

PRESS RELEASE

April 28, 2019

Portola Valley School District to Appoint Roberta Zarea to be Next District Superintendent at May 1, 2019 Regular Meeting

It is with great enthusiasm that the Portola Valley School District (“PVSD”) Governing Board of Trustees announces that it has selected Roberta Zarea as the new District Superintendent, effective July 1, 2019, pending a vote at its meeting on May 1, 2019. The Board looks forward to working with Ms. Zarea during this exciting time for the District.

The Board retained the services of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (“HYA”), a national school executive search firm, to assist them in their search. After conducting focus groups with parents, educators, and administrators at both district schools and reviewing the results from an online survey, HYA presented the Board and the PVSD community with a comprehensive Leadership Profile to guide the search for our next superintendent. Over 30 candidates from a nationwide pool met the Leadership Profile. Ms. Zarea’s qualifications and experiences not only matched this community-driven Profile, but she also clearly rose to the top of the field.

Ms. Zarea comes to Portola Valley from the Saratoga Union School District, where she has served as Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services since 2013. During her tenure in Saratoga, Ms. Zarea led important changes to the district’s middle school math placement process, to the kindergarten extended day initiative, and to the district’s comprehensive sexuality education program. Ms. Zarea was particularly effective in soliciting community input regarding these highly visible initiatives and also expertly communicated about them. She has deep experience in planning and evaluating curriculum and in creating clear articulation for all learners throughout the grades in elementary and middle school and then from middle school to high school. She is a tireless advocate for children and brings a genuine love of education to her work every day.

Before her tenure in Saratoga, Ms. Zarea held a number of positions in the Union School District, including as Principal, Vice Principal, Coordinator of Special Projects, and elementary school teacher (grades 3 and 5).

Ms. Zarea is originally from Michigan and received her B.A. in Russian Language and Literature from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She holds a Master of Arts in Elementary Education from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro and a Master of Arts in Educational Leadership from San Jose State University. She is currently completing work towards her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from San Jose State. Ms. Zarea resides in San Jose with her husband and has two grown daughters. In her free time, she is a volunteer with the Special Olympics and with Angels on Stage Theater Troupe.

Board President Jeff Klugman states, “The PVSD Governing Board of Trustees met with many outstanding candidates for the role of Superintendent. Ms. Zarea’s qualifications, and, in particular, her experience in the Saratoga Union School District and her visible passion for education set her apart from other excellent candidates. Ms. Zarea was our top choice. On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees and the Portola Valley community, we’re excited to attract someone with Ms Zarea’s background to our district.”

Ms. Zarea said, “I feel deeply honored and humbled to be granted this leadership opportunity in a community so highly motivated to support student success. One of my immediate goals in Portola Valley is to build a strong relationship with the board of trustees, staff, students, parents, and the community. I will be carefully listening, observing, inquiring and studying input from all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the district’s Blueprint for Excellence. I also look forward to visiting classrooms regularly to ground my new learnings in real-time student and teacher experiences.”

The PVSD Governing Board of Trustees will take formal action to approve Ms. Zarea’s contract on May 1, 2019. The meeting will take place at the Ormondale School Library at 5pm.