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**FOR
IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW SUPERINTENDENT TO LEAD THE LAWNDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT INTO THE FUTURE



LAWNDALE, CA - The Lawndale Elementary School District (LESD) Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the selection of distinguished educator, Ms. Virginia Castro, as the new Superintendent following unanimous approval of her appointment and employment agreement at the board meeting on June 21st. Ms. Castro assumes the office following the retirement of the well-respected Superintendent, Dr. Betsy Hamilton.

Ms. Castro earned her Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree from the University of La Verne, as well as a Juris Doctor from the University of La Verne, College of Law. Her career in public education spans 23 years as a classroom teacher, resource teacher, assistant principal, and principal at the elementary and middle school levels. After making her transition to the district office in 2013, Ms. Castro served as a Special Education Director, Director of Instruction and Assessment, and currently as the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services in the El Monte City School District.

During her nine years in El Monte, strategic initiatives have been successfully implemented, including Dual Immersion Spanish/English and Mandarin/English Programs, a TK-6 music program, multi-tiered intervention systems to meet the unique needs of each student, contributing to the recognition of five campuses as California Distinguished Schools, and all 14 EMCSD schools, as well as the district, receiving the California Pivotal Practice Award.

As both a strong communicator and fluent Spanish speaker, Ms. Castro fosters a deep commitment to collaboration and engagement, bringing an impressive track record of success to this new role. Her ability to listen and inspire people are trademarks of her leadership style that will elevate LESD's mission to, "ensure all students learn through access to high-quality actions and services that increase academic achievement and civic, career, and college readiness."

"Based on Ms. Castro's unique and extensive preparation and accomplishments, it was clear to the Board that she is the perfect person to lead LESD into the future," noted Board President Cathy Burris. "Her reputation as both a problem solver and collaborator assures that our district will continue our rich tradition of programs and services that serve the whole child. I have no doubt that Ms. Castro will be embraced by our students, our employees, our parents, and the greater Lawndale community."

The Board would like to extend its appreciation to Ms. Castro and each of the applicants who demonstrated an interest in the position. The board expresses its gratitude to Trustee Ann Phillips for her guidance and leadership in the search process. They also recognize LESD Cabinet members, employees, parents, students, and community members who provided invaluable input throughout this process. "As we prepare for the opportunities, challenges, and post-COVID hurdles our district is facing," shared President Burris, "the journey is bright with Ms. Castro at the helm."

Dr. Betsy Hamilton will continue to serve as Lawndale's superintendent until Ms. Castro arrives in late July. In the ensuing weeks, Ms. Castro will work closely with Dr. Hamilton to ensure a seamless transition for all involved. Looking ahead, Ms. Castro shared, "As the daughter of immigrant parents, I have personally lived the American dream and know the impact education can make. My life's work revolves around ensuring equity and access for all students, then creating systems to ensure this translates into high achievement. I feel honored and privileged to become part of this wonderful community."