



Southwestern Superintendent to Leave for Collinsville at the End of the School Year

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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BRIGHTON – Southwestern Superintendent Brad Skertich is leaving the Southwestern School District, where he has served as its chief administrator for nearly a decade.

After nine years, Skertich has decided to take a position as the superintendent of the not-too-distant Collinsville School District. He will be replacing the outgoing Dr. Robert

Green. Skertich's last day at the current district will be June 30. His first day in Collinsville will be July 1. In the meantime, the Southwestern School District will seek a new superintendent, starting with a special board meeting to be held this Thursday, Feb. 28 at 6 p.m.

Skertich cited the Collinsville School District's diversity in both population and programs as reasons he applied for the position a few months ago. He said taking the position was ultimately best for himself, his career and his family.

“I am excited to be relocating to Collinsville – personally and professionally – to experience the many opportunities the community offers,” he said in a release from the Collinsville School District. “My family means the world to me and I needed to make sure a career change will be good for my wife and daughter, too,” said Skertich, “The Collinsville School District’s academic offerings, traditions, service opportunities and wide-ranging extracurricular activities are appealing to me as an educator and a parent.”

During his nine years in the Southwestern School District, Skertich is possibly most noted for his campaign to increase school funding in his district from the State of Illinois. During the “Era of Proration,” as he called it, state funding was often cut – despite the funds being promised to the district by the state.

Since the school funding formula in the State of Illinois has been updated, Skertich said the focus has shifted to updating things within the district in desperate need of attention. He said fiscal responsibility as well as the health and well-being of students were and still are paramount within the district.

“Since getting the new funding formula, our focus has been financial responsibility and students' social and emotional well-being,” he said. “We also have implemented a one-to-one technology initiative for students from 5-12 grades.”

Part of the emotional and social well-being of the students included staff of the Southwestern School District being trained in assisting students with troubling matters they themselves may not be mature or experienced enough to properly handle. Issues such as trauma and poverty have been addressed by experts speaking with the staff at various programs and seminars.

“We need to be better prepared for those types of situations when students come to us with troubling matters,” Skertich said. “We have to do our best to meet those needs and create a better environment for our students.”

When asked if he would bring some of these programs with him to Collinsville, Skertich said it was impossible to not take parts of his past with him from experience to

experience, but added he would have to “get his feet wet” in the new district and see how things work there currently. Skertich said he has had an exceedingly positive experience with that district during the interviewing process, and said he would wait to evaluate the needs of that district before speaking regarding programs he would like to introduce.

“I'm very grateful to have been a Piasa Bird for the last nine years,” he concluded. “I'm looking forward to being a Kahok in the future.”

“Hiring a superintendent is one of the most important responsibilities that a school board has,” said Collinsville Board of Education President Gary Peccola in a release from the district. “Over the last eight months the board has devoted a significant amount of time to finding the right person to lead our district after Dr. Green’s retirement. We were pleased to have a number of highly qualified candidates apply for the position, but Brad stood out to all of us from the beginning. The more we learned about him, the more we felt his experience, qualifications and personality were what we were looking for,” added Peccola.

Story was updated to include quotes from Collinsville School District.