

THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF BOSTON



MEMORANDUM

To: Boston School Committee
From: Jeri Robinson, Boston School Committee Chair
Subject: Recommendation of Dr. Drew Echelson as Acting Superintendent
Date: June 21, 2022

As you know, the Superintendent Search Committee has been hard at work since March, incorporating extensive community feedback into the Superintendent job description, reviewing applications, and conducting several rounds of interviews with the candidates. The Search Committee has wrapped up its work and is recommending the finalists to the School Committee for your consideration. We expect to schedule public interviews this week, on June 23 and 24, and I am excited and hopeful that the Committee will vote to offer one of the finalists the position of Superintendent before Dr. Cassellius' departure on June 30.

I am mindful of the District's need for stability amidst the urgent work of transforming our school system into the foundation for healthy, thriving communities: the ongoing discussions with DESE to address the May 2022 District Review, negotiations with the Boston Teachers Union, and preparation for summer learning and the 2022-23 school year. To ensure continuity of BPS operations during this transition period, I have been working together with the BPS Senior Leadership Team and the Mayor's Office over the last several months to prepare for the next Superintendent's first day. Accordingly, please accept my recommendation to the School Committee for the appointment of Dr. Drew Echelson, BPS Deputy Superintendent of Academics, as Acting Superintendent, effective June 30, 2022.

Dr. Echelson has served as Deputy Superintendent in BPS since 2020 and has served as Superintendent of Schools in Waltham (MA). In his current role, Dr. Echelson serves as the Chief Academic Officer, overseeing, among others, the Office of Special Education and the Office of Multilingual Learners – two critical areas that require sustained, thoughtful reform to meet the needs of BPS students. In recent months, Dr. Echelson has played an integral role in the ongoing negotiations with DESE, as well as the BTU. Dr. Echelson was not a candidate for the Superintendent position, and he is well positioned to assist the District's next leader in their transition into the job.

Dr. Echelson's appointment would cover the time period between Dr. Cassellius's planned departure and the start date of the new Superintendent. I believe that this Acting appointment is necessary for a smooth transition and to ensure that the critical work of the District continues steadfastly focused on our students.

Chair's Memo to Boston School Committee

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I look forward to moving quickly with Dr. Echelson's appointment to provide the District with the necessary stability during this period of transition, and I am grateful for your partnership and your dedication to Boston's young people. I request that the Committee take action on this recommendation at our June 29, 2022 meeting.