



**Jill Underly**  
State Superintendent-Elect  
WI Department of Public Instruction  
[dpi-transition.wi.gov](http://dpi-transition.wi.gov)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### State Superintendent-elect Underly Announces First Appointments to Agency Leadership Team

(Madison, WI) — State Superintendent-elect Jill Underly announced today her first appointments to her Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) leadership team.

“This group of outstanding leaders bring with them the experience and diverse perspectives we need to tackle the issues facing our schools,” said Dr. Underly. “We’ll be ready to get to work on day one to build a public education system where every child gets what they need to succeed, every day.”

**John W. Johnson, PhD** has been named Deputy State Superintendent-designate. John currently serves as the director for Literacy and Mathematics at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and previously was the Communications Director in the Office of the State Superintendent. Prior to joining DPI, John served for more than 15 years in schools as a history, social studies, and special education teacher, learning coordinator, and high school assistant principal. John was appointed by the governor as a public member of the Wisconsin Arts Board in 2020.

John earned his doctor of philosophy degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he also earned two master’s degrees, one in Educational Administration and one in Special Education–Learning Disabilities. He earned his bachelor’s degree in History from Georgetown University. John and his wife have three daughters, all Wisconsin public school graduates with the youngest graduating this school year.

**Thomas McCarthy** has been named Executive Director-designate in the Office of the State Superintendent. He currently serves as Senior Manager in the office of DCF Secretary Emilie Amundson, and previously served as the communications director at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) where he led a team charged with supporting the mission and vision of the state superintendent. Before joining the DPI, Tom worked in the Wisconsin State Legislature as a legislative assistant, research assistant, and committee clerk. There, he focused on connecting communications and policy to build more effective solutions and better serve impacted stakeholders.

Tom is a graduate of UW-Madison, a husband and the proud father of a toddler, and when he has free time, enjoys playing music.

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**Latoya Holiday** will be reappointed as Special Assistant to the State Superintendent. Latoya began her career at the DPI in 2005 as an intern through the State of Wisconsin’s Student Diversity Internship Program. Latoya later served as a School Administration Consultant for the Private School Choice (Voucher) Programs and as the state’s Charter Schools Consultant.

Latoya holds degrees in English and Educational Policy from the University of Illinois and UW-Madison. Latoya is a wife and mother of four and extends her commitment to equity through service in her church where she has spearheaded community support initiatives including backpack give-a-ways, coat drives, and youth development activities.

**Paul Manriquez** has been named Assistant State Superintendent-designate. Paul grew up in Whitewater, Wisconsin where he graduated from Whitewater High School and then attended, played baseball, and graduated from UW-Whitewater with a Bachelor of Science in Education. He earned a Masters in Education from National Louis University and then a Masters in Education Leadership from Concordia University-Wisconsin.

Paul taught and coached in the Elkhorn Area School district for 16 years before becoming the Middle/High School Principal in the Pecatonica Area School District.

Paul lives in Waunakee with his wife, Michelle and daughter, a senior at Waunakee High School. His son is currently attending Madison College. In his free time, he enjoys watching his son play baseball for Madison College and daughter play softball for Waunakee High School. Paul loves the Wisconsin outdoors, camping and hiking with family and hunting with friends.

More information about State Superintendent-elect Underly’s transition -- including scheduling requests and applications to serve -- can be found at <https://dpi-transition.wi.gov/>.

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