



News Release

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Wadsworth Named School for the Deaf Superintendent

PIERRE, S.D. – An educator with more than 30 years of experience in deaf education has been named the next superintendent of the South Dakota School for Deaf.

Kim Wadsworth currently serves as the SDSD director of outreach, a position she has held since 2010. Prior to that she was an outreach consultant with the school for 13 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary deaf education from Augustana College, now Augustana University. Wadsworth began her career in deaf education with the Utah School for the Deaf and Blind. She returned to Sioux Falls in 1994 to work with SDSD outreach.

South Dakota School for the Deaf, part of the South Dakota Board of Regents' system, works to provide quality educational programs and support services for deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. The school's mission includes consultation to families and educational teams statewide and comprehensive student evaluations, including audiology and hearing screening. SDSD serves as a resource for families and local schools by providing a specialist in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children as a member of the educational team.

"I look forward to continuing to be partners in educational success and collaborating with stakeholders in our state -- families, educators, the deaf community, Department of Education, and Department of Health -- to best meet the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing," Wadsworth said.

"As an all-outreach program, serving students in mainstream programs, we have unique needs and must work together for each child to reach his or her potential. Every child is born ready to learn, and we have a passionate team ready to partner with families, the deaf community, educators, and stakeholders," she said. "I am honored to be in this position, and I look forward to leading SDSD as we work to enhance the education and support of South Dakota children who are deaf or hard of hearing."

Wadsworth noted, "Our outreach and audiological programs are like no other. Our team has expertise and passion for supporting children with varied hearing status. We are child first and want to get the word out that SDSD is here and ready to support."

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“It was not only Ms. Wadsworth’s extensive experience in many aspects of deaf education that made her the right choice, but her enthusiasm for her work and commitment to helping deaf and hard of hearing children,” said Regent Jim Morgan, who co-chaired the search process. His co-chair, Regent Jim Thares, added, “I am pleased that we were able to select a candidate with such a depth of experience in deaf education and an understanding of the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students in South Dakota.”

Wadsworth is expected to begin her duties at the School for the Deaf after the current school term is completed. She replaces Supt. Marje Kaiser, who announced plans to retire in May after a 45-year career in special education, 10 of those years serving as superintendent for both SDSD and the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Aberdeen. Dan Trefz was selected in early March to serve as the new superintendent at SDSBVI.

Wadsworth and her spouse, Tom, have three adult children, Tyler, Parker, and Sarah. They enjoy time with family and friends, reading, spending time on the water, and golfing.