



## **MS Delta Native named West Bolivar's Superintendent**

West Bolivar Consolidated School District – A Hinds County principal known for increased student performance will be the West Bolivar Consolidated School District's top administrator beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, following school board approval this week.

Dr. Will Smith, who is a Delta native, currently serves as principal of Utica Elementary Middle School. He will assume his duties as

Superintendent July 1, 2022.

"I am honored to be the new superintendent of the West Bolivar Consolidated School District. I believe that successful learning takes place in a respectful, secure and motivating environment, where everyone is held accountable. Teamwork with parents, teachers and the community are essential for school improvement," Smith said in a press release.

According to his bio, Smith has worked for 15 years in rural, urban and suburban school districts in Mississippi and Georgia, serving as teacher, assistant principal, and principal. Beginning his career in education at age 20, he served at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

Smith has a track record of enhanced relationships with key stakeholders of the schools he has served and also increased student achievement, which has been recognized by educational leaders, nonprofit organizations, researchers, and media outlets.

While at Utica, he provided innovative instructional leadership throughout the school, focusing on improved learning and teaching while promoting a positive learning environment.

As principal, he led Utica from a D rating to a B rating through the state's accountability model. While the B rating was the first in school history, Utica is projected to be an A-rated school for the '21-'22 school year.

Smith has quite a story. He is the first in his family to graduate from high school and college. He attended Jackson State University, earning his bachelor's degree in social science and master's degree in education administration. He completed the Master Teacher of Economics program at Mississippi State University. At 26, Smith earned his doctor of philosophy degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. He also served as an adjunct professor at Jackson State and Western Governors University for 10 years.

Throughout Smith's career, he has earned numerous awards, such as Best Principal in Mississippi and the Key to the Community Leadership Award through the Business Empowered Mississippi Chamber of Commerce in 2021 and the 2020 Outstanding Educational Leadership Award through the Mississippi Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. He also was named the 2020-2021 Hinds County School District's Administrator of the Year.

Smith is active in community service and instrumental in helping students get into college.

The West Bolivar Consolidated School District contracted with the Mississippi School Boards Association in the superintendent search process.