

# FRONTIER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FRONTIER EDUCATIONAL CENTER

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May 5, 2021

Dear Frontier Community,

At last evening's Board of Education meeting the Board voted unanimously to appoint Christopher J. Swiatek to be the next Superintendent of Schools for the Frontier Central School District, effective July 1, 2021.

The Board selected Mr. Swiatek after a thorough search process which attracted 23 applicants, included 2 rounds of interviews, and also asked the finalists to complete an entry plan and 2 writing samples. Of course, the process began by seeking stakeholder input in small focus groups representing students, parents, employees, and other community members. Additionally, 430 Frontier community members completed the online survey, which sought input on the qualities needed in a superintendent. The Board deeply values stakeholder input and this input was considered throughout the search process and when selecting Mr. Swiatek to be the next Superintendent.

The online survey asked respondents to rank superintendent characteristics in order of most important to least important. The clear top 2 characteristics the Frontier community is seeking in a Superintendent is unquestioned integrity and the ability to clearly identify problems and develop effective solutions. Other characteristics that rank high are effective communication, collaboration, and consensus-building skills, as well as a strong commitment to improving student achievement. I can confidently say that Mr. Swiatek's background, experience, and skillset exhibit these characteristics.

Mr. Swiatek is a person of unquestioned integrity and someone who builds his relationships on earning the trust and respect of anyone he meets. After growing up in a Buffalo blue-collar family, Mr. Swiatek served overseas in the U.S. Air Force, earning both an Outstanding Service Medal and Overseas Tour Medal. Since then, he has continued to live up to the professional and moral standards of the military. In both my own personal observations and through his glowing references, Mr. Swiatek is a kind, approachable leader. He is proud of his work ethic and makes decisions based on what is best for kids.

The survey and focus group input showed that the Frontier community desires a collaborative leader with excellent problem-solving and communication skills. Mr. Swiatek has built these skills through his experience over his diverse career. Upon honorable discharge from the Air Force, Mr. Swiatek joined his family construction business and worked there for over a decade, gaining a lot of experience that carries over to the Superintendent position. After deciding to shift his career towards education, Mr. Swiatek began his teaching career here at Frontier as a long-term Social Studies substitute. He then taught at Hamburg before entering administration. Most recently, he was the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources at Ken-Ton before becoming Superintendent of Franklinville Central Schools.

During his career, he has worked in nearly all facets of a school district giving him the experience to hit the ground running. Further, through this experience Mr. Swiatek has built a reputation for effectively working with teams, listening to ideas, building a consensus, and executing on the decision he makes. During the interview process, the Board asked finalists to complete writing samples, which included an opening-day speech and responding to a concerned parent's e-mail. Mr. Swiatek showed to be a clear, effective communicator. He writes concisely, getting to the point without leaving out necessary information. He strongly believes in the value of a face-to-face conversation.

Another characteristic ranked very high on the survey was a strong commitment to student achievement. Mr. Swiatek has a record of supporting and leading initiatives that advance student achievement. He understands the value of data to inform his decisions. As Superintendent of Franklinville, he was awarded the 2020 *Superintendent Excellency Award* by WNYESC for his work in advancing student achievement. Additionally, Franklinville Junior-Senior High School was named a *Recognition School* by NYSED for 2020, further demonstrating Mr. Swiatek's educational leadership. He is driven to advance learning opportunities for all students. It was also clear from the stakeholder input that many parents are concerned about how the pandemic has impacted their child's learning and what school will look like in the fall. Mr. Swiatek collaboratively developed and executed an effective pandemic plan for Franklinville. Although his official start date is July 1, Mr. Swiatek is also prepared to begin his transition before then to ensure the best start to the upcoming school year possible.

This past year has challenged us all. Thank you to every one of you for your perseverance. I want to particularly thank the Interim Superintendent (Dr. Whelan), District Clerk (Mrs. Leising), Assistant Superintendent for Personnel (Ms. Pinker), Assistant Superintendent for Instruction (Mrs. Duggan), and former Director of Finance (Mr. Thiel). These individuals worked tirelessly for many months to lead the District as we searched for a new Superintendent. Thank you also to the Board's search consultant, Mr. Robert Christmann, for his great assistance.

I look to the future with great excitement and optimism. Together—we can continue to grow and make Frontier the place “Where Falcons Take Flight!” As he begins as Superintendent, Mr. Swiatek will want to get to know the entire community. Look out for opportunities to meet him in the coming weeks and months.

Respectfully,

***Davis Podkulski***

Frontier CSD Board of Education, President