



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Eric Studebaker to lead student engagement, safety efforts at SDE**

(BOISE) – Superintendent of Public Instruction Sherri Ybarra announced Friday that Dr. Eric J. Studebaker will join the State Department of Education as director of Student Engagement and Safety Coordination.

“I am thrilled to welcome Dr. Studebaker to our department,” Superintendent Ybarra said. “His experience, commitment and passion for supporting schools and students to achieve make him a great choice for leading our efforts to advance student wellbeing, safety and opportunities.”

Studebaker will start work in mid-July, filling the position left open by Matt McCarter, who resigned in May to take an executive position with the Treasure Valley YMCA. Department responsibilities include advanced opportunities, GEAR-UP, student safety, student health and wellbeing, youth suicide prevention, driver’s education and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers.

Studebaker most recently served in Idaho as the dean of enrollment and student services at the College of Western Idaho (CWI), where he worked from 2012 to 2016. His latest post was as vice president of student services at Columbia Gorge Community College (CCGC) in The Dalles, Ore., from July 2016 to this past May. He has been an adjunct faculty member and dissertation chair at Northwest Nazarene University for the past four years in their Educational Leadership doctoral program. He has nearly 17 years of experience in education administration, starting at College of Southern Idaho new student services in late 2002 and later serving as Idaho’s Professional-Technical Education Region IV Transition Coordinator until early 2012.

He earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from the University of Idaho, a master’s in human resource training and development from Idaho State University, and a doctorate in higher education administration and research from the University of Idaho. He also holds certification in conflict resolution, mental health first aid, Title IX administration and Career Pathways Leadership.

Ensuring the safety of Idaho students and schools is a top priority for Superintendent Ybarra, and a statewide safety symposium is in the works for this fall. Studebaker will play a lead role in that event, and in the ongoing development of a safety course for Idaho educators and other school staff.

At Columbia Gorge Community College, Studebaker helped develop, implement and manage the institutional emergency response plan in collaboration with local K-12 administrators, community health organizations and law enforcement. At both CGCC and CWI, he led the Behavior Assessment Teams and served on Threat Assessment Teams. He has been directly responsible for federally mandated drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs at institutions in Idaho and Oregon.

“While being ready with well-developed response plans is critical, prevention efforts must also receive significant attention,” Studebaker said. “Creating safe school environments takes ongoing and varied efforts to train and education our staff, teachers and students.”

“Over the last twenty years, I have had the pleasure of working with high school partners throughout the state of Idaho,” Studebaker continued. “As a college admissions advisor, tech prep coordinator and director of dual credit programs, I have worked in nearly every school district in the state. I believe this experience and these relationships would help make me a highly effective liaison for the State Department of Education.”

Superintendent Ybarra agrees.

“Dr. Studebaker is a great fit for our department, our objectives and the students and schools of Idaho,” she said.

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