

Boston Public Schools

Superintendent of Schools Desired Characteristics

The Boston Public Schools (BPS) is seeking a strong educational leader who is committed to addressing the issues of Equity, Coherence, and Innovation. *The next leader of BPS needs to have the skills necessary to lead the nation's oldest school district to become the first school district in the nation to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps, while fostering a culture of excellence in every school and providing central office managers and school leaders with the support needed to do so.*

The Superintendent must be a visionary, innovative, and results-oriented education leader with a demonstrated ability to manage a culturally diverse large urban district. The leader of the District is expected to provide innovative and forward-thinking solutions that eliminate both opportunity and achievement gaps with a specific focus on equity and also reduces the dropout rate.

The Superintendent must have the proven ability to recruit and retain exceptionally talented, diverse, and culturally proficient individuals to build effective teams to deliver results for students. The Superintendent must be a politically astute problem solver with outstanding communication skills and possess rigorous fiscal oversight expertise to address the District's current financial needs.

The Superintendent must possess strong interpersonal skills that enable collaboration and consensus building to secure the necessary political and financial support for the short- and long-term goals of the District. The Superintendent must be highly visible and communicatively proficient to advocate for pre-k-12 public education, at both statewide and national levels, and to advocate in collaboration with the local community. The Superintendent must have a record of successful experience in managing systemic change in a large organization and the proven skills to building an effective Team. The Superintendent must be digitally literate; a digital age person who is globally aware and has a passion to engage, empower, prepare and educate all children for the 21st century and global economy as well as anticipate technological progress and its use in the classroom. The Superintendent and all BPS staff are expected to place service to students as the primary focus, to encourage culturally and linguistically diverse parent, family, and community involvement, to set and achieve goals that have a broad base of support, and to be accountable for those outcomes.

The Superintendent must possess the competence to work with a mayorally-appointed School Committee, participate as a member of the Mayor's Cabinet, and proactively build bridges with all key stakeholders and entire school communities during times of transition, and prior to the implementation of new, planned, and proposed initiatives.

Minimum Qualifications:

- **Education:** Master's Degree
- **Certification:** Active and valid MA School Superintendent License Required
- **Experience:**
 - 10+ years of related supervisory experience
 - Experience in public school, state or local government, nonprofit or a business of similar size and complexity
 - Massachusetts and Boston area context/experience preferred
 - Experience managing community, student, parent, stakeholder and/or board relationships
 - Demonstrated ability to develop policy, strategic plans and related initiatives

Skills and Qualities

The ideal candidate will possess many of the following key skills and qualities identified by the BPS community, and/or be able to demonstrate the knowledge, experience, and mindsets needed to lead this work.

1. Elimination of the Opportunity and Achievement Gap:

- Possesses a proven record of excellence and equity of and an urgency for improving educational opportunities for and proficiencies of all students, along with the competency to develop and execute systemic reforms to address these needs.
- Has demonstrated the ability necessary to address and eliminate the achievement and opportunity gaps, and to improve educational outcomes for all students from early childhood to college and career readiness.
- Displays cultural competence to address the myriad of realities associated with meeting the needs of all students in a diverse urban setting, including culture, disability, equity, gender, language acquisition, poverty, prejudice, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and success as adults in a diverse global society.

2. Instructional Leadership:

- Possesses a strong understanding of the challenges of urban education; understands Boston's history of desegregation, as well as its current minority/majority student population with a high proportion of Blacks and Latino students, English Language Learners, and Special Education students.
- Evidences a strong commitment to the academic, emotional, physical and social development of the whole child.
- Values and relies on data when making decisions and in the development and implementation of comprehensive monitoring and accountability systems for the academic, personnel, operations, and fiscal management of the District.
- Displays tolerance for risk-taking, when appropriate, to better meet the needs of students and/or the District.
- Knowledgeable of best practices in K1-12 instruction, school-based transformation, garnering public support for expansion of early childhood and updating facilities.

- Possesses a track record of positive results in improving the performance of Black and Latino students, especially males, as well as Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners.
- Has professional success in dealing with the needs of students for critical thinking, the use of technology, and the ability to participate fully in society, and the specific types of challenges facing the Boston Public Schools:
 - ❖ Improving literacy instruction and providing differentiated learning for high achievement and to close gaps
 - ❖ Successfully educating a high proportion of English Language Learners with multiple languages
 - ❖ Successfully educating a high number of Students with Disabilities (especially male students of color)
 - ❖ Providing differentiated programming to support a wide variety of skill-building and interests of students, including a focus on developing strong vocational education programs
 - ❖ Working with schools requiring targeted focused support and schools requiring broad comprehensive support with state monitoring (ie those at risk of or in turnaround status)
 - ❖ Providing professional development for school-based and central office leaders and staff, resulting in sustained and measurable improvements in classroom instruction and related student outcomes, including overall strategy, funding, and program evaluation.

3. Management and Operations:

- Capable of effectively and efficiently leading a system of schools operating under a variety of structures with varying degrees of autonomy and flexibility in decision-making.
- Has demonstrated leadership in system-wide change to promote better learning outcomes through the effective use of available resources.
- Has the executive skills to recruit, develop, evaluate, collaborate with, and retain outstanding administrators, teachers, and staff members at all levels that are representative of the diversity of Boston.
- Experienced with capital and operational needs to ensure students are attending schools in state-of-the-art facilities by garnering the requisite community and political support to reach this goal.
- Experienced with creating positive and collaborative relationships with unions/professional associations and effectively managing contract or labor agreements.
- Success in dealing with managerial/operational issues such as:
 - ❖ Teacher and staff diversity in recruitment, hiring, development, and retention
 - ❖ Issues in student assignment and school choice, given racial and ethnic equity concerns and the inequitable assignment of high-needs students
 - ❖ Major capital facilities plans for school buildings to be designed and implemented in the context of grade reconfiguration, excess seats, and equity issues
 - ❖ Weighted Student Funding in budgeting

- ❖ The central office role in the support and accountability of School Leaders in a system of schools with differentiated autonomy

4. Family and Community Engagement:

- Possesses the excellent communication and management skills necessary to work collaboratively with the School Committee and appropriate stakeholders in the development, refinement and/or periodic review of the District's mission, vision, and comprehensive strategic plan to ensure that they provide the District focus and guidance in short- and long-term planning and decision-making.
- Track record of and/or commitment to being visible and actively engaged in the schools and community.
- Displays the ability to develop effective and efficient partnerships with the many community organizations, parent and family groups, not-for-profit agencies, businesses, foundations, institutions of higher education, faith-based communities, public officials and other groups, including building upon a strong track record that ensures every school is led by a capable, qualified school leader.
- Has demonstrated success in engaging parents and families as full partners in the education of their children.
- Displays ability to be successful in developing respectful working relationships to genuinely engage with key stakeholders, including students, parents, families, teachers, school leaders, staff, bargaining units, community, advocates, foundations, partner organizations, media, elected officials, the School Committee, and the Mayor.

5. Professional Culture:

- Has proven outstanding leadership skills that demonstrate effective and deliberate communication.
- Has an ability to passionately motivate others
- Maintains an openness to innovative ideas to advance the vision and mission of an organization with an annual budget comparable in size to a large urban school district.
- Demonstrates a collaborative leadership style that is open-minded, inclusive, and decisive.
- Creates a collaborative culture among administrators and teachers that focuses on supporting the work of teaching and learning in the classroom and throughout the school.
- Demonstrates strong leadership skills to guide systemic improvement in large institutions and champion public education in Boston, including broad collaboration with other Boston schools for the benefit of all children within the city, while ensuring acquisition of adequate resources and attract students to the school system.
- Displays knowledge and understanding of the historic political environment of Boston, including the structure of a School Committee appointed by the Mayor, and strong parent and community organization involvement.
- Has effective interpersonal and communication skills (verbal, written, and listening), including the demonstrated ability to communicate with key

stakeholders in a variety of public and private forums.

- Displays courage in decision making that will always put the needs of students first, regardless of conflict and criticism; engages in regular, direct conversation and dialogue with students.
- Shows self-awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses and has a documented professional record in building teams of education and management leaders to effectively meet the full range of challenges needed for successful, systemic and institutional change in a diverse urban school district like Boston.
- Exhibits a proven track record in managing large systems, including the application of and use of current technology to improve efficiency and responsiveness.

Current Challenges

The next Superintendent will partner with the BPS community to address a number of ongoing system-wide challenges, including:

- Closing persistent opportunity and achievement gaps by fostering opportunities for marginalized students (Black, Latino, English Language Learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged) to flourish across all areas of their education.
- Implementing BuildBPS, the district's 10-year educational and facilities master plan, to increase equity, expand access to quality, and reduce transitions for families.
- Advocating for increased state and federal funding to ensure BPS has the financial foundation needed to educate all students.
- Addressing the complex needs of the district's high population of special education students and English Language Learners.
- Increasing staff diversity, to ensure that our teachers and administrators reflect the students they serve.
- Providing targeted, ongoing support for the district's lowest performing schools.
- Redesigning the high school experience to prepare every young person for postsecondary, career, and life-long success.
- Addressing the varying admissions processes in high school admittance.

Terms: Managerial Tier E (Exempt). Individual employment contract. 12 months. Must be available beyond 40 hours per week for meetings of the Boston School Committee,

frequent evening and weekend events, as well as for emergencies, to meet the needs of the district. Boston Residency Required.

The Boston Public Schools, in accordance with its nondiscrimination policies, does not discriminate in its programs, facilities, or employment or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, criminal record (inquiries only), disability, homelessness, sex/gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, genetics or military status, and does not tolerate any form of retaliation, or bias-based intimidation, threat or harassment that demeans individuals' dignity or interferes with their ability to learn or work.