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REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
KANE COUNTY

Patricia Dal Santo, Regional Superintendent

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*Patricia Dal Santo announces retirement, Kane County Board appoints new  
Regional Superintendent*

**GENEVA, Ill.** – Following 32 years with the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE), Patricia Dal Santo has announced her plans to retire as Regional Superintendent. She will step down from her role on June 30, 2025.

After receiving her letter of resignation, the Kane County Board appointed John Jonak to serve the remainder of Ms. Dal Santo's term as Regional Superintendent for Kane County at Tuesday's meeting.

Ms. Dal Santo has served with distinction for over three decades, having joined the ROE in 1993 following her time with East Aurora 131. After serving as Director of Alternative Programs, she was appointed Regional Superintendent in 2012. In her 13 years leading the ROE, she has expanded the capacity of the office to provide professional learning, alternative programming, communication, and technological innovation.

"It has been the honor of my lifetime to serve Kane County in this capacity," Ms. Dal Santo said. "I am deeply grateful for the dedicated educators, community leaders, and staff at the ROE with whom I have had the privilege to work alongside. Together, we've made meaningful progress in supporting our schools and students, and I am confident that this important work will continue."

Since entering the educational field, Ms. Dal Santo has exercised her passion for helping students find unique pathways to success. From expanding professional learning opportunities to programs offered to students at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center, she has built supports that suited the life circumstances of children and families.

Her advocacy for access to all styles of education prompted her to join representatives to lobby lawmakers on various occasions, leading to the passage of the equity-focused Evidence-Based Funding Formula and the Illinois Balanced Accountability Model that are still used by the state. She was also instrumental in shaping the policy that led to the forming of current Regional Safe Schools Programs.

Under her guidance, the Kane County ROE has been a leader in developing and piloting several systems that are used by ROEs across Illinois, including educator licensure, compliance, and professional development registration. She was also instrumental in shaping a model of approach to truancy intervention and supports that is used by multiple offices. This includes the implementation of family counseling and prosocial activities.

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Additionally, Ms. Dal Santo has been a key contributor to multiple state initiatives and governing bodies. She served as the first female president of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools and led that organization during its task of consolidating the number of ROEs in Illinois to the structure seen today. She also served as board president and is currently a representative of the Illinois Coalition for Educating At-Risk Youth, which provides necessary resources through advocating for more equitable funding, legislative initiatives, teacher training, and professional networking in support of Illinois' most vulnerable students.

"Our mantra at the ROE is: 'Lead, Assist, Inspire,' and I have tried to implement that philosophy in our work over the years," she said. "One size does not fit all when it comes to how students learn. We must strive to advocate for meeting every student's needs, in whatever form they take. If that has prompted our office to develop a new system or lobby for specific funding to fill that need, that is something we have worked to achieve. My hope is that those efforts have made an effective difference in the educational journey of students in Kane County."

In succeeding Ms. Dal Santo, Mr. Jonak will bring an extensive list of qualities to the role of Regional Superintendent, including 26 years in education and nearly two decades in an administrative capacity. Prior to his time with Rosemont Elementary School District 78, where he currently serves as Superintendent, he held two roles within Westmont Community Unit School District 201. He was the Director of Student Services and Early Childhood Programs for the district for one year after his principalship at Westmont Junior High from 2012-2021.

He received his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Eastern Illinois University in 1998, his Master in Administration and Leadership from Benedictine University in 2006, and earned his Superintendent Licensure from Northern Illinois University in 2021. He also carries 20 years of military experience, having served as a Platoon and Battalion Operations Sergeant in the United States Army.

"I am honored to be chosen to serve Kane County in this position," Mr. Jonak said. "As a Batavia resident, an educator's spouse, and the father of students in Batavia 101, I know first-hand the impact our schools have. My dedication lies in connecting with students, families, and educators that make our school communities so special. The ROE has a rich history of supporting these educational efforts, and being a leader of that work is a tremendous responsibility. I look forward to working alongside our dedicated team and our school district partners to ensure every teacher and student has the resources they need to be successful."

Mr. Jonak will assume his duties as Regional Superintendent on July 1, 2025.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### About the Kane County Regional Office of Education

The Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) is one of 38 educational service agencies in Illinois. Located in Geneva, we serve 9,200 educators and 107,000 students across 524 square miles that span nine school districts across Kane County (U-46, Batavia 101, West Aurora 129, East Aurora 131, District 300, Central 301, Kaneland 302, St. Charles 303, and Geneva 304).

Our mission is to advocate for education, provide leadership, perform regulatory functions, and coordinate state and local services for educators, school districts, and the community.