

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 4, 2019

RE: Leadership Announcements

Rocky View Schools' (RVS) Superintendent of Schools Greg Luterbach is pleased to announce the following leadership appointments, effective August 2019.



Sandy McDuffe, Area Director of Schools

A reflective practitioner with a passion for building leadership capacity, Sandy McDuffe will join the Schools Department as an area director this fall. Bringing over 12 years experience as a school administrator and 26 years as an educator to the table, McDuffe joined RVS in 2016 to serve as the principal of Meadowbrook School and later at W.H. Croxford High School. Prior to joining RVS, McDuffe spent 20 years working for School District 59 Peace River South in British Columbia, first as a teacher and then as a school-based administrator. She also served as a high school principal in Pincher Creek, AB, for six years.

In her time with RVS, McDuffe has built a reputation as an influential, decisive and transformative leader. McDuffe's collaborative approach and open communication style has helped her build an excellent rapport with peers, students and parents and foster a student-centric culture that provides engaging and meaningful learning experiences for all.

Over the course of her career, McDuffe has coordinated a district-wide mentorship program for new teachers, facilitated workshops aimed at enhancing leadership competencies and served on various committees geared towards instructional design and inclusion. McDuffe holds a Master in Educational Leadership from the University of Lethbridge, as well as a Bachelor of Education with minors in Psychology, Physical Education and Zoology from Brandon University.



Garry Bell, Area Director of Schools

Currently the principal of George McDougall High School, Garry Bell will move into the role of area director, bringing a depth and breadth of experience to this leadership position. Bell's journey with RVS began in 1998, when he joined the jurisdiction as a teacher at Westbrook School. During his tenure with RVS, Bell served as a teacher and assistant principal before moving into the role of principal, first at W.G. Murdoch School, followed by George McDougall.

Known as an innovative instructional leader, over the years Bell has introduced and implemented various alternative programs, enhanced the use of technology through initiatives such as video conferencing and worked to improve reporting of student achievement. In recent roles, Bell has led staff through Alberta Education's High School Redesign process and helped facilitate a Levelled Literacy Intervention pilot at the high school level to support struggling readers. Adept at leading change, Bell currently serves on RVS' Superintendent Design Team on System Redesign.

Bell holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor of Education, both from the University of Calgary.

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Jeff Smith, Principal, W.H. Croxford High School

Jeff Smith will move out of his current role as principal of Muriel Clayton Middle School to become the principal of W.H. Croxford High School in August. Joining RVS in 2008 as a teacher, Smith’s exceptional leadership qualities helped him secure his first assistant principalship at Bert Church High School by 2010 and principal of Muriel Clayton in 2017.

An accomplished basketball player, Smith played professionally in New Zealand, held several coaching jobs at both the high school and post-secondary level and co-founded the Cochrane Basketball Training Centre. He has drawn on his coaching skills to help develop capacity and

leadership skills among his staff and students, cultivating a culture where the contributions of all are valued and respected. An enthusiastic learner who models a commitment to growth, Smith has been an active participant in RVS, serving on numerous task groups and superintendent working committees.

Smith obtained his Master of Arts in Education in Administration and Supervision from the University of Phoenix in 2012 and holds two bachelor degrees from the University of Calgary, one in Education and one in Physical Education.



Laurie Johnston, Principal, George McDougall High School

Currently the principal of Bert Church High School, Laurie Johnston will take the helm of George McDougall High School as principal this fall. Over the last 25+ years, Johnston has lent her teaching and administrative expertise to the Brandon School Division, the School District of Mystery Lake, Foothills School Division and the Calgary Board of Education. Johnston joined the ranks of RVS administrators in 2011, as assistant principal of George McDougall. She later moved into her first RVS principalship assignment at Bert Church in 2014, where she has created a collaborative culture that promotes innovation, risk taking, accountability and capacity building.

A proponent of life-long learning, Johnston is currently pursuing her Doctorate in Education from the University of Calgary and continues to expand her knowledge base through various professional learning initiatives. She also holds a Master of Education from the University of Lethbridge and a Bachelor of Education from Brandon University.

It had previously been announced that Johnston would move to Herons Crossing School for the fall of 2019. Given the above changes, the decision was made to utilize Johnston’s skills at George McDougall High School.

“On behalf of RVS I extend my congratulations to these staff on their new placements,” said Luterbach. “I look forward to their continued leadership in the fall.”

Competition for the principalships of Herons Crossing and Muriel Clayton will be held shortly.

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