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Hutchins elected president of IASA

Crab Orchard superintendent to take reins of statewide association

SPRINGFIELD – The superintendent of Crab Orchard Community Unit School District 3 has been elected president of the statewide association for school superintendents and administrators. Derek Hutchins begins his one-year term on Friday (July 1) as president of the Illinois Association of School Administrators (IASA).

“I am greatly humbled and honored to serve such a fantastic association as president. IASA is not only the leader in professional development and support for administrators, but also in its advocacy for public education,” said Hutchins, who has been an educator for 28 years, the past 12 as superintendent in the Crab Orchard district. “I truly believe that it is because of IASA that I am a much better educator, leader and administrator.”

Dr. Brent Clark, executive director of IASA, said Hutchins experience and his leadership skills will provide solid leadership for IASA, which is one of the nation’s largest statewide associations for school administrators with more than 1,700 members.

“Derek has been on the IASA Board of Directors for more than five years and has served four years on our Governmental Relations Committee so he has a keen understanding of the issues facing public education,” Clark said. “Derek is deeply committed to providing the best possible educational opportunities for children and I believe he will provide great leadership for our association during these challenging times.”

In addition to serving this past year as president-elect of the association and his participation in the Governmental Relations Committee, Hutchins also served on the Professional Development Committee. He was a founding member and currently serves as president of both the Southern Illinois Health and Wellness Insurance Trust and the Greater Egyptian Conference and is chairman of the Williamson County Special Education Executive Board.

Hutchins is a graduate of Benton High School and attained his Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees from Eastern Illinois University and his Specialist Degree in Education from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. He spent 10 years as a high school Chemistry, Math and Physics teacher and six years as a principal before becoming superintendent at Crab Orchard in 2004.

Crab Orchard School Board President Matt Troxel called Hutchins a “top-notch” administrator.

“We are very, very blessed to have Derek as our superintendent,” said Troxel, who has been a member of the Crab Orchard Board of Education for 10 years, serving as president the last seven years. “He has been a wonderful asset for our district. He keeps things in line and if a problem comes up he knows how to handle it. Derek is always looking out for kids and trying to provide them with the best possible opportunities, and people need that these days.”

Hutchins said he looks forward to working with her colleagues from throughout the state to meet the tough challenges facing public education.

“The challenges facing today’s school superintendent are much different than when I started this 12 years ago. The system of funding school districts very much needs to be fixed where all districts are funded equitably and adequately,” Hutchins said. “Now is the time when the topic is at the forefront to make the necessary changes. As British statistician Sir Claus Moser opined, ‘Education costs money, but then so does ignorance.’ “

Hutchins and his wife Tina have been married for 26 years. They have a son, A.J. (and fiancée Veronica Grgin), who is a State Farm Agent in Schaumburg, and a daughter, Autumn, who is a sophomore at John A. Logan College.

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