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New Missouri Education Commissioner Selected

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) - A new Missouri education commissioner has been chosen to replace a leader who faced frequent criticism while dealing with struggling districts.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has announced that the State Board of Education has promoted an assistant commissioner, Margaret Vandeven, to education commissioner. Vandeven replaces Chris Nicastro, who announced in September that she was resigning at the end of the year. Despite criticism that intensified in the past year, Nicastro said no one asked her to retire other than her husband.

One issue for Nicastro was an August auditor's report that found the department's process for seeking bids from consultants to study a possible overhaul of the Kansas City school district was biased and included potential conflicts of interest.

Associated Press