



district five

OF LEXINGTON & RICHLAND COUNTIES

Media Release

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District Five’s Sara Wheeler takes helm as President of Magnet Schools of America

IRMO- District Five Magnet School Program Director Sara Wheeler has always had a passion for building relationships and for making a positive difference for teachers and students. Her latest opportunity gives her a chance to expand her influence on a national level as she embraces her new role as President of Magnet Schools of America (MSA). MSA is a national organization dedicated to providing leadership for high quality innovative instructional programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, and academic excellence for all students.

“I would like to express my sheer excitement, joy and, yes, a little anxiety in taking over as President of MSA,” Wheeler said in her latest e-newsletter titled *Maintaining the Momentum*. “I am so fortunate to follow in the footsteps of such great leaders.”

Wheeler has been the driving force behind the implementation of District Five’s magnet programs. Wheeler joined District Five in September 2013, shortly after the District received a boost from a \$10.3 million federal grant to expand and enhance its magnet school offerings. “She was the perfect person to take the helm of our magnet program” said Chief Instruction Officer Dr. Christina Melton. “She brought a wealth of experience, a deep understanding of magnet school implementation and tremendous drive to District Five.”

Wheeler has been involved with magnet school development and implementation for many years. She previously worked in Richland School District Two where she led district and school level magnet programs. Currently, she oversees the magnet school implementation for the Dutch Fork Elementary Academy of Environmental Sciences, Seven Oaks Elementary MEDIA Magnet, Irmo Middle School International Academic Magnet, Irmo High School International School for the Arts and Spring Hill High School Career Pathways Magnet.

“My school district kicked off the 2016-17 school year with a powerful theme honoring and celebrating diversity in our community and focusing on understanding the individual needs of all students by building relationships first,” Wheeler wrote. She leads by example building relationships and finding the very best way to meet the unique needs of students across the district.

District Five has long placed a priority on growing academic programs through magnet and other offerings. This philosophy is echoed in the District’s Choice motto. “District Five – Where Every Choice is a Great Choice.” It is a deliberate decision to provide families with the choices they need to make their students successful in school and in future careers. “We want every student and family to find the very best fit for their educational experience,” said Wheeler.

When asked about Wheeler’s new position with Magnet Schools of America, District Five Superintendent Dr. Stephen Hefner said, “We are very fortunate to have Sara on the District Five team. She brings tireless energy and a deep understanding of magnet schools to District Five. I know she will have tremendous success as President of MSA.”

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