



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SUPERINTENDENT CANDIDATE INTERVIEW: MARIE IZQUIERDO**

April 22 2019

The Boston School Committee held a public interview with Marie Izquierdo, a candidate for the position of Boston Public Schools (BPS) Superintendent, on April 22, 2019 at 1 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee Chamber, Roxbury, Massachusetts. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael Loconto; Vice Chairperson Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael O’Neill; Dr. Lorna Rivera; Jeri Robinson; Quoc Tran; and student representative Evelyn Reyes.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

None.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Loconto led the pledge of allegiance and announced that interpretation services were available in Spanish. He welcomed and introduced Ms. Izquierdo, who currently serves as the Chief Academic Officer for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) in Florida. He also thanked the Superintendent Search Committee and public interview panelists for their hard work.

Ms. Izquierdo made an opening statement, describing her personal background, her experience as an educator at MDCPS, and her desire to lead BPS.

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SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Ms. Reyes asked Ms. Izquierdo if she is supportive of student advocacy. Ms. Izquierdo discussed the importance of student voice and said that student input is incorporated at all levels of decision making at MDCPS. Ms. Reyes asked Ms. Izquierdo how should would balance the Mayor's priorities with the community's priorities should they differ. Ms. Izquierdo responded that she would work collaboratively with the Mayor's office and maintain focus on students.

Ms. Robinson asked Ms. Izquierdo her thoughts on early childhood education. Ms. Izquierdo responded that investment in early childhood is critically important. Ms. Robinson asked Ms. Izquierdo her about her experience with closing opportunity and achievement gaps. Ms. Izquierdo discussed her work helping to significantly reduce the number of MDCPS schools rated D & F. She said that the quality of instruction in English Language Learner programs is critical and noted that her team has made inclusion a priority.

Dr. Coleman asked Ms. Izquierdo her thoughts about comprehensive schools that provide wrap around supports for students and offer services to the community after the school day ends. Ms. Izquierdo discussed the importance of district partnerships and said that schools should be utilized after the school day with additional supports. Dr. Coleman asked Ms. Izquierdo what she would like to be known for in 5-10 years. She responded that she would like to be known for building coherence in a large urban school district, making BPS central office more service-oriented, and preparing students to graduate college and career ready.

Dr. Rivera asked Ms. Izquierdo about her experience hiring and retaining teachers of color. Ms. Izquierdo said that students need role models who look like them. She said she would partner with youth development programs like Becoming a Man. She would also target post-secondary institutions with a critical mass of students of color, develop non-traditional teacher development pipelines, use exit surveys to understand attrition, and incentivize teachers to work with the most fragile students. Dr. Rivera asked Ms. Izquierdo her thoughts on school choice and charter schools. Ms. Izquierdo responded that she is a proponent of choice, saying students should have a portfolio of high quality programmatic options. She said that BPS must innovate and offer high quality options in order to increase enrollment. She said that she would work to right-size the district's footprint through BuildBPS.

Mr. Tran asked Ms. Izquierdo what equity means to her. She responded that those who have less require more support. She cited BPS' use of the Opportunity Index and Weighted Student Funding as examples of tools that are helping to achieve parity and raise student outcomes. Mr. Tran also asked Ms. Izquierdo about her knowledge of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). She responded that because BPS' special education rate is higher than the national average, she would want to examine the district's assessment process to look for over-identification, and try to increase the Medicaid reimbursement.

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Mr. O'Neill asked Ms. Izquierdo to describe three good impressions she has of BPS, as well as three challenges in facing the district. She responded that she is attracted to Boston because BPS has a strong equity agenda, is rich with existing and potential partners, and she wants to be a vehicle for the School Committee to achieve its goals. She cited as challenges closing achievement gaps, increasing the quality of schools, and reducing or slowing the growth of the transportation budget.

Mr. O'Neill then asked Ms. Izquierdo to discuss how she would assemble her senior leadership team and how she approaches making difficult decisions. She responded that she recognizes and develops talent and finds people who complement each other. She discussed the importance of succession management planning. Ms. Izquierdo said that she makes data-driven decisions and works closely with constituencies, citing as an example making changes to bilingual programming in MDCPS.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked Ms. Izquierdo how she would unify the community. Ms. Izquierdo responded that she has learned about the importance of being accessible by working with the superintendent of MDCPS. She said that she would develop a culture of responsiveness.

Mr. Loconto asked Ms. Izquierdo about the accountability system in Florida. She discussed MDCPS' theory of action and focus on standards alignment and professional development, and aligning resources to the students with the greatest needs.

Dr. Rivera asked Ms. Izquierdo about her knowledge of Question 2 and the LOOK Act. Ms. Izquierdo called the outcomes of Question 2, saying there is no one-size-fits-all model for bilingual education. She emphasized the importance of teacher quality, standards, high quality materials and professional development. She expressed excitement about the opportunity to assess students in their home language.

Dr. Coleman asked Ms. Izquierdo if racial and economic integration is still a relevant strategy for closing the achievement gap. She discussed the importance of raising quality across all schools and utilizing external partners to provide wraparound services and help break the cycle of poverty.

Ms. Izquierdo presented her closing statement, citing her experience moving up the ranks as an educational leader in a diverse, large urban school district. She said that in addition to being a problem solver, she is a unifier and a systems thinker. If selected as BPS Superintendent, she pledged to listen, learn, and lead, placing children at the center of all decision making.

ADJOURN

Mr. Loconto recognized Dr. Keith Motley, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, who was in the audience.

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Mr. Loconto invited BPS stakeholders to learn more about the candidates and view the public interview schedule at bostonpublicschools.org/superintendentsearch. He encouraged people to complete the online surveys, which will remain open until midnight on Sunday, April 28. Feedback can also be provided via email at superintendentsearch@bostonpublicschools.org. The School Committee is tentatively scheduled to vote on the selection of a superintendent on May 1st.

At approximately 3 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary