



YUMA SUN

Appointed to local school district board

- By Blake Herzog, @BlakeHerzog
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Yuma County Superintendent of Schools Tom Tyree has appointed people this week to fill vacancies on two school district boards, which did not have enough candidates in the running to fill all available seats in this year's elections.

Tyree, who has been interviewing the candidates along with leaders of the districts involved, said both appointees have been involved in the community through their careers and personal lives.

Holly Clements will be stepping onto the Southwest Technical Education District of Yuma's board. "We had some really quality people apply for that seat, and quite a few of them," Tyree said, but the extent of her experience in agricultural education put her over the top.

Clements said Tuesday she's wanted to be on the board for the district, known as STEDY, since it was formed in 2015 after approval by local voters, but "I had just recently gotten pregnant at the time, so I didn't think I was ready, I didn't think I had the time to commit, basically.

"And my son just turned 1, and a friend of mine had called and said 'I really want you to do this,' and I said well, OK, I think I have the time now," she said.

After earning a bachelors and masters degree in agricultural sciences from the University of Arizona, Clements arrived in Yuma and taught ag for one year at Kofa High School before moving on to ag science classes at Arizona Western College for five years.

Most recently, she's been teaching agricultural business classes part-time for the University of Arizona, while raising her young family.

She applied for the volunteer STEDY board seat because "I've always felt that if you have a strong career-tech ed, you have a strong economy, because you're creating a skilled workforce. And to me, a strong CTE is good for Yuma County, and that's why it was important for me to see it succeed."

She said she wants to make sure the available funding is allocated where it needs to be to support all of the areas where STEDY offers classes. "Although my background is in ag, I'm concerned about all areas, because ag itself is really interdisciplinary. We have welders, we have mechanics, we have people working in an office, so business management skills are huge for us.

"So that's why, for me at least, my interest goes way beyond the ag industry for sure," she said.