

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 10, 2021

SUBJECT: San Dieguito Union High School District Names Dr. Cheryl James-Ward Lone Finalist for Superintendent

ENCINITAS – After a lengthy process of gathering stakeholder input with 48 community-based meetings over a two-week period, a nation-wide search which included the review of 17 applicants, and a comprehensive interview process of the top applicants, the San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) School Board is pleased to announce Dr. Cheryl James-Ward as the lone finalist for Superintendent of the San Dieguito Union High School District.

Dr. Cheryl James-Ward is the CEO and Chief Engagement & Innovation Officer of e3 Civic High, recognized as one of the most innovative schools in the nation. Prior to joining e3 Civic High, Dr. Ward was a tenured professor for San Diego State University. While at SDSU, she served as the Founding Director of the online Master of Arts Program in Educational Leadership, led the SDSU Chinese and American Educational Leadership Symposiums, and taught both master's and doctoral level courses.

Dr. Ward's other educational experiences include Director of Academic Initiatives for the Long Beach Unified School District with 15000 students under her leadership. She has served as Principal and Vice Principal for the Long Beach Unified School District, Principal for Capri Elementary in Encinitas, and Dean of Student Discipline as well as Math Teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Dr. Ward is a renowned researcher in both leadership and future leaning schools. She has published numerous articles in leadership and technology journals, including the National Association of Secondary School Principals Leadership Journal, Frontiers in Education Technology, Educational Administration Quarterly, ASCD Principal Leadership, Association of California School Administrators Leadership Journal, Voices in the Middle and Education Technology Review. She is the lead author for the book, *Using Data to Focus Instructional Improvement*.

Dr. Ward has lived in Carmel Valley with her husband Dr. Randy Ward, the retired County Superintendent of Schools, and their two children Jernie and James for over sixteen years.

The SDUHSD Board of Trustees, led by Board President Maureen "Mo" Muir, believe Dr. Ward is a great fit to serve the district as its next leader.

"Dr. Ward is well known in our community and brings an unparalleled level of relevant experience", said Board President Maureen "Mo" Muir. "She has a Doctorate of Education from USC and has substantial knowledge of curricula and student assessment. I am confident she is the right leader for us."

"We are so fortunate that Dr. Ward will be leading our district", said Board Trustee Michael Allman. "She has substantial public school experience, is a credentialed educator, and is a proven and experienced leader."

"Dr. Ward brings a commitment to serve the needs of students from all backgrounds," said Board Trustee Melisse Mossy. "She will work hard to provide the best possible education for all of the diverse members of our community."

Dr. Ward looks forward to working with the School Board, parents, staff, students, and the SDUHSD community on a shared vision of providing the very best educational experiences for all students.

"With the onset of COVID-19 and game-changes like ubiquitous technology, artificial intelligence and global economies, public high schools are challenged to provide a new level of education," said Ward. "In order for the United States and other countries to compete on a global scale, school leaders need to reevaluate and redesign educational programs to provide students the exposure and experience needed to become globally competent competitors."

The SDUHSD School Board will officially vote on the position at its October 14 meeting. Pending approval, Dr. Ward will begin her role as Superintendent on November 1, 2021.

Interim Superintendent Lucile Lynch will continue to serve the District through October. Lynch was valued as a collaborative problem solver and leader who helped launch the largest summer school in SDUHSD's history, develop the District's safety plan to bring approximately 13,000 students back to full time instruction, improve district communication and help the Board tackle twenty-one board meetings during the five months she served the district. The Board thanks Lynch for her service. She will resume her work with a local nonprofit, Beacons, Inc., upon leaving.

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The San Dieguito Union High School District serves 7th through 12th grade students in the communities of Encinitas, Solana Beach, Del Mar, Cardiff, Rancho Santa Fe and surrounding areas. Covering 85 square miles, the district includes four high schools, five middle schools, and a continuation high school. Website: www.sduhsd.net.