

## education - Murray State provost in line for Morehead presidency



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Morehead State University has chosen former Murray State University Provost Joseph "Jay" Morgan as its only finalist to replace retiring president Wayne Andrews.

According to officials, the presidential search committee chose Morgan and another finalist to visit campus, but the other candidate dropped out of the process. Morgan is scheduled to tour Morehead on March 5 and 6.

Morgan is the chief academic officer for the Council on Postsecondary Education, the state's higher education governing agency. He oversees curriculum, planning, legislative and policy development, and research and innovation among other areas. He received his undergraduate and masters degrees in agriculture at Murray State before getting his Ph.D. in agricultural education from Oklahoma State University.

In 1997, Morgan started teaching agriculture at Murray. He went on to serve as a faculty regent, associate provost and provost. In 2015, he was recruited to work at the council. He is the second council employee to lead a school; executive vice president Aaron Thompson is the interim president of Kentucky State University.

"I am excited about this opportunity, and I am very impressed with Morehead State University," Morgan said. "I look forward to continuing to work with the board of regents and visiting the campus again next month."

Council President Robert King said that while the council will be saddened to lose Morgan, "he will be a great leader for Morehead State University."

Andrews' departure was one of several announced last year. Raymond Burse left Kentucky State and James Ramsey stepped down at the University of Louisville. Western Kentucky University last week announced that Timothy Caboni would replace retiring President Gary Ransdell. Also last week, Northern Kentucky University's Geoffrey Mearns said he was leaving to take the helm at Ball State University.

Morehead State has been facing a raft of financial issues due to state budget cuts and declining student enrollment drawn from Eastern Kentucky.

In the world of hiring university presidents, hiring committees usually accede to candidates' requests to keep their names secret. Then the committee will announce one, sometimes two, "preferred" candidates who come to visit campus and talk to stakeholders.

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Caption: Morgan

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