

Wausau principal tapped to lead CG-B High

Written by Carol Pomeday
Wednesday, 18 May 2011 18:31

The principal of Newman Catholic High School in Wausau has been chosen to lead Cedar Grove-Belgium High School.

Larry Theiss will replace John Hocking, who will retire June 30 after 10 years as principal.

Theiss accepted the job Monday after his wife Amber and their 3-month-old daughter Phoebe toured the schools. Their other two daughters, Sophie, 7, and Hannah, 11, didn't come because they were in school.

"It was a great day, a great visit," said Theiss, who had promised his wife he wouldn't accept the job until she could visit the schools their daughters would attend and meet teachers.

Even Phoebe liked the atmosphere, he said.

"You always worry when you have a 3-month-old in tow, but she did really good," Theiss said.

Supt. Steve Shaw said Theiss was chosen from a strong field of candidates. Theiss and Michael Wridt, high school administrator for Atlas Preparatory Academy in Milwaukee, were interviewed May 11 by School Board members and administrators.

"I think it was his experience that made the difference," Shaw said. "The other candidate had limited administrative experience. We were trying to find someone who would work well with the great staff John has put together."

Theiss was assistant principal at Merrill High School for five years before becoming head of Newman High School in 2005.

He was an English teacher at Kaukauna High School for four years while pursuing a graduate degree in educational leadership at Marian University in Fond du Lac.

"I always knew I wanted to get back into public schools," Theiss said. "One of the realities of private schools is declining enrollment, and we saw a significant decline. The recession has hit the rural communities hard."

Newman has 176 high-school students. Cedar Grove-Belgium has 305 students.

"I started researching Cedar Grove-Belgium and saw it was a great school district that is growing," Theiss said. "It was a place where I could take my passion for leadership. I love working with students and saw this is a place where I can be principal and work with students and staff."

"My philosophy is you don't come in and rattle the ship. You come in, develop relationships and see where the areas of need and support are."

Wausau principal tapped to lead CG-B High

Written by Carol Pomeday

Wednesday, 18 May 2011 18:31

One area that needs revamping is the technical education program, he said. A new tech ed center attached to the high school is slated to be completed this summer.

“I’m actually coming down on Saturday to lay out a vision for tech ed — how to make sure we’re partnering with local businesses to teach what they need,” Theiss said.

Theiss is the second new administrator hired in the district. Craig Gunderson, assistant principal at Badger Middle School in West Bend, will succeed Mary Kaye Wolf as elementary principal.