

**For Immediate Release**

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**Ripon Area School District Announces Next Principal at Murray Park Elementary  
and Quest Charter Elementary School**

Ripon, WI – The Board of Education for the Ripon Area School District has unanimously approved Renee Bunge as the principal at Murray Park and Quest Charter Elementary School at their August 25, 2015 meeting. She will begin on August 26, 2015. She will replace Randy Hatlen who moved into the Ripon High School and Lumen High School Principal position as of August 5, 2015.

The Murray Park and Quest Charter Elementary School Principal position was posted from August 4 – August 10. Staff and parents were invited to participate in a survey regarding characteristics they valued in their next principal. Thirty-eight people applied for the position through WECAN. Through a screening process five candidates were invited to interview on August 12, 2015. A fifteen-member selection committee conducted interviews. The committee consisted of members of the School Board, Journey Governance Council, administration, parents, and teachers and staff from both schools. Two candidates were invited back on August 13, 2015 to participate in a second round of interviews. The selection committee recommended reposting the position.

The position was reposted from August 14 – August 18, 2015. Thirty-seven applicants applied, nine of which were new applicants. Candidates were screened and three were invited to interview on August 20, 2015 with the same large and diverse committee. Two accepted the invitation and both candidates, Renee Bunge and John Graf, were invited to a second interview on August 24, 2015. Each finalist also had an opportunity to tour the building and participate in a Meet and Greet with parents and staff.

Renee Bunge, a resident of Ripon has been an educator for 23 years. She is an assistant principal at Oshkosh West High School, a position she recently assumed after being a literacy teacher for grades 6-7 in the Oshkosh Public Schools since 2002. Prior experience includes being a gifted & talented teacher and a 5th grade teacher in the Oshkosh Public School as well as a 5th grade teacher at Murray Park Elementary in Ripon.

Ms. Bunge received her bachelor's degree in elementary and middle child-early adolescent learning with a minor in English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Subsequently, she received her first master's degree from University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in reading. She holds a license as a reading specialist K-12. Ms. Bunge recently completed a second master's degree in educational leadership from University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. She has experience leading professional development on literacy practices, writing curriculum and mentoring teachers.

References described Ms. Bunge as the go-to person for students, parents, teachers, and administration that she works with. She was noted as being respected for her literacy knowledge and passion for both educating young people and sharing instructional practices that maximize learning. A former supervisor stated Ms. Bunge is "a person who is consistently reflecting and looking for ways to help us see improvement school-wide."

"The Ripon Area School District has had a very unique opportunity to build a dynamic and highly engaged leadership team to serve the needs of the District into the future. The selection committee was impressed with Ms. Bunge's extensive teaching experience, literacy background and commitment to the community of Ripon," commented Superintendent Mary Whitrock. "Bringing Ms. Bunge on as the principal of Murray Park Elementary School and Quest Charter Elementary School completes the administrative team and puts closure on a very successful administrative hiring process."

Any comments or suggestions, please contact Mary Whitrock at (920) 748-4600.