



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Special Meeting

June 14, 2022

Called for 6:00 p.m., and broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of purpose of considering the appointment of the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services

Members Present: Member Bhambi ABSENT; Member Fantini, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Vice-Chair Rachel, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

The Chair read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is being televised, votes will not be taken and there will be no public comment. The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with the following roll call: Member Fantini ABSENT; Vice-Chair Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Member Bhambi ABSENT; Mayor Siddiqui YEA. Member Fantini joined the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

Mayor Siddiqui turned the floor over to Dr. Greer who provided an overview of the position and the reasoning for the vacancy. There was a robust search and a screening committee led by Dr. Turk. The screening Committee vetted out potential candidates, conducted preliminary interviews over a week ago and have brought two candidates to the Committee for the position of Assistant Superintendent of Student Services – Dr. Dawn Bentley and Dr. Barbara Mullen.

The Mayor suggested starting with two questions per Committee member (in a round-robin format), and used the following questions to interview both candidates.

Mayor Siddiqui:

- CPS is explicitly committed to becoming an antiracist district, one that recognizes and affirms the experiences of students with a variety of racial, cultural, religious, gender, and immigration - amongst other - identities. Please share specific examples of your work in inclusive practices and elaborate on her experience in leading and facilitating anti-racism, equity, inclusion, and belonging?

Member Wilson:

- Looking at the barriers to racial equity Building Equity Bridges identified, which one resonates with you today? For what reason?
- When there is a conflict between a family and the Special Education department about what services should be provided, what systems and/or process do you use to resolve the situation?
- Data produced in 2019 showed that 85% of fifth graders were reading below grade level. How would you ensure students on IEPs obtain the skills they need to read on grade level? How would you lead conversations with families and teachers regarding this situation?

Member Weinstein:

- Please share your experience with students (and their families) that are double exceptional and how, in your previous roles, you have engaged services for them.
- What kind of data, including qualitative and observational, do you use to improve student outcomes and better understand what is actually happening for individual students?

Member Rojas:

- Talk to us about your leadership and management style. If colleagues were to describe you in three words, what would they say?

Member Fantini:

- What do you see as the key measures in this role, to which you would hold yourself accountable?
- Asked about Dr. Bentley's leadership style? Does she like to meet with her team weekly, monthly?
- Besides panorama is there any additional tools used or preferred?
- What is your philosophy of error and how do you look at your own mistakes? Please give us an example of an error of leadership that you have made and how you respond and lead differently now?

Vice Chair Rachel:

- What is your interest in serving in Cambridge? Why Cambridge, why now?
- What practices would you want to import from Acton-Boxborough and what would you expect to be different challenges in CPS?

Mayor Siddiqui:

- How have you implemented an initiative or program that improved student success outcomes and how was that initiative monitored?
- What else should we ask you? What else would you like to share?

Dr. Greer introduced the first candidate of the evening, Dr. Dawn Bentley at 6:04 p.m. Dr. Bentley has been serving as the Assistant Superintendent of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Acton-Boxborough since 2019. Dr. Bentley's interview began at 6:05 p.m.

Following closing remarks from Dr. Bentley and no other questions from the Committee, Dr. Bentley's interview ended at 6:47 p.m.

At 6:48 p.m., Mayor Siddiqui announced that the Committee will take a 10-minute recess before returning at 7:00 p.m. for the second interview.

Dr. Greer introduced the second candidate of the evening, Dr. Barbara Mullen at 7:00 p.m. She has been serving as the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Student Services since October 2021. The Committee followed the same prompt with the two questions per Committee member for the interview. The same questions used for the previous interview was used for Dr. Mullen's interview.

Following closing remarks from Dr. Mullen and no other questions from the Committee, Dr. Mullen's interview ended at 7:51 p.m.

Mayor Siddiqui summarized the next steps. She also encouraged the members to provide any feedback to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will make a recommendation for an appointment to the Committee at the next Regular Meeting on June 21st

On a motion by Member Fantini, seconded by Vice-Chair Rachel, on the following roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 p.m.: Member Fantini YEA; Vice-Chair Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson ABSENT; Member Bhambi ABSENT; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Attest:

Ariel B. Kennebrew

Ariel B. Kennebrew
Executive Secretary to the School Committee