



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 12, 2020

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Michael F. Rice, Ph.D., State Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Deputy Superintendent Position at MDE

I am pleased to inform you that I have appointed William Pearson, Ed.D., as an interim deputy superintendent in the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), following the departure of Dr. Venessa Keesler, who left to further her career in the private sector after a decade at MDE.

Anyone interested in applying for the position on a full-time basis can learn more [here](#). Outside of a pandemic, this very important leadership position works primarily in Lansing. It is open to current local school district or intermediate school district educators, as well as to those who once served in local school districts or intermediate school districts and to state employees.

Dr. Pearson has served as head of MDE's office of partnership districts since December 2018. As the interim deputy superintendent in the division of educator, student, and school support, Dr. Pearson will oversee state assessments and accountability; educator excellence (certification, permits, recruitment, and retention); local school district supports; and education technology. In his 40-plus years in public education, Dr. Pearson spent 23 years as a local superintendent of the South Lyon, Mount Clemens, and St. Johns school districts.

During this interim period, Gloria Chapman, Ed.S., will serve as interim director of the office of partnership districts. Ms. Chapman has been the assistant director in that office since July 2019 and has worked closely with partnership districts across the state since 2017. Her professional career includes seven years as an administrator of a Title I school at Farmington Public Schools. Ms. Chapman spent 20 years as a special education consultant at Detroit Public Schools.

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Please join me in congratulating Dr. Keesler on her new position and in welcoming Dr. Pearson and Ms. Chapman to their new interim roles within the department.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors