



## Dist. 15 names Ohio native as next superintendent

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A suburban Cleveland school administrator will take the helm as Palatine Township Elementary District 15's new superintendent.

The board of education on Wednesday officially tapped Ohio native Dan Lukich to secede Robert McKanna, who retires June 30 after five years.

"In extensive discussions with Dr. Lukich it is clear that he shares the District 15 commitment to quality schools and to providing the kind of positive learning environment in which all students can grow and flourish," Board President Gerald Chapman said in a statement.

Lukich, 61, served as superintendent of four school districts over a period of 23 years, most recently an 11-year stint with the Orange Schools in Pepper Pike, Ohio.

It'll be a different scene for Lukich, whose former district is K-12 with 2,400 students. District 15 is K-8 with 13,000 students.

"There are definitely some demographic differences but also a lot of similarities in terms of the pursuit of quality with student engagement and students involved in the understanding of their learning," Lukich says.

During his brief remarks, Lukich charmed a standing-room-only boardroom with humor and pride in his four children, all of whom are graduates or future cadets of the U.S. Naval Academy. His daughter serves as the Naval attaché in the Situation Room of the White House, said Lukich, who also introduced his wife of 35 years, Judy.

Lukich was already familiar with District 15 when the nationwide search for a new superintendent -- led by Libertyville-based BWP & Associates for \$18,000 -- began in the fall.

He and McKanna crossed paths at a 2004 ceremony in Washington, D.C., when President Bush awarded the district the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

"There was this small room with hundreds of people trying to get in to hear (McKanna) speak," Lukich said. "People were really interested and enthralled in what District 15 had to say about their educational program."

Lukich said his first order of business will be to learn about what District 15 has done in the last few years and make early assessments with the board about management and strategic planning.

"More importantly are the more visionary goals," he said. "Where does this district and community want to see itself in terms of its own growth three to five years from now?"