

Joint statement on PPS leadership transitions

Over the next year, Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) will experience significant and important transitions in leadership. The current superintendent, Dr. Anthony Hamlet, is expected to resign effective October 1, 2021. On September 29, 2021, the school board will announce an interim superintendent and begin a national search for a new superintendent, presumably starting in early 2022.

We see pending leadership changes as a necessary opportunity for PPS to restore the community's trust in the district. PPS's next leader deserves community support so they can effectuate the changes our students and families need. As such, we write to share our expectations of the board in navigating pending leadership changes.

We believe it is important that the job description for the new superintendent explicitly include the following competencies: success in overcoming achievement gaps and recognizing historical inequities in public education, broader societal inequities, and diverse stakeholder interests; ethical decision making; fiscal responsibility; success in collaborating with school board members and diverse community and education stakeholders; success in promoting transparency in district decisions; success in educating complex learners; and fairness in hiring and promotion decisions.

Our further expectations of the board are as follows.

- The board will hire an interim superintendent with no involvement in Dr. Hamlet's hiring and no culpability in decisions that resulted in ethics violations as documented by the State Ethics Commission.
- The board will document lessons learned from Dr. Hamlet's tenure in order to facilitate an effective search and empower the new superintendent. At a minimum, the board will understand what led to the transportation crisis that impacted school start dates and times and why existing procedures were ineffective in identifying proven ethics violations. Prior to interviewing permanent superintendent candidates, the board will publicly release a report summarizing these findings and explain how they will be used to select candidates.
- The board will identify best practices urban schools use to collaborate with families and community stakeholders to increase transparency, inclusiveness, and draw on the many strengths of the Pittsburgh community. The board will draw on the experience of organizations like A+ Schools and the Center for Urban Education at Pitt to ensure this work is effective.
- The board will form an ad hoc committee that includes diverse families from all nine districts and other community stakeholders that will collaborate with the board to create the search process and job description.
- The board will identify and pursue best practices with respect to searches for

superintendents by examining processes in other districts. The board will utilize the expertise and networks of organizations like Council of Chief State School Officers, the Urban League, the Center for Black Educator Development, Reconstruction, Chiefs for Change, the Center for Urban Education at Pitt, and A+ Schools to assist in its search.

- The board will communicate to the public how they plan to conduct the search process, leaving sufficient time to accommodate public input before beginning a search.
- The board will halt any further contracts with ed-tech companies and outsourced health clinics until after the permanent superintendent is installed.

These expectations are, in part, aimed at helping the board select candidates most prepared for success in a complex urban school system. A majority of PPS students are Black and Brown and this District has for years failed in its obligation to educate all of its students at a high level. We need a leader with a plan to both close gaps in opportunities and outcomes and attract new families to Pittsburgh schools through a competent administration and stewardship of our abundant resources. We believe if our school system is to be truly representative of our community, we need leadership that is able to handle the complexity of the task while rallying broad community support for public education.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding our proposals above and stand ready to assist and support the board as needed in meeting the needs of PPS families and employees.

The 167 cosigners listed below represent stakeholders across all nine of Pittsburgh Public Schools districts

Name	Affiliation	District
Mike Blackhurst	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Shallegra Moye	Pittsburgh community member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Lacy Reed	PPS alumnus	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Barbara Griffin	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Marjorie Minkler	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Michele D. Levine	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Eric Goldberg	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Elizabeth Blackhurst	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Andrea Goldstein	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Karey Kluesner	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)

Ashley Hezel	Former PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Walker Evans	PPS parent	District 6 (William Gallagher)
Jessica Ruffin	Pittsburgh community member	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Christy L. McGuire	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Dr. Cheryl Hall-Russell	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)

Name	Affiliation	District
Tanya Baronti	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Stevie Sheridan	Future PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Donna Smith	Pittsburgh community member	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Randall Walsh	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Dr. Ron Sofo	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Cortney Fischer	PPS staff member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Jennifer Waldron	Former PPS parent	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Matthew Chinman	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
CYNTHIA MUFFY MENDOZA	PPS parent	District 9 (Veronica Edwards)
Lynda Wrenn	Former PPS School Board President	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Caitlin Spear	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Katy Holt	Pittsburgh community member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Ashley Varrato	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Ana A Wolfowicz	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Rose Hely Reed	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Eric Stoller	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Anne Sekula	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Juleen Rodakowski	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)

Ashley McClain	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Renee Robinson	Pittsburgh community member	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Andrew King	PPS alumnus	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Karen Hochberg	Pittsburgh community member	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
david a morris	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Ken Segel	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Susan Bails	PPS alumnus	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Abigail Horn	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Elly Fisher	Pittsburgh community member	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Akwasi Opoku-Dakwa	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Ruth A Stetler	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Sharon Ross	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Cristina Ruggiero	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Tracey Reed	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Shay Lowry	PPS parent	District 9 (Veronica Edwards)
jennifer mcgonagle	PPS staff member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Laird Cooper	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Dr. Heather B. Cunningham	Pittsburgh community member	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)

Name	Affiliation	District
Grace Tan	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Lara Stunkel	PPS parent	District 9 (Veronica Edwards)
Elizabeth VotrubaDrzal	Pittsburgh Resident	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Christina Dixon	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Ed Wrenn, M.D.	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Adale Sholock	Pittsburgh community member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh

Aurora Sharrard	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Seth Hufford	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Susan Brownlee	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Julie Lazzaro	PPS staff member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Scott Matthews	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Janet Kinnane	parent of former PPS students	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Carolyn B Reed	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Jill Weiss	Parent of a PPS alumnus	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Kelly Hiser	PPS parent	District 6 (William Gallagher)
Jay Armant	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Neetha Khan	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Cate Axtman	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Amanda Godley	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Barbara Baumann	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Sara E London	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Carey Harris	PPS parent	District 7 (Cynthia Falls)
Melissa Butler	Former PPS teacher; Pgh resident	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Bibhuti Aryal	PPS alumnus	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Cassie Quigley	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Wendy King	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Harry Hochheiser	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Susan Hoppe	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Michael Hezel	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Emily Lovallo	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Jada Shirriel	PPS alumnus	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh

Casey Johnson	Pittsburgh community member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Chryssoula Barbas	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Marni Pastor	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Gina Ann Garcia	PPS parent	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)

Name	Affiliation	District
Sarah Galusha	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Marijke Hecht	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Sabina Deitrick	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Joe Moore	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Allyce Pinchback-Johnson	PPS alumnus, PPS former employee, Pittsburgh community member	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Diondre Johnson	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
La'Fay Pinchback	PPS retired teacher	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Ashley Comans	Wilksburg Resident	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Andrea DeVries	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Daniel Scheid	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Tammy Thompson	PPS parent	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Meredith Bortz	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Denele Biggs	PPS parent	District 7 (Cynthia Falls)
Nancy A Krygowski	Pittsburgh community member	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
LaKesha Silver	PPS alumnus	District 6 (William Gallagher)
Elizabeth Bush	Parent of PPS alumni	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Pat Krimmel	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Carol Nichols	Future PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Chris T Hendrickson	Pittsburgh community member	District 7 (Cynthia Falls)

Dorie Taylor	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Maurice Bajcz	PPS parent	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Barbara Granito	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Virginia Weeber	Parent of PPS alumni	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Deborah Polk	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Tereneh Idia	Pittsburgh community member	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Ruth F. Kolb	Parent of PPS alumni	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Julie A Kascal	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Maryn Formley	Pittsburgh community member	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Neepa Majumdar	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Emma Gilmore Kieran	Pittsburgh community member	District 8 (Kevin Carter)
Sarah trbovic	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Kristen Tsapis	Pittsburgh Community Member AND Former PPS Parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Sherry Andetson	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Anne McCafferty	Pittsburgh community member	District 3 (Sala Udin)

Name	Affiliation	District
Karla Boos	Pittsburgh community member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Nikole Fiedler	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Michelle Hebert	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Peter Sandrian	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Heather Hopson	Single Mom Defined	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Jennifer Miller	PPS parent and PPS teacher	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Heather Conrad	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Rachel Rosenfeld	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)

Deirdra Bullock	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Sara Segel	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Lauren Narbey	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Maria Guyette	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Patricia Barbas	Both PPS Staff Member and Community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Suzanne Shannon	PPS parent	District 3 (Sala Udin)
Abbie Campsie	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
John R Kitchin	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Erricka Hager	PPS alumnus	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Danielle Chiotti	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Fatima Bunafoor	Pittsburgh community member	District 5 (Terry Kennedy)
Amy Sturtz	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Andrea Hartz	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Edward livant	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Amanda Neatrour	Pittsburgh community member	District 9 (Veronica Edwards)
Khamil Bailey	PPS parent	District 7 (Cynthia Falls)
Jeffrey Phillips	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Mary Alice Lightle	Pittsburgh community member	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Stephanie Theuret	PPS staff member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Alexandra Beschorner	PPS parent	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Melanie Sprenkel	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Lynn Cox	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Jon Nelson	Pittsburgh community member	
Jennifer Ganger	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Melissa Stoller	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Erin Bindewald	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)

Todd Shirley	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
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Name	Affiliation	District
Julie Rodakowski	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Laura Ristau	Pittsburgh community member	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Emma Hance	PPS alumnus	District 7 (Cynthia Falls)
Susan L Cosgrove	Pittsburgh community member	District 4 (Pamela Harbin)
Nada Jordan	PPS staff member	I am not a resident of the City of Pittsburgh
Mari Stout	PPS parent	District 1 (Sylvia Wilson)
Dave Bindewald	PPS parent	District 2 (Devon Taliaferro)
Nancy Lapp	Pittsburgh community member	District 3 (Sala Udin)