

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

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August 19, 2019

Dear Brookline Parents, Guardians and Staff,

Following former Superintendent Bott's July 19 announcement of his resignation, we have made great strides to secure leadership for the school district. On July 22, we established the Interim Superintendent Preliminary Screening Committee. Over the past four weeks the committee worked diligently to identify an interim superintendent.

Mr. Bott's final day with the school district was Friday, August 9. At a meeting of the School Committee on August 12, we voted to appoint Dr. Nicole Gittens, the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, as the acting superintendent. We would like to thank Dr. Gittens for her willingness to serve the school district in this short-term capacity.

At this time we are very pleased to announce that, at our meeting this evening, the School Committee unanimously voted to appoint Ben Lummis to be the interim superintendent of the Public Schools of Brookline for the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Lummis currently serves as the Special Assistant to the Superintendent for Strategy & Performance. He will begin as interim superintendent as soon as his contract is finalized. Dr. Gittens remains acting superintendent until this transition is complete.

The search for an interim superintendent was thorough. The screening committee met five times between July 22 and August 19. Members of the committee include Suzanne Federspiel, Jennifer Monopoli, David Pearlman and Helen Charlupski. Lisa Richardson, Director of Human Resources, and Lesley Ryan Miller, Pierce School principal, participated as advisors to the committee. The committee actively recruited possible candidates and sought recommendations from those who declined to be considered for the position. We contacted the executive directors of both the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS) on a number of occasions to consult with them regarding prospective candidates. We also contacted members of the Boston College, Boston University and Harvard University graduate schools of education for suggestions on possible candidates. Finally, we also received suggestions from the community - all of which we followed up on. In total, we contacted more than 20 retired superintendents and deputy superintendents and encouraged them to apply.

This is an extremely challenging time of year to hire anyone in the field of education. We had six applications, of which we invited three candidates to interview with us. The candidate pool of applicants was diverse in terms of race, gender and age. After the interviews, the committee unanimously voted to recommend Mr. Lummis for interim superintendent.

For the past four years, Mr. Lummis has served the Brookline community as the Special Assistant to the

Superintendent for Strategy & Performance. As Special Assistant, he has gained a deep knowledge of the Brookline school district and the vast array of work that is happening across all of our schools.

As Special Assistant, Mr. Lummis has played a leadership role in areas related to curriculum and instruction, policy, capital projects, contract negotiations, professional development, and community engagement. He has worked on, and has in-depth knowledge of, all of the major school-based and district-wide priorities. By working side by side with Superintendent Bott, and closely with all principals, teachers and administrators, and with the School Committee, Select Board, Town Boards and Commissions, Town departments, PTO leaders, and community members, Mr. Lummis has the relationships needed to successfully lead the district through the 2019-2020 school year.

Over the course of his 25-year career in public education, Mr. Lummis has filled many roles. He started as a middle school English teacher in Needham and Cambridge, has coached principals, supported schools and teacher teams in redesigning their schools to create a more well-rounded school day that included arts, enrichment, physical activity and more hands on learning, worked with union and state educational leaders, and led international professional development for teachers and administrators to learn about the education systems in Finland, China, England. Mr. Lummis also served as a Cambridge School Committee member in the early 2000s. Mr. Lummis earned his BA from the University of Michigan and his Masters in Teaching from Tufts University.

During the interview process Mr. Lummis shared his enthusiasm for the district's work and stressed his ability to provide a bridge to the next superintendent. The committee was impressed by his dedication to finding collaborative solutions and commitment to engaging the community in resolving issues.

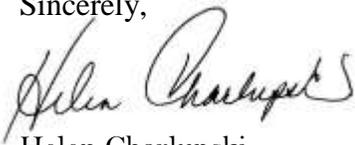
We strongly believe that Mr. Lummis will provide the leadership, skills, knowledge and commitment to successfully guide the school district over the coming school year, and we stand ready to support him in this important work.

The committee is aware that because this is the first time Mr. Lummis will serve in a Superintendent's role we will need to provide the proper supports to ensure his success. To that end, we recommend that a retired superintendent serve as a coach/mentor to Mr. Lummis over the course of the next school year.

The process for finding a new, permanent superintendent is scheduled to commence shortly after the start of the school year. It is imperative that we create a process and framework that will encourage the best candidates to apply. We want candidates to know that our community values public education and our educators. Many districts across the Commonwealth will be searching for superintendents this year, and we want to be sure that Brookline is at the top of everyone's list.

We will continue to keep you updated as the search process for the permanent superintendent unfolds, and we thank you in advance for your continued support in this period of transition.

Sincerely,



Helen Charlupski
Brookline School Committee and
Chair, Interim Superintendent Preliminary Screening Committee



Julie Schreiner-Oldham, Chair
Brookline School Committee