doubt in my mind- he’s going to do everything he can to help our district to continue to grow and improve,” said District 70 School Board President Tom Vickers.

“The District 70 community and the school board wanted someone who would recognize all the things that are good in District 70 – from the foundation of neighborhood schools to the Applications of Learning, our Wheel that was developed by Dr. Schumacher who took us to where we are today,” Vickers said, proudly pointing out all five schools have won national Blue Ribbon Awards of excellence. The school board president said the board also wanted “someone who embraced our belief in continuous improvement” and could get “us to the next level of excellence. Dr. Barbini has those qualities and at the end of the day, the board felt he checked all the boxes and will be a great fit for us. And we, as a school board, will do everything we can to help him succeed.”

While in District 15 since 2014, Barbini has led the implementation of a 1:1 student to Chromebook initiative for students in sixth through eighth grades, has been responsible for developing the annual staffing plan to meet the needs of the district's more than 12,000 students, provided the vision necessary for staff-led professional development opportunities on the innovative use of technology to enhance student learning, worked collaboratively with neighboring governmental agencies on school safety initiatives, as well as assisting the superintendent with daily operations. He also supervises District 15's technology, data application services, and communications departments.

In a twist of fate, Barbini knows what it's like to follow Schumacher as he became the assistant superintendent of student services in North Shore School District 112 just a couple of years after Schumacher left for District 70. Barbini held the position for seven years before moving to District 15.

"Dr. Schumacher sets the bar high as a leader and a genuinely good person," Barbini said. "Following in his footsteps in two school districts is an absolute honor. I will care for what he has built in District 70 and will attempt to lead by his example."

The incoming superintendent also thanked the school board for their extensive work on searching for a new leader.

"I would like to thank the District 70 board of education for this wonderful opportunity," he said during the meeting. "District 70 is a destination district because of the board's effectiveness, focus on continuous improvement, and commitment to doing the right things for students, families, and the dedicated staff who serve them."

Barbini has both a doctorate degree and a master's degree in educational leadership from Northern Illinois University; and a bachelor's degree in special education and graduated summa cum laude from Illinois State University. He began his college career at William Rainey Harper College and was named a 2016 Harper College Distinguished Alumni recipient.

He began his administrative career as Executive Director of Special Education for Valley View School District 365U in Romeoville, where he served from 2004-2007. Prior to that, Barbini was a special education teacher at Downers Grove South High School for four years, having started his career in education as a special education teacher in Warren Township High School District 121.

School Board President Vickers also took the time to thank everyone involved in the yearlong process.

"I'm personally grateful to the entire board, really, for the diligence and time everyone dedicated to this process," he said. "The board has been invested and committed to the process for more than a year."

The early search start allowed District 70 to have the first pick of candidates as several neighboring school districts also are searching for superintendents.

"The Board is very thankful to all the stakeholders, which included community members, parents, teachers, and administrators, who responded to the online survey and the focus-group meetings. This feedback helped develop a solid profile for the District's superintendent search.

The Board also is thankful to School Exec Connect for being very open and flexible with our special asks and requirements in finding the right candidate – we were blown away by the quality of the candidates that School Exec Connect presented.

“We also are thankful to the Stakeholder Group who interviewed the final three candidates and provided valuable feedback to the Board. And, importantly, thank you to Dr. Schumacher, who has brought District 70 to its current level of excellence, and who, we know, will assist Dr. Barbini in making a smooth transition.”

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