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WKU sees jump in school principal candidates

By AARON MUDD amudd@bgdailynews.com 1 hr ago



Marguerita DeSander

Submitted

When Western Kentucky University launches its revamped principal preparation program this fall, it expects to do so with triple the number of candidates it saw this time last year.

Marguerita DeSander, professor of educational administration, leadership and research at WKU, announced a sharp uptick in interest around the program Wednesday to regional superintendents at the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative.

“We couldn’t have done this without you,” DeSander said, thanking the districts that partnered with WKU to help build a recruitment pipeline.

In an email to the Daily News on Thursday, DeSander said the program currently has 15 candidates, which is roughly three times what the principal program saw last year.

“We have several additional inquiries that have come through this week, as well,” she said.

The number is tentative, but the program continues to accept students through mid-July.

It’s welcome news for area superintendents looking to fill critical school leadership positions.

Simpson County Schools Superintendent Jim Flynn represents one of five area school districts that have closely partnered with WKU in recent years.



Through an initiative funded by the Wallace Foundation that began in 2016, WKU redesigned the curriculum of its principal preparation program and developed a leadership tracking tool that will help employers find high-quality applicants.

“We’ve really worked hard at building the curriculum and building this leader development platform that’ll help us, you know, hopefully increase that pipeline and then ensure that we have a great school leader leading every school in our area,” Flynn told the Daily News.

With the launch of the new program, DeSander said coordinators will regularly review feedback on program quality. “That’s been the really interesting piece of all of this Wallace work is that it’s providing us with the feedback loops, not just from the districts, but from the students themselves as to how well we’ve prepared them for this work,” she said.

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Aaron Mudd

Education reporter. Covers education and related issues, focusing primarily on the Bowling Green and Warren County public school districts and Western Kentucky University.

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