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## **Superintendent Watson Appoints Governing Board Member in Pendergast Elementary School District**

**(Phoenix, AZ)** - On Friday, January 5, Maricopa County School Superintendent Steve Watson announced the appointment of Alan Gaugert to the governing board of Pendergast Elementary School District. Gaugert fills the vacancy that occurred when Ruben Gutierrez resigned on October 30, 2017. In accordance with A.R.S. § 15-302, county school superintendents have statutory authority to appoint qualified individuals to fill vacancies on a school governing board or, if appropriate, call for a special election in the district.

Superintendent Watson applies three criteria in making an appointment to a governing board. First, candidates must be fully committed to the success of their local traditional public school district; second, they must be even-tempered, reasonable and respectful; and third, appointees must be fiscally responsible with a focus on getting dollars to teachers and into the classroom.

Pendergast submitted three names (in no particular ranking) from a list of six candidates to Superintendent Watson for consideration. The district placed an emphasis on voice, commitment and stakeholder status. Using his criteria and that of the district, Superintendent Watson concluded that Alan Gaugert was the best choice for the Pendergast appointment.

Alan Gaugert will serve out the term ending in November 2018. Gaugert retired from the U.S. Air Force as a lieutenant colonel after serving 21 years as a fighter pilot. He has taught in both the Peoria Unified School District and Maricopa County Community College District. Currently, he serves as a captain of the Villa de Paz block watch and a volunteer patroller and a civilian coordinator with the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Patrol program.

"I am honored to receive the appointment," Gaugert said. "I look forward to the opportunity to add another voice to improve Pendergast Elementary School District's role in the community."

He and his wife have resided in the district for nearly three decades where they have raised their three daughters who attended Pendergast schools.

Superintendent Watson noted, "Alan Gaugert brings to the district decades of service and experience that overwhelmingly meet the criteria of the current governing board and the community."

"At a time when teachers need an advocate and strong voice, Alan brings that to the table in Pendergast," Watson concluded.

Pendergast Elementary School District was established in 1885 and is located in the west valley and includes the cities of Phoenix, Glendale and Avondale. The district covers 20 square miles and is home to about 10,000 preschool to eighth grade students spread across 12 campuses.

Maricopa County contains 58 public school districts of which there are 276 governing board positions. This is the tenth governing board appointment by Superintendent Watson since beginning his term January 2017.

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*For more information on the governing board appointment process, contact Shane Wikfors at (602) 885-0499.*