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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 12/21/2017

### Mokena School District 159 Hires New Superintendent

Mokena, IL: Following unanimous approval by the Mokena School District 159 Board of Education, Dr. Don White has been hired to be the district superintendent starting July 1, 2018. Dr. White will replace Dr. Omar Castillo who has served Mokena School District 159 since 2013.

“Dr. Castillo’s service to the students, families and staff of District 159 has been commendable,” stated Board President Jennifer Riedl. “Many achievements have been realized under Dr. Castillo’s leadership and we look forward to his continued commitment to our district through this transition. We believe Dr. White’s experience and knowledge will only build on the excellence that already exists in District 159.”

Dr. White has been an administrator in Illinois schools since 1991. Dr. White has held several education leadership positions. Most recently he served as the Superintendent of Hinsdale Community Consolidated School District 181 since 2014. District 181 is an elementary district in Hinsdale and Clarendon Hills with nine schools and approximately 3900 students. Before that Dr. White served as Superintendent of Troy Community Consolidated School District 30-C from July 2007 through May 2014, an elementary district in Plainfield with seven schools and approximately 4,500 students. His experience also includes Superintendent positions with Pekin Public Schools District 108 and Pleasant Plains Community Unit School District 8. He served as Deputy Superintendent and Director of Educational Technology in Champaign Community Unit School District 4, Principal of LeRoy Elementary School and Director of Elementary Instruction and Technology in LeRoy Community Unit School District 2, and Assistant Principal and Athletic Director in Dwight Elementary School District 3. He began his education career as a 4th grade teacher with Lincoln Trail Elementary School in Mahomet-Seymour Community Unit School District 3.

Dr. White's education includes a Doctorate from Illinois State University with a Superintendent's Endorsement, a Master's degree in Education from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Western Illinois University. He has served in a number of service and community organizations, including Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis and the United Way of Will County. He has held leadership roles in many professional organizations, such as the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA), where he has served as a mentor, a Professional Development Committee representative and Chair Facilitator of the School for Advanced Leadership. He has presented sessions and written articles on the topics of technology, staff evaluations, community engagement, finance, data-driven decision making and leadership. Among other

honors and awards, Dr. White earned the IASA Service to Education Award in both 2007 and 2012.

The Board of Education hired School Exec Connect to conduct the search for the next superintendent. The search process included a survey, interviews and focus groups to develop a candidate profile that served as a guide during candidate screening and subsequent interviews. Numerous staff, parents, students and community members participated in this important search.

School Exec Connect received 64 applicants from five states. Multiple rounds of interviews have taken place with the firm and the 159 Board of Education. The final round of interviews included three candidates who met with two interview committees comprised of District 159 administrators, members of the Mokena Teachers Association, members of the Mokena Classified Staff Association and parents, and was followed by another extensive interview with the 159 Board of Education.

Dr. White was actively looking for a new position after engaging in a mutual separation agreement with District 181. The Board of Education is aware of this agreement and Dr. White was forthcoming about this with the 159 Board of Education and the two interview committees. We are confident that Dr. White's knowledge, experience and commitment to students, staff and families will be an excellent fit with our district.

Dr. White has been married for over 35 years to his wife Lori, a registered nurse. They have two grown children and three grandchildren.