



**For Immediate Release**

Thursday, May 17, 2018

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## **Superintendent Ybarra names Peter McPherson chief deputy**

(BOISE) – Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra today appointed Peter McPherson as chief deputy superintendent. He replaces Pete Koehler, who retires June 29.

“One of the qualities that makes Superintendent McPherson stand out is his passion for supporting students to achieve and his focus on personalizing education,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “He also brings an innovative mindset born from the necessity of serving children in remote, rural areas as well as broad educational leadership experience.”

McPherson, 45, currently is superintendent and federal programs director of the Challis School District, a position he has held since January 2014. Superintendent Ybarra said McPherson’s appointment respects that 72 percent of Idaho school districts are rural, serving nearly 38 percent of the state’s students. In addition, 46 percent of administrators and nearly 40 percent of teachers work in the state’s rural districts.

“I’m excited about Superintendent Ybarra’s vision for education and to join her and her team to take it to the next level,” McPherson said. “I’m looking forward to working alongside committed professionals who put the needs of students first and who ‘walk the walk’ by listening to the needs of schools and are genuinely eager to help support them.”

As chief deputy, McPherson will oversee day-to-day management of the department. He joins Deputy Superintendent Tim McMurtrey as the superintendent’s senior leaders in the State Department of Education.

“I know many folks speculated that Tim would be the next chief deputy, however, he told me early on he wanted to keep his focus in his area of expertise: academic support,” Superintendent Ybarra said.

McPherson joins Superintendent Ybarra’s team June 18 and his annual salary will be \$125,000.

Before his service in Challis, McPherson led Gem State Academy, a private boarding school in Canyon County, for nearly six years. He served as a secondary teacher for 10 years in private schools in Colorado, California and Oregon.

“I knew early in my life that my calling was to serve children. What I’ve learned working in both public and private education systems is: Kids are kids and teachers are teachers. We all care about the children and want them to become successful adults and contributing citizens. We also both value the trust parents and the public place in us and we want to deliver a return on investment, whether it’s tuition or tax dollars,” McPherson said.

He also has been active in professional associations and community and education boards including:

- Member of Idaho School Superintendents Association (2014 - current)
- Member of Idaho Association of School Administrators (2014 - current)
- Member of Idaho School Board Association (2014 - current)
- Trustee for the Custer County Economic Development Association (2015 - current)
- Member of the State Department of Education Superintendent’s Cabinet (2015 - current)
- Member of the Idaho Leads Rural Schools Network (2016)
- Member of the Custer County Inter-Disciplinary Committee (2014 - current)
- Former trustee of the Camp Ida-Haven Board of Directors (2008 - 2015)
- Former trustee of the Walla Walla University Board of Directors (2008 - 2014)

He earned an education specialist degree in educational leadership and administration from Northwest Nazarene University and master’s and bachelor’s degrees from Walla Walla University. McPherson is currently pursuing a doctorate from Northwest Nazarene University.

McPherson spent the early years of his life in Alaska and moved to Idaho at age 15 with his parents. He graduated from Gem State Academy, the school where he later served as principal. For 16 years, he spent summers working at Camp Ida-Haven in McCall. He, his wife, and their three children ages 8, 6, and 4 live in Nampa.

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