

Local Schools



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Scott Dill Hired to Succeed Hon as Superintendent

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Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Scott Dill, a public educator of 20 years experience, half of which has been in administration was hired on Thursday, December 17, 2015 by the R-I Board of Education to lead Poplar Bluff Schools into its new facilities and beyond.

Since 2012, Dill has served as superintendent of Houston Schools, a rural district 120 miles northwest, where he began as middle school principal. He was employed for a decade prior as a library media specialist at Macks Creek Schools in Central Missouri.

“I am both honored and humbled to have been selected by the board to lead the Poplar Bluff R-I School District,” said Dill, who received a regional award from the Missouri Association of Administrators last year for his successful superintendency. “I eagerly anticipate the challenges and opportunities inherent to this position.”

Dill is in the final stages of his dissertation toward a doctorate in educational leadership from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, where he also received his master’s in educational administration along with a specialist degree. He earned his bachelor’s in teaching from Missouri State University in Springfield.

“Working together, in a collaborative partnership, I am confident we will continue the tradition of excellence, which is a hallmark of this storied school and community,” Dill continued, exclaiming: “Onward and upward!”

With assistance from the Missouri School Boards’ Association starting in September, a

series of focus groups were held for the community and staff to determine the qualities desired in the next superintendent. A retired Missouri educator of over four decades, Dr. Jerry Waddle, who led the search that resulted in the hiring of Chris Hon in 2010, again served as the district's MSBA consultant.

According to the results of a survey completed by over 400 patrons, more than three quarters of respondents were interested in an individual with effective experience running a district. In addition, more than half of those surveyed – mostly parents and teachers, favored a leader with familiarity navigating school construction. In 2013, Dill helped drive Houston's first victorious bond issue in 14 years, resulting in a multi-million dollar campus renovation.

"With the new building projects, we are on our way to becoming a preeminent district," stated John Scott, school board president. "I know that our new superintendent will build on our recent improvements and help guide us to the next level."

Before an agreement was reached with Dill, the seven-member school board narrowed a field of a dozen applicants to the five strongest, and interviewed the finalists meticulously with help from a search committee. The top three were brought back in for a second round of screening.

"The combination of community and teacher participation I thought was dynamic in both diversity in background and experience," reflected Jeff Shawan, a member of the 12-person search committee. "The board listened carefully to our comments and engaged us and invited us to participate beyond just simply filling out a scorecard. They should be lauded."

Dill will assume the helm on July 1, two months before construction on the historic buildings plan is scheduled for completion. Hon, who announced his eventual retirement from public education one year ago, said over the next several months he is committed to involving Dill on any major decisions that will have a direct impact on the 2016/17 school year.

"Mr. Dill has the enthusiasm and vision to help our school and community achieve our most important goal: to provide our children the best education available," Scott concluded. "I look forward to the next chapter at Poplar Bluff R-I."

Submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator
Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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