



Arkansas Department of Education

Division of Elementary and Secondary Education

Johnny Key, Secretary

Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, Deputy Commissioner

December 10, 2020

CONTACT: Kimberly Mundell

PHONE: (501) 683-4788

kimberly.mundell@arkansas.gov

Key Announces New Appointments to ADE Team

LITTLE ROCK — Arkansas Department of Education Secretary Johnny Key announces three new appointments to the department's team. Stacy Smith will serve as a deputy commissioner for the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Sonja Wright-McMurray has been named the senior associate director for the Division of Career and Technical Education, and Teletha Leonard will serve as the human resources director for ADE.

"As we continue to streamline processes and improve efficiencies under transformation, it is essential to have the right team in place," Key said. "These three outstanding team members not only have a wealth of knowledge in their respective fields, but they also bring real-world experience that will enhance the services we provide internally and externally to students, educators, and schools."

Stacy Smith

Stacy Smith, the current director of the Office of Coordinated Support and Service, will continue in that role and also will serve alongside Dr. Ivy Pfeffer as an additional deputy commissioner for DESE. As deputy commissioner, Smith will oversee the Learning Services and Public School Accountability divisions. She assumes her new position Dec. 16.

Smith served as a former assistant commissioner of Learning Services from March 2016 to July 2020, when she assumed the position as the director of OCSS. She previously served as the DESE director of Curriculum and Instruction from July 2014 to March 2016 and has been a principal at Hill Farm Elementary School in the Bryant School District and Fountain Lake Elementary School in the Fountain Lake School District.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a Master in Educational Leadership from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and an Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership from Arkansas Tech University in Russellville.

Sonja Wright-McMurray

Sonja Wright-McMurray has been named the senior associate director for the Division of Career and Technical Education. Assuming her new position Dec. 13, Wright-McMurray will oversee all CTE programs, special populations, Career Coaches, and accountability for the division.

Wright-McMurray has been with the division since 2009. Prior to being named the new senior associate director, Wright-McMurray has been the associate director of Accountability, Career Readiness, and Technical Programs for the division from 2019 to 2020, during which she provided management and oversight for seven CTE programs. Previously, Wright-McMurray served as the associate director of CTE Special Projects and associate director of the Arkansas College and Career Coach Program at the division. She also was the director of Minority Student Services at the University of Central Arkansas at Conway and director of Upward Bound at Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa.

Wright-McMurray holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Master of Education in Higher Education Administration from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She currently is working on a Doctorate of Education in Higher Education Leadership from Maryville University in St. Louis, Missouri, with an anticipated graduation date of December 2021.

Teletha Leonard

Teletha Leonard has been named the human resources director for ADE. In this role, Leonard will oversee the human resources functions and processes for the department. She begins her new role Dec. 28.

Leonard was the senior human resources director for Benefits and Employee Services at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences from October 2016 to October 2020. Prior to serving in the senior HR director role, Leonard was the human resources director in that division from August 2003 to October 2016. She previously served as the area manager in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Arkansas Children's Hospital, a member of the adjunct faculty at the UAMS College of Public Health, and a faculty member with the University of Phoenix.

Leonard has a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, a Master of Arts in Human Resources Management from Webster University at Little Rock, a Professional Human Resources PHR Certification, and a Society of Human Resource Management Certification SHRM-CP.

[Follow us on Twitter @ArkansasEd.](#)

[Like us on Facebook at Arkansas Department of Education.](#)

[Follow us on Instagram at arkansas_ed.](#)



Photos (l to r); Stacy Smith, Sonja Wright-McMurray, and Teletha Leonard

dese.ade.arkansas.gov

Four Capitol Mall • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-682-4475

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

Four Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR | 72201 US

This email was sent to kimberly.mundell@arkansas.gov.
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

emma®