

## Alachua County Public Schools leadership team taking shape

A slate of leaders who will guide Alachua County Public Schools' recovery from the COVID pandemic, manage a \$90 million federal grant and operate the district more efficiently was approved at a special School Board meeting on Monday, June 28.

As it does every year at this time, the Board voted on the [contracts of both new and existing administrators](#), including school principals and assistant principals. Those contracts take effect July 1.



Among the administrators on the list are those filling new or revised positions recommended by Superintendent Dr. Carlee Simon and approved by the School Board during its June 21 meeting. Two of the four highest-level positions, including Chief of Operations and Chief of Finance, are simply title changes from existing positions. The Chief of Teaching and Learning position reflects more significant changes to an existing assistant superintendent position, while the Chief of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement is an entirely new position.

Shane Andrew, who currently serves as principal of Eastside High School, will be moving into the Chief of Operations position, which will oversee a variety of district functions, including human resources, transportation, maintenance and construction, and others. Andrew, who has been with the district for 30 year, previously served as executive director of the district's facilities department.

Alex Rella will remain in charge of payroll, benefits, food service and other departments as the district's Chief of Finance. Rella has been the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services for six years, and has been part of the district's finance team since 2005.

Jennie Wise, who will be the new Chief of Teaching and Learning, has been the Executive Director of K-12 Curriculum since 2016. She has been with the district since 1991 and has worked as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and district administrator.

Dr. Anntwanique Edwards, currently the assistant principal at Eastside High School, has been selected as the new Chief of Equity, Inclusion and Community Engagement. Dr. Edwards will oversee the district's educational equity and outreach, communications, student wellness and exceptional student education departments. She has been with the district since 1994, serving as a teacher, school counselor and assistant principal. She has also worked with youth and families at such organizations as the Corner Drug Store, Alachua County Drug Court and the Porter's Youth Program.

The Board approved people to fill a number of other new or revised leadership positions. Among those on this list are current principal Nanette Dell (Executive Director of Elementary Curriculum); current principal Wanza Wakeley (Executive Director of Secondary Curriculum); current curriculum supervisor Kevin Berry (Director of Curriculum); current principal Jacquatte Rolle (Director of Professional Development); an educational performance analyst from Texas, Taylor Gilfillan (Director of Evaluation, Accountability and Data Analytics); current principal David Shelnett (Executive Director of Human Resources); and current senior project coordinator for facilities Eddie Souza (Director of Maintenance and Construction).

*(more)*

The School Board will be reviewing other new and revised job descriptions over the next month, with additional hires expected. Many of the new positions will be funded through the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund, which has been provided to school districts nationwide to help them recover from the impact of COVID and address longer-standing issues, such as the opportunity gap. Others will be funded through the elimination and/or consolidation of other positions. The administrative changes are not expected to have any impact on the district's general fund.

"These are the people who will be guiding the critical work we need to do over the next few years to get our schools back on track after the COVID crisis and to address the many challenges that we faced long before the pandemic hit," said Dr. Simon.

During a public workshop on June 2, Dr. Simon laid out her vision for the district for the next two years. In addition to the reorganization of the district's leadership, her presentation included information on new efforts to boost academic achievement and expand mental health services. She also discussed plans to 'reimagine' the district's schools, which would include a comprehensive review of educational programs and facilities, and to develop a new strategic plan. Both initiatives will involve robust community engagement.

A video of the Superintendent Vision presentation is available at  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQqpbX7y-c8>

####