



YAVAPAI COUNTY EDUCATION SERVICE AGENCY

The First Choice for Educational Services

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NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Yavapai County School Superintendent Tim Carter is pleased to announce the appointment of **Dr. Connie Harris** to the **Yavapai College Governing Board, representing District # 3** (including the upper Verde Valley communities of Clarkdale, Cottonwood, Jerome, Sedona, and the Village of Oak Creek).

The opening was created by the resignation of Mr. Al Filardo, who cited several reasons which were outlined in his letter of resignation. We sincerely appreciate the service provided by Mr. Filardo to the residents of the 3rd District and to Yavapai College.

Dr. Harris graduated from Alhambra High School in Phoenix and attended Phoenix College before the completion of a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education (English) from Arizona State University. She then earned two Master of Arts degrees; the first from Arizona State University in Reading Education and the second from Northern Arizona University in Psychology and Human Relations. Dr. Harris completed her formal education with an Educational Doctorate in Administration and Leadership from Arizona State University in 2007.

Dr. Harris and her husband live in the Village of Oak Creek.

Dr. Harris started her educational career as a teacher at Westwood High School in Mesa before moving to Deer Valley High School. She then transitioned into the administrative ranks serving as an Assistant Principal at Deer Valley High School, Horizon High School, and Barry Goldwater High School. She served as Principal of Mountain Ridge High School from 1994 to 2002 before being promoted to become the Deer Valley Unified School District Associate Superintendent for Educational

Services. In August of 2010, she accepted a Clinical Assistant Professor position at the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. In July of 2013, she accepted her current position as the Arizona Director of AdvancED (a highly respected accrediting agency serving K-12 schools, education service agencies, and colleges on an international basis).

Mr. Carter stated, "Dr. Harris clearly understands the scope, operation and functions of a Governing Board and there is no doubt in my mind that she will represent the citizens of District 3 extremely well. Her work ethic and concern for learning have been obviously consistent for many decades. She is a person of integrity. Her critical thinking skills focus attention on finding solutions to problems and improving educational practices in a strategic manner. Dr. Harris takes a practical approach to problem solving and has long worked as a team member, building consensus and partnerships all along the way. She has a history of innovation. She listens, observes, and considers as many options as possible. She knows how to make a decision, and then stands by it with firm determination. Mrs. Harris will serve the various stakeholders of Yavapai College in a most honorable fashion".

Candidates were invited to provide a letter of interest and resume to Mr. Carter for this position. Five (5) well qualified candidates did so.

A five (5) member Interview Team was appointed by the Superintendent, including; a Yavapai College Student, Yavapai College Instructor, Business Person, Taxpayer, and a Community Member. The Committee interviewed the candidates in the Cottonwood County Building on December 7th and provided feedback to the Superintendent about strengths and weaknesses of each candidate and why the person should be appointed or not. They were a pleasure to work with and they are owed a debt of gratitude.

Prior to making a final decision, Superintendent Carter offered to speak individually with each currently seated Yavapai College Board Member and with college administration. Mr. Carter set aside ten (10) hours of time when he was available to meet one on one, face to face, with any

member of the public at the Cottonwood County Complex, and he provided his email address and his cell phone number so anyone who wished to do so, could provide their insights into the appointment. He was contacted by one hundred seventy one (171) members of the public. A great majority came from District 3 residents, while several came from other areas of the Verde Valley and from throughout the county. By comparison, in a routine School District Governing Board appointment there are about ten (10) public comments. In almost two hundred (200) Governing Board appointments, the most comments ever previously received on a single appointment was seventy (70). As a result of media coverage, intense public interest, and the variety of complex issues at play, it became obvious this was going to be the most difficult appointment of his tenure. Mr. Carter greatly appreciates the public comments and thanks those who became involved in the process.

Mr. Carter said "I believe the residents of District 3 should be extremely proud that we had a solid pool of knowledgeable and experienced candidates who were willing to come forward and serve in this most important capacity. I was also extremely happy with the level of community involvement in the process. District patrons came forward in large numbers to make me aware of their thoughts and concerns, both general and specific, which helped bring focus and clarity to the appointment".

The appointment is valid from the time Dr. Harris takes the oath of office through December 31, 2018. This seat will be up for election in November 2018 for a new term beginning in January 2019. A ceremonial swearing-in will be conducted at the January 10th meeting of the Yavapai College Governing Board at the Prescott campus. If you have any questions, please call Mr. Carter at 928-925-6560 or Dr. Harris at 623-512-1035.