

Group statement on conditions essential for a successful search for a new BPS superintendent

September 12th, 2018

The selection of a new Superintendent of Schools for Boston will affect the lives of more than 50,000 students and their families in every neighborhood of the city. At a time of stark inequities in access, opportunity and achievement across the district, and as extremely impactful decisions regarding the future of our school facilities are imminent, the choice of a Superintendent is a critical one.

To that end, it is imperative that the process is one that will generate the most highly qualified educational leader, and that the process is an inclusive and transparent one.

As organizations committed to the success of every student in every school, we have come together to declare that the following actions are mandatory for a successful search.

The School Committee and the mayor must state publicly that the interim superintendent will not be considered for permanent appointment. Our goal and expectation is that a quality, diverse, and experienced pool of candidates apply. Without a definitive statement regarding the Interim Superintendent, however, strong candidates may conclude that the search is not a serious one, and they will decline or be reluctant to apply.

The School Committee must approve a firm timeline for the search, and a new Superintendent must be in place as soon as possible, but certainly in time for the 2019/2020 school year. Delays in the search process will potentially hinder the likelihood of drawing highly qualified candidates and could delay the permanent hire of a superintendent for another full academic year. This would be to the detriment of the city's students and schools.

The School Committee must quickly develop a plan for a transparent search process with authentic community engagement. The critical choice of a new Boston School Superintendent must not be made behind closed doors. All stages of the process, including decision making, must include diverse student, parent, educator and community members. These voices must not be silenced in favor of private foundation and business interests.

We ask the School Committee to respond to these requests at their next meeting, on September 26th. We will provide further requests regarding the composition of the search committee.

Signed,

BEAM (Black Educators' Alliance of Massachusetts)

Boston Branch NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)

Boston Network for Black Student Achievement

Citizens for Public Schools

East Boston Schools Family Coalition

Harbor Point Community Task Force

Mass COSH (Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health)

QUEST (Quality Education for Every Student)

SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice)- Boston

Start Smart- Boston

Union of Minority Neighborhoods