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Deaton tabbed as South Warren High School principal

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1 of 5



Matt Deaton speaks after being named the new principal of South Warren High School on April 12, 2023. Deaton replaces Jenny Hester as principal of the high school at Ramey (grace.ramey@bgdailynews.com)

Grace Ramey

South Warren High School has chosen a longtime Spartan for its next principal.

Matt Deaton, who has served as the principal of South Warren Middle School since 2021, was announced as the high school's next leader on Wednesday.

Deaton is familiar with SWHS, working as its assistant principal from 2018 to 2021. Prior to that, he was the high school's dean of students and also taught social studies. He's also been the SWHS golf and bowling head coach.

"I've always enjoyed the feeling of making a difference in someone else's life, I think since I was a kid," he said. "I had four younger brothers, I knew they were kind of looking up to me and I wanted to help them and be a leader for them. And that kind of translated into teaching and leadership."

His time as the middle school principal prepped him to make the step up to SWHS.

"It's been a really great two years here. Learned a lot about leadership being a lead principal," Deaton said. "Again, it just all goes back to the meaning and the purpose I get from making a difference in other people's lives."

The middle school has enjoyed plenty of academic success during Deaton's tenure.



“Under his leadership, South Warren Middle School earned the highest distinction on the Kentucky Summative Assessment in the 2021-2022 school year,” Warren County Public Schools Superintendent Rob Clayton said in a release. “Matt exemplifies our districtwide commitment to ensuring safety, achievement and opportunities for all students.”

Deaton is a Hilltopper, completing his bachelor’s in social studies with secondary certification at Western Kentucky University. He also worked as a pastor for 15 years and preached at Community Church of Christ in Bowling Green.

“I stayed as a pastor for four years into my teaching career, and then it just became one of those things like, ‘which way do you go, how are you going to make a difference’ and I felt very called to be in education,” Deaton said.

For Deaton, leadership is about genuine concern for people.

“The old saying is, people ‘don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care,’ I think that’s very true,” he said. “... So I took that from my time as a pastor.”

Deaton will assume the role principal Jenny Hester has held for a decade prior beginning July 1.

“I’m going to work closely with Ms. Hester, she’s a good friend of mine and a colleague and a mentor and I want to spend a lot of time with her getting ready for the next step at the high school,” Deaton said. “And then whenever a new principal is named at the middle school, I want to work closely with that person to help them be ready.”

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