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Agency Appoints New Deputy Secretary of Education

BARRE – Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe has appointed Heather Bouchey, Ph.D., of Montpelier as her Deputy Secretary of Education, the Agency announced today.

Holcombe noted: “Heather’s extensive experience in research, leadership and education is an ideal fit for the Agency. We are very fortunate to have found someone with her talent and commitment to the success of Vermont students on our team. As one of her former employers said, “She is smart, compassionate, strategic and humble. She is exactly what we need in government.”

Bouchey will step into the role vacated by former Deputy Secretary John Fischer, who left the Agency this spring. She joins Deputy Secretary Amy Fowler and CFO Bill Talbott in overseeing the programmatic work of the 160 employees at the Agency.

“I am excited about the direction of PreK-16 education in Vermont given the Agency’s current priorities and initiatives,” said Bouchey. “My professional work to date has focused on efforts to improve secondary students’ academic success, learning and long-term outcomes, with particular attention to those students who are most vulnerable. I am thrilled about collaborating with Agency staff, school districts, educators, and community members to continue this work at a statewide level. I can’t wait to get started!”

Bouchey earned her Bachelor of Science degree at Cornell; Master’s degree from Illinois State; and her Ph.D. at the University of Denver. Since 2010, she has dedicated her career to improving opportunities for underserved students in Vermont’s rural areas, including supporting several recent initiatives with the Agency and Northeast Kingdom area high schools. After several years as a university professor, Bouchey established the Patrick and Marcelle Leahy Center for Rural Students at Lyndon State College, continuing on to become the college’s Associate Dean for Enrollment Management and Institutional Research.

Bouchey will start at the Agency in early September.

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