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By LARRY PHILLIPS • Daily Leader A 13-member search committee studied 15 applications and interviewed five candidates before deciding to offer the job of deputy superintendent of USD No. 480 to Dr. Diane Gross, the current assistant superintendent of USD No. 261 in the Haysville school district.



Current deputy superintendent Lance Stout, who has been hired to take over as superintendent upon Vernon Welch's retirement this month, said in a press release that Gross' experience will be a great benefit to the district. "Dr. Gross, who has 27 years experience in public education, has spent the last eight years working as an assistant superintendent of schools in Haysville overseeing both data and assessment and instructional services," Stout noted. "At Haysville, Dr. Gross also has been involved with Literacy First, AVID and Advanced Placement Course design, all programs prominent in the USD 480 curriculum."

Gross said her experience should help her be able to transition into the district fairly quickly.

"As an assistant superintendent, my focus has been, primarily, on assessments and data analysis," Gross said Tuesday, adding she's looking forward to working in the AVID program, as well.

"I'm really excited to be a part of that," she said.

Gross will not actually start her new position until July 1, but she has started the progress of preparing for the move to Southwest Kansas.

"I'm not going to slight any of the things I have to do with my job here, but as soon as I can get out there, it will help with the transition," she said. "I'm just trying to make sure I take care of things with my current job, and I've got to do some things here – get ready to sell my house here."

Though Gross works in the Haysville school district, her home is located in Wichita, just north of Haysville.

She said she has made two visits to Liberal – first visiting with school district people and then for her interview.

"The couple of times I've been out there, I've really been impressed with the community and the school district and the folks I'll be working with," Gross said.

Gross is single, but she will not be moving to Liberal alone.

"My family right now is a puppy that I've assumed the responsibility for – right after the new

year. So he's my challenge right now, and he's keeping me greatly occupied," she said, with a chuckle.

"Dr. Gross' duties in Liberal will include supervising all principals in the district, overseeing curriculum and instruction, in addition to supervising the data and assessment for the district," Stout said in his release.

Gross said she's hoping to get things going so she can get to Liberal as quickly as possible.

"I'm just really excited," she added.

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