



**C A M B R I D G E  
S C H O O L C O M M I T T E E**

**(Official Minutes)**

**Special Meeting**

**June 25, 2024**

Called for 5:00 p.m., on Tuesday, June 25, 2024, broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge for the purpose discussing Superintendent transition plans and other related items.

Members Present: Member Harding, Member Hudson, Vice Chair Hunter, Member Rachel, Member Rojas ABSENT, Member Weinstein ABSENT, Mayor Simmons

Also Present: Dr. Carolyn Turk, Director of Education Policy, Office of the Mayor

**Mayor Simmons** in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

The Chair read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is being televised, votes to be taken and there would be no public comment.

The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with a roll call of members present: Vice Chair Hunter PRESENT, Member Rachel PRESENT, Member Rojas ABSENT, Member Harding PRESENT, Member Hudson PRESENT, Member Weinstein ABSENT, Mayor Simmons PRESENT

**Mayor Simmons** gave opening remarks. He outlined the goal of developing a framework of a plan and the hiring a short-term interim superintendent. She passed the floor to Dr. Carolyn Turk, who gave the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

Highlights of Dr. Turk's presentation include:

Considerations for Selecting an Interim Superintendent

- Familiarity
- Available to commit for a flexible period of time
- Passionate and committed about serving at CPS
- Familiar with CPS culture
- Understanding that position is temporary
- Desire to listen, observe and engage.

Narrowing the focus:

- Duties performed solely by the Superintendent
- Duties completed under the direction and supervision of the Superintendent
- Importance of considering the duration of the interim appointment & time of year of the appointment

Examples of Immediate Needs (June – September)

- Ongoing communications with families
- Summer retreat with Executive Leadership Team
- Summer programs and facilities projects
- Approval of grants and grant spending
- School Committee preparation
- DESE preparation and submissions

- Student Registration Center ramp up
- Ensuring smooth launch of 24-25 school year
- Universal Preschool launch and implementation

Following the presentation, **Mayor Simmons** solicited the Committee members' questions and comments. **Member Harding** shared that he is looking for someone to tackle some of the district's issues so the new Superintendent can focus on the future. He is also open to the notion of an interim candidate becoming the permanent superintendent. He highlighted that Committee members have not expressed their opinions and he expressed his desire for a Committee retreat. **Member Rachel** shared her concern about the potential of the number of leadership transitions – temporary interim, interim and permanent. **Vice Chair Hunter** noted their comments and shared that at this time, there was only a recommendation for a temporary interim superintendent and proposed that Chief Operating Officer (COO) serve in this role for 30-90 days and no longer. In the absence of a deputy superintendent, the COO position is the next in line. She shared that **Mayor Simmons** and she had recent conversations with COO Murphy and he is willing to serve in this role. In addition, Dr. Greer recommended COO Murphy as well.

The Committee discussed the hiring timeline, challenges of hiring during certain time periods, MASC recommendations, and the importance of involving all Committee members in the selection process. **Member Hudson** voiced her concern that important initiatives should continue to move forward such as proposed updates to the math curriculum. There was a robust discussion regarding the inclusion of the "30-90 days" timeframe in the proposed motion. **Member Harding** suggested having the option of appointing COO Murphy for up to one year to allow the Committee more flexibility. **Member Rachel** aligned with Member Harding's suggestion in amending the motion to include "up to a year." There was discussion of who would assume the responsibilities of the COO role with Mr. Murphy's increased responsibilities, followed by a detailed discussion regarding drafting the motion to allow for the most flexibility.

The following Motion was put forth by Mayor Simmons:

The School Committee votes to appoint Chief Operating Officer Murphy as interim superintendent for a period of 90 days to one year.

On a motion by Mayor Simmons seconded by Member Harding the Motion was approved on the following roll call vote: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Weinstein ABSENT; Mayor Simmons YEA

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of moving reconsideration of the foregoing vote: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Weinstein ABSENT; Mayor Simmons YEA

The Rules having been suspended, on a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Member Rachel to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, on the following roll call vote: Vice Chair Hunter NAY; Member Rachel NAY; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Harding NAY; Member Hudson NAY; Member Weinstein ABSENT; Mayor Simmons NAY.

**Mayor Simmons** shared next steps in the process which would include connecting with COO Murphy, reaching out to Attorney MacFarlane to draft a contract and working with Ms. Christo to schedule a forthcoming meeting.

On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter seconded by Member Hudson the meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Weinstein ABSENT; Mayor Simmons YEA. (6:20 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo  
Interim Executive Secretary to the School Committee