

Jefferson Twp. Local Schools names new superintendent

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Jefferson Twp. Local Schools offices. EILEEN MCCLORY / STAFF

BY EILEEN MCCLORY STAFF WRITER

Jefferson Twp. Local Schools hired Ronda Welch, a Columbus City Schools employee, as its next superintendent beginning March 9.

Welch works for Columbus City Schools as a parttime expulsion hearing officer, she said. She previously was the executive director of elementary schools for Columbus schools.

Welch graduated from the district and said her parents still live in

Jefferson Twp.

She will be paid \$60,577 as the interim between March and August, and then \$150,000 for the 2026-27 school year.

“I’m looking forward to coming back and getting reacclimated to a smaller district,” Welch said.

The current Jefferson Twp. superintendent, Rusty Clifford, was hired as an interim superintendent and scheduled to end his contract at the end of July. He is paid about \$110,000 annually.

Clifford is a former West Carrollton superintendent who retired in 2022.

Clifford plans to leave his post at the end of April after transitioning Welch into her new role.

Clifford said he has a lot of confidence in Welch and said he chose to leave because the district doesn’t need two superintendents.

“It has been an honor and a privilege in building a foundation for Jefferson Twp. schools,” Clifford said.

Board members complimented Clifford’s performance during the year and a half he has been superintendent.

“I make a motion that we accept the resignation of our wonderful superintendent,” said board member Shaunece Gillespie.

Jefferson Twp. has about 270 students, according to data from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

Clifford played a key role in improving Jefferson Twp.’s report card. Jefferson Twp. was the lowest-performing district on the state’s report card in the 2022-23 school year. It received 1.5 stars out of a possible 5, with three stars meaning the district met state standards.

In the 2024-25 school year, the district jumped to 2 stars and is no longer the lowest-ranked district in the state.

