

High school will be losing its leader

Dr. Finnerty will become Asst. Superintendent of the Twin Valley School District.

By Gary Weckselblatt

Dr. David Finnerty, the principal who helped inspire and lead improvements in college and career readiness during his six years leading Quakertown Community High School, will be leaving the district following the Class of 2019's June 14 graduation to become Assistant Superintendent of the Twin Valley School District.

The Twin Valley School Board approved Dr. Finnerty's hire Monday night.

"I am privileged to have been the Principal of the students, teachers and staff in this building and to have gotten to know the wonderful people in this community," Dr. Finnerty said. "There are memories I will carry with me and cherish forever."

Superintendent Dr. Bill Harner said it is difficult to lose a principal with Dr. Finnerty's administrative and educational skills. "The high school principal is the toughest job in a school district, and David rose to the challenge and exceeded in every aspect," Dr. Harner said. "He has provided a remarkable service to our district, especially to our students."

Dr. Harner said what he'll remember most about Dr. Finnerty is the



Though he's accepted a position as Assistant Superintendent of the Twin Valley School District, Dr. David Finnerty will preside over the QCHS June 14 graduation ceremonies at Lehigh University's Stabler Arena.



way he reacts when he's around students. "He lights up like a light bulb when he's around kids," Dr. Harner said. "His student-centered nature is remarkable."

Dr. Finnerty is not the only administrator the high school is losing. Stephen Kimball, one of the

school's three Assistant Principals, is heading to University of Pennsylvania Law School in the fall, after serving as a social studies teacher, TOSA - teacher on special assignment as an administrative intern, and assistant principal. That will leave Assistant Principals Jason Magditch and Camil Culbreath remaining from the four-person administrative team.

Dr. Finnerty was hired at a time when fewer than 20 percent of Quakertown graduates were completing a college or university degree in four years, and fewer than 15 percent completing an Upper Bucks County Technical School job/career program. In a survey by Quakertown's Class of 2013 a majority claimed the district had left them ill-equipped for higher education.

At that time, many QCHS graduates who attended Bucks County Community College had to take remedial courses before beginning a two-year program of studies. With the hard work of teachers and administrators, under Dr. Finnerty's leadership, the district has seen dramatic improvements in college and career readiness. Student performance on Advanced Placement exams shows that the high school has nearly doubled the number of students who are college ready. There has been a 500 percent increase in the number of AP scholars.

Here's a sampling of Dr. Finnerty's legacy:

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DR. FINNERTY

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- The high school made the College Board's Advanced Placement Honor Roll for four consecutive years for expanding its AP offerings and enrolling students.
- QCHS's 28 AP classes are the most offered in Bucks County.
- QCHS had the state's 12th highest School Performance Profile among more than 600 schools in 2016, and was tops among all Bucks County high schools.
- U.S. News & World Report has given the high school its Silver rating four years in a row.
- This year, four students have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program, with two becoming Finalists.

Dr. Finnerty also began the school's tremendous Mini-THON fundraiser to help fight pediatric cancer. He inspired it as a way to build leadership qualities and service learning in students.

He has also sought to have students more prepared for an increasingly global society, with the addition of AP classes in German, Mandarin and Spanish.

In addition, during his Dr. Finnerty's tenure, the high school underwent a four year \$78 million renovation, and moved ninth graders from the Freshmen Center to the high school.

Dr. Finnerty, who spent eight years in the National Guard, has been in public education for 15 years. He began as a seventh grade math teacher in Allentown, and then



High School Principal Dr. David Finnerty speaks to an assembly of eighth graders.



Dr. Finnerty addresses the Parent-Community School Safety Committee.

taught 11th grade math in the Schuylkill Haven Area School District, not far from Twin Valley. His resume includes two years as Assistant Principal at William Allen High School, before taking his current position at QCHS.

"I feel very good about what we've

done here," he said. "I've been part of a tremendous team effort."

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