

West Bend educator picked for principal

Written by Carol Pomeday
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 18:04

Craig Gunderson says he's eager to lead the elementary staff, students

The assistant principal of Badger Middle School in West Bend has been chosen to be the new elementary principal in the Cedar Grove-Belgium School District.

Craig Gunderson, who lives in Cedarburg and met with staff and students last week, verbally accepted the position Monday after working out details in his contract with Supt. Steve Shaw.

The contract is expected to be approved by the School Board at its May 11 meeting.

Gunderson sent an e-mail to the elementary staff announcing his decision, adding "I'm very excited to begin our journey together."

Gunderson's first official day in the district will be Friday, July 1. He will succeed Mary Kaye Wolf, who has been principal for three years.

"I am very excited to have the opportunity to work and serve within this amazing school district, and I am so appreciative of the warm welcome I have received from everyone," Gunderson said Tuesday.

"The communities of Cedar Grove and Belgium value the contributions of the school district, and the schools do a remarkable job of serving all children. I look forward to building strong and productive relationships at the community, school, staff, parent and student levels."

Gunderson has been with the West Bend district for seven years, including four years teaching social studies and language arts to seventh-graders.

He was the dean of students for one year before becoming assistant principal.

Cedar Grove-Belgium has 490 students in early childhood classes through fourth grade, which is considerably smaller than the 900-student middle school Gunderson will leave.

As assistant principal, he was responsible for discipline and other student issues.

Gunderson earned bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary and middle school education and learning disabilities from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

He obtained his master's degree in school administration from Marian University in Fond du Lac, where he is working on his doctorate in education administration.

Gunderson taught fourth and fifth grades in the Waupaca School District before joining West Bend.

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His wife works in Mequon and they have a young son. They are considering moving to the district, Gunderson said.

Gunderson was chosen from 26 applicants and ranked the highest among the six candidates interviewed by administrators, teachers, staff, parents, students and community leaders.