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New Haven names interim business chief

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SUBMITTED BY RICK LA PLANTE

Jim O'Connor, a former middle school principal who has spent most of the past 25 years in school business management, has been hired on an interim basis to serve as Chief Business Officer of the New Haven Unified School District.

Mr. O'Connor will begin his duties January 4, replacing Chief Business Officer Ted Hood, who has resigned, effective December 31.

"Ted Hood served New Haven during what has been and continues to be the most difficult financial crisis in the history of California public education," Superintendent Kari McVeigh said. "He has helped us weather that storm better than most districts, and we wish him well."

The search for a permanent successor to Mr. Hood already is under way, Ms. McVeigh said.

"New Haven, like all California school districts, is anticipating more cuts in education funding until the Governor and Legislature resolve the structural

problems in the state budget, so it is critically important that we find the right individual to provide long-term business leadership," Ms. McVeigh said.

"In the mean time, we are very fortunate to be able to call on Jim O'Connor on an interim basis. I expect Sacramento is going to tell us in January that we have to make mid-year cuts, and Jim has the kind of experience that will help us make those difficult decisions."

Mr. O'Connor is familiar with New Haven, having worked in neighboring school districts for most of his career.

"I'm very aware of the tradition of excellence in New Haven," he said. "I'm looking forward to helping the District through this transition and in the hiring of a permanent Chief Business Officer."

Mr. O'Connor, who served most recently as an instructor in the Chief Business Officer training program at the University of Southern California and as coordinator of a regional CBO training program, started his adminis-

trative career as principal of H.A. Clover Middle School in Tracy from 1976 to 1984. He went on to become Assistant Superintendent for Business Services in Tracy Public Schools from 1984 to 1989.

Mr. O'Connor moved to the San Ramon Valley Unified School District to serve as Assistant Superintendent of Business Services and later Deputy Superintendent and Associate Superintendent, from 1989 to 1995.

Mr. O'Connor served as Assistant Superintendent for Business Services and later Deputy Superintendent for Business Services in the Castro Valley Unified School District, from 1995 to 2006. Since then, he has served as a consultant for the Dixon Unified School District, as the Alameda County Office of Education's financial advisor to the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District, and as an interim assistant superintendent in both the Oakley Union Elementary and Napa Valley Unified school districts.