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District 99 names next superintendent

Henry Thiele to replace Mark McDonald at end of school year

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Community High School District 99 announced last week that Henry Thiele will take over as the district's next superintendent, effective July 1, 2016.

During its Dec. 14 meeting, the District 99 Board of Education unanimously approved a three-year performance contract with Thiele, who will replace Mark McDonald when he retires at the end of the 2015-16 school year. McDonald has served as superintendent since 2008.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Thiele to District 99," Board of Education President Dr. Nancy Kupka said in a news release. "He has significant experience in the classroom, in administration and in advancing curricular and student development."

Thiele comes to District 99 from



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Henry Thiele will replace Mark McDonald as the District 99 superintendent of schools at the end of the 2015-16 school year.

Maine Township High School District 207, where he is the assistant superintendent for technology and learning. The Park Ridge school district serves more than 6,500 students in its three high schools.

During his time at District 207, Thiele has led the district through the deployment of several large-scale initiatives related to teaching,

learning and technology.

District 99 said Thiele's achievements include becoming the first to bring Google Apps to a K-12 setting, launching a full-scale 1:1 Learning program, transitioning more than half of District 207's textbooks to digital platforms, and helping the district receive national recognition for innovations in technology and learning.

"His vast technological experience will help [District 99] integrate new methods of teaching into the classroom, building upon and augmenting the outstanding work of the current administration," Kupka added.

In addition to authoring numerous academic papers and curricula, Thiele has been a featured keynote speaker and presenter at dozens of professional conferences about instruction and technology locally and nationwide. He is also serves in a variety of professional organizations, including as president for the Special Education Technology Connections. The focus of the nonprofit organization is

assisting special education teachers and students with technology.

Thiele is also a board member for the Illinois Education and Technology Leaders, a statewide association of school technology leaders.

Prior to District 207, Thiele was a music and science teacher at Conant High School in Hoffman Estates, which is one of five high schools in Township High School District 211 in Palatine. His last position at District 211 was as technology coordinator, where he was responsible for Conant's educational technology department.

"I reviewed Hank's materials, and right away I knew that he was the one I wanted," District 99 board member Don Renner said. "I think

'innovation' is the best way to describe [Thiele's] potential, and I believe [he has] a ton of it."

Additionally, Thiele was an adjunct professor in the department of education at Roosevelt University in Chicago. He received a Bachelor of Arts in secondary education from Concordia University, where he earned a double major in instrumental music and physical sciences. He also holds Master of Arts in teacher leadership and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Roosevelt University in Chicago.

District 99 said it is planning to hold public receptions over the next several months to introduce Thiele to the Downers Grove North and South communities.