



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Whittier Union Welcomes New Administrators for 2019-20 School Year

WHITTIER – Three longtime Whittier Union High School District educators will transition into new administrative roles for the 2019-20 school year, bringing years of veteran leadership and knowledge to essential managerial positions.

The three administrators – all hired by the District in 2004 – are Kristin Kooiman, Director of Personnel Services; Lillia Vazquez, Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Santa Fe High School; and Diana Salazar Valles, Assistant Principal of Business and Activities at Whittier High School.

“Our new administrators have a history of providing leadership and diligence throughout their careers at Whittier Union,” Superintendent Martin J. Plourde said. “We are excited to see the innovative approaches they will bring to the District community.”

Since launching her teaching career at La Serna High School, Kooiman has served in various capacities, including a biology and Guided Studies teacher, curriculum coordinator, department chair and curriculum assessment support coach. She began serving as the school’s assistant principal of curriculum and instruction in 2012 and is a graduate of Santa Fe High School.

“Being a former student and substitute teacher in this District, spending 15 years as a teacher and administrator at La Serna, and having my own child graduate from Whittier Union, I know the importance of valuing all employees, who have a tremendous impact on our students,” Kooiman said. “I really appreciate the opportunity to serve the District. It’s a significant responsibility and I look forward to joining the personnel services team.”

Vazquez previously taught computer science at La Serna High School. She has also taught at Whittier and California high schools, serving in a variety of roles over her tenure, including course lead, site data lead, ed tech support lead, WASC focus group leader and summer administrative intern.

“My journey as a teacher began here at Whittier Union and I am very excited to begin my administrative career here as well,” Vazquez said. “I’ve learned a lot about collaboration and working together and I am excited to be a part of the leadership team. I look forward to fulfilling this role with a lot of Chieftain pride.”

Salazar Valles was 18 years old when she was hired as Whittier High School's college center adviser. She became a counselor at Frontier High School in 2008 and guidance counselor at Whittier High in 2011. She was selected as director of the school's New Horizons student support program in 2012.

"I began in the District at 18 years old and never did I imagine that I would still be here 15 years later and have the impact on students in the variety of ways that I have," Salazar Valles said. "I've been very grateful and fortunate for every opportunity that I've gotten and honored to be at Whittier High all these years."

PHOTO CAPTION

072219_WUHSD_NEWADMIN: Whittier Union has promoted three longtime educators to administrative roles for the 2019-20 school year: Kristin Kooiman, Director of Personnel Services; Lillia Vazquez, Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction at Santa Fe High School; and Diana Salazar Valles, Assistant Principal of Business and Activities at Whittier High School. They are pictured with Board of Trustees members Dr. Ralph Pacheco, Tim Schneider, Leighton Anderson and Vice President Jeff Baird.

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The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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