



For Immediate Release

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North Ed Selects 2 Candidates for Second-Round Interviews in Superintendent Search

Candidate Interviews to Take Place March 18-19, Open to the Public

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – The search for the next superintendent of Northwest Education Services (North Ed) has been narrowed to two potential candidates.

At a special meeting Wednesday, North Ed’s Board of Education deliberated after three days of first-round interviews with five candidates and chose to invite **Stephanie O’Dea** and **Dr. Tara Mager** for second-round interviews to take place March 18-19. The board hopes to make a final selection this spring, allowing the new superintendent to start July 1.

“All of the candidates had strengths and experiences that would benefit North Ed in some way, and we are grateful for the opportunity to hear their thoughtful responses to our questions,” said North Ed Board President Joseph Fisher. “We look forward to further conversation with our two remaining candidates to learn more about their vision for North Ed and how they would serve our students and communities.”

[Stephanie O’Dea](#) is currently the Director of Instructional Systems at the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA), and recently served as senior education adviser to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer.

[Dr. Tara Mager*](#) is currently Superintendent at Clare-Gladwin Regional Education Service District, and has 20 years of experience working in public education including as superintendent at a local school district.

The second-round interviews will include unstructured time among North Ed’s staff and students, as well as more discussion with the North Ed Board that is open to the public. More information on public participation will be shared. The candidate discussions with the North Ed board will begin at 5:45 p.m. each day at North Ed’s Arnell Administration Building, 1101 Red Drive, Traverse City:

March 18:

- Tara Mager

March 19:

- Stephanie O’Dea

Michigan Leadership Institute is supporting North Ed with its search, which drew an initial pool of 22 candidates. Five of those were selected for first-round interviews that took place earlier this week. However, the board may return to the pool of applicants if the candidates do not meet expectations or withdraw from the process.

Current North Ed Superintendent Dr. Nick Ceglarek is retiring after being hired for the role in 2017. Prior to starting at North Ed, Ceglarek served as superintendent at Hudsonville Public Schools, Fruitport Community Schools and Baldwin Community Schools. He began his career in education as a math teacher at Rockford Public Schools.

Northwest Education Services supports 20,000 students and more than 30 school districts across the five counties of Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau. As the intermediate school district, it provides early childhood services, special education and vocational education programming for students, professional development for educators and various support services for districts.

More information related to North Ed's superintendent search can be found [online](#).

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**Tara Mager has successfully defended her dissertation and will officially receive her doctorate degree in April.*