

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Foerster named superintendent of the Life Skills Transition Center in Grafton

BISMARCK, N.D. – North Dakota Department of Human Services Executive Director Maggie Anderson has selected Susan Foerster superintendent of the Life Skills Transition Center (LSTC) in Grafton, following the retirement of long-time superintendent Alex Schweitzer.

Foerster has served as the center's assistant superintendent since 2000 and has 34 years of experience working with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She joined the LSTC in 1981 and has held various positions including special education instructor in the school department, program coordinator, and director of residential services.

Her responsibilities have included co-chairing with Schweitzer a transition task force that focuses on developing community housing and service options and transitioning center residents to community settings. Task force members include department clinical and administrative staff, private sector providers of services for people with developmental disabilities, and advocates.

The center currently serves 61 adults and 19 youth on site and 13 individuals who live in the Grafton area. Staff members provide specialized services and residential services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities whose needs may exceed community resources. The center employs about 380 people.

"Susan has been a vital part of the development of person-centered services, community integration, and other efforts to support quality of life of residents of the center, which remains an important safety net for people who may have significant needs or experience a crisis and need temporary placement options," Anderson said.

Foerster has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from North Dakota State University and a master's of education degree from the University of North Dakota.

Foerster will assume her new responsibilities on June 1, when Schweitzer retires after a lengthy public service career. Schweitzer has been superintendent of the North Dakota State Hospital since 1995, and was named superintendent of the LSTC in March 2000.

The center is nationally accredited and recognized for its person-centered community integration efforts and specialized services that focus on each client's individual needs and goals. The center first received accreditation in 1989.

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