

**Board of Education**

Ventura Unified School District

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**For the future of every student**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**JANUARY 8, 2019**

**VENTURA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT APPOINTS NEW SUPERINTENDENT**

The Board of Education is pleased to announce their unanimous vote to appoint Dr Roger Rice as the new Superintendent of Ventura Unified School District (VUSD). Dr Rice, who currently serves as the Deputy Superintendent of Student Services for the Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE), comes to the district with a wealth of knowledge and skills he will use to further VUSD’s commitment “For the Future of Every Student.”

The community was very clear in their request that the new Superintendent be someone who will advocate for all students, who has experience working with at-risk and marginalized youth, and who will effectively communicate with our students, staff and community. When considering whether to spend several months and thousands of dollars conducting its third search in four years, the Board agreed to look first at local candidates with a proven track record of working with and for all students. Dr Rice immediately came to mind — having been a highly regarded finalist in the previous Superintendent search.

Dr Roger Rice, who has a distinguished career of more than 20 years of service to Ventura County youth, has worked to develop and support innovative programs for Alternative Education, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Special Education, and other programs to meet the needs of At-Risk Youth. Dr Rice served as the Chair of the State of California’s Student Services Group. In addition, he was selected as the County Education Leader of the Year for 2018 by the Ventura County Leadership Academy. Dr Rice has worked as a Classroom Teacher, Dean, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of Oxnard Union High School District and Deputy Superintendent of VCOE. He holds a BA in English from Colorado State University, Masters in Education from Azusa Pacific University, and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Southern California.

Dr Rice brings experience and a passion for helping students with both their academic and social/emotional needs. He has demonstrated himself to be a conscientious, collaborative leader who has invested in his own professional training on issues that directly impact students — cultural proficiency, equity and access, IDEA training, creating professional learning communities, restorative practices and more.

Dr Rice’s first day with Ventura Unified will be Friday, March 1st. Dr Jeff Baarstad, retired Superintendent of Conejo Valley Unified School District, has agreed to serve as Interim Superintendent until that time. Dr Baarstad will work closely with Executive Cabinet, the District Leadership Team, Dr Rice and the Board to ensure that all students and staff have the support they need to be successful during the transition. Our sincere goal is to regain the stability of our District and to remain focused on supporting our students and staff moving forward.

The Board would like to acknowledge and thank Dr Jeff Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, who has admirably served as Interim Superintendent since December 22<sup>nd</sup>, and will remain in that role until Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. Dr Davis is a highly valued member of our Executive Cabinet. He worked with staff during the Winter Break to ensure consistent services to our schools, and reassured the community that Ventura Unified remains committed to the needs of all our students.

Dr Rice looks forward to working with staff, students and the community to build a bright future for every student in Ventura Unified.

CONTACTS:

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