



SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FOR BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Request for Statement of Qualifications for Executive
Search Firm

Deadline: February 26, 2014

**SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FOR BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM**

The Superintendent Search for Boston Public Schools hereby requests proposals from qualified firms to provide Executive Search Consultant Services for the position of Superintendent for the Boston Public School system. The cost of this superintendent search, including the services of an executive search consultant will be privately funded through foundation support. As such, this request is not being issued under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30B. However, to ensure that the Search Committee obtains the most qualified firm that can most effectively deliver the required services, the Search Committee requests informal proposals as set forth below.

Firms interested in undertaking this assignment must forward 14 copies of a detailed proposal to be received no later than the close of business Wednesday, February 26, 2014, at the following address:

Superintendent Search
Boston School Committee
26 Court Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

All questions concerning this Request must be sent in writing to the Boston School Committee office at feedback@bostonpublicschools.org, directed to the attention of the Superintendent Search.

Please be advised that this search will go at an accelerated rate, with the goal of finalizing an appointment by July 1, 2014. Interested firms, therefore, must be willing to commit the necessary staff resources to accommodate that appointment timeline. The Search Committee reserves the right to reject or accept any proposal based on criteria established at its sole discretion.

I. Scope of Services

The responsibilities of the selected firm will include the following:

- 1) Assist the Search Committee in conducting a search that generates a diversified pool of highly qualified candidates, including women and people of color.
- 2) Identify and solicit applications from superior candidates nationwide and internationally.

- 3) Maintain communication with candidates and respond to certain candidate inquiries and information requests.
- 4) Screen the initial applicant pool and provide a report on each applicant, using criteria established by the Search Committee.
- 5) Conduct reference and background checks on all interviewees, as required, including extensive reference checks on three to six finalists.
- 6) Provide advice and assistance to the Search Committee in the overall conduct of the search, including the interview process.
- 7) Assist the Search Committee staff in coordinating candidate interviews and making necessary arrangements for candidate travel and accommodations.
- 8) Perform other related services in the conduct of the search.

II. Submission Guidelines

Each proposal must include at least the following information:

- 1) A summary of the firm's experience in conducting executive searches for superintendent of schools for urban PreK-12 school districts.
- 2) A list of recent assignments in education and/or related fields, including the names of client institutions and the titles of positions for which searches were conducted.
- 3) The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least three individuals who may be contacted to comment on the firm's performance in recent searches.
- 4) Evidence of commitment to, and successful experience in recruiting outstanding candidates from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- 5) The name of each staff member who will be assigned to this search, a brief summary of his/her relevant credentials and experience, and an indication of the proposed time commitment to this project. Please identify the lead staff person and provide contact information.
- 6) The proposed fee structure for this search, including one or more options depending on the specific nature of the final assignment.

Based on its review of proposals received by February 26, 2014, the Search Committee will invite a small number of selected firms to meet with it on March 5th, 2014. A final determination/award will be made on March 12th, 2014 and is subject to Boston School Committee approval.

SCHEDULE – KEY DATES

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| 1. Request Distributed | February 12, 2014 |
| 2. Vendor Questions Due | February 19, 2014 |
| 3. Questions Answered in Writing | February 21, 2014 |
| 4. Responses due by 5PM | February 26, 2014 |
| 5. Interviews by Search Committee | March 5, 2014 |
| 6. Finalist selected | March 12, 2014 |

This solicitation shall not be construed in any manner to be an obligation by the District to enter into an agreement with any vendor.

The Search Committee reserves the right to reject any or all responses. The Search Committee may negotiate the terms of the contract with the selected vendor prior to entering into a contract.

The Search Committee reserves the right to revise in part this Request. If the Search Committee cancels or revises this Request, all respondents will be notified by addenda. The Search Committee also reserves the right to extend the date responses are due. Statements of interest and any other information submitted in response to this Request shall become the property of the Search Committee. Notwithstanding any indication by Responder of confidential contents, and with the exception of bona fide confidential information, contents of responses are public documents subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law after award.

The Search Committee will not provide compensation to Responders for any expenses incurred by Responders for response preparation or for any demonstration that may be made. Contractors submit responses at their own risk and expense.

A specific Superintendent job description will be provided to the successful search firm soon after the time of selection.

III. General Information about the District

Background

Over the past twenty years, the Boston Public Schools (BPS) has been transformed from a failing school district to one of the most successful urban public school systems in the country. We educate 74 percent of the school-age children who live in Boston. Our enrollment is rising and today we educate more than 57,000 students in 128 schools.

We are proud to be one of the most diverse school districts in the nation. Nearly one in every two students speaks a language other than English at home, and our students come from more than 100 different countries. One in five BPS students has a disability and three out of four live near or below the poverty line.

Approximately 40 percent of the system's students are Latino/Latina; 36 percent are African American; 13 percent are White; 9 percent are Asian; and 2 percent are of a different background or multiracial. The Boston Public School system employs more than 8,000 persons, including 4,500 classroom teachers. The system's proposed general fund budget for FY15 is \$973 million.

BPS is the home of many firsts in the nation: first public school (Boston Latin School, 1635), first public elementary school (Mather Elementary School, 1639), first public school system (1647), first public high school (English High School, 1821).

- Our 2013 graduation rate of 65.9 percent was the highest it has ever been—up eight points since 2007.
- Graduation rates for African American students have risen from 54.2 percent in 2007 to 63.6 percent today.
- Graduation rates for English language learners have increased from 38.8 percent in 2007 to an all-time high of 60.1 percent today.
- BPS offers pathways to graduation to students who may have dropped out through our Re-Engagement Center and our summer graduation programs. We have cut the dropout rate by 52 percent since 2006.
- Thirty percent more students take AP exams today than three years ago, with Black and Hispanic students seeing the greatest growth in performance.
- Nine out of 10 elementary and middle school students are receiving weekly arts education, up from 67% in 2009, and the number of high school students accessing arts education has doubled in three years.
- In 2008, just four percent of 8th grade students who were not in an exam school were enrolled in Algebra I. Today, 34 percent of 8th grade students take this

advanced mathematics course.

- The percent of 10th grade students who pass all MCAS tests has risen from 44 percent in 2009 to 53 percent today.
- We offer full-day pre-kindergarten education for 2,400 four-year-olds, up from 700 seats in 2005.
- BPS works in numerous partnerships with foundations, universities, corporations, nonprofits, and community organizations.
- Approximately one-third of our schools have some measure of autonomy (Pilot, In-District Charter, Turnaround, Innovation) and the district has been increasingly moving towards more autonomy for all schools through funding and hiring mechanisms.

District Strategic Plan

Boston Public Schools will face changing national, state and local challenges over the next five years. In response to these anticipated shifts, the Boston School Committee has worked over the last 9 months to develop a long-term strategic vision that will guide the academic and operational goals of BPS moving forward. The Boston School Committee, in conjunction with Interim Superintendent John McDonough and his staff, have held a series of open discussions in order to arrive at a set of aspirational goals and associated priorities:

Improved student outcomes

- All students will graduate ready for college and/or career as life-long learners and engaged global citizens.

Improved school quality

- BPS will be a district of high-performing schools, eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps.

Strong district leadership/high-quality, action-oriented teachers and staff

- BPS will recruit, develop and retain highly effective, culturally-competent school and district leaders, teachers and staff who are held accountable for meeting objectives.

Effective resource allocation

- BPS will make effective and equitable use of resources.

Greater community engagement

- All schools will strengthen student, family, and community investment to

guarantee opportunities for student success.

These are draft aspirational goals and associated priorities, scheduled to be finalized in March 2014 after completion of community hearings.

Superintendent Position

The Superintendent is the executive for the School Committee in all matters relating to the powers and duties of the School Committee. S/he has the sole authority to make appointments and promotions for all school system positions.

The Boston Public School system is governed by a seven-member school committee appointed by the Mayor of Boston to four year terms. Committee members are entitled to a stipend.

The School Committee is charged with hiring, supervising, evaluating, and paying the superintendent. It also has the authority to develop educational, personnel, managerial and financial policies for the school system and to adopt balanced operating and capital budgets annually. Additionally, the superintendent serves as a member of the cabinet of the Mayor of the City of Boston.

The Superintendent has the obligation to implement the policies and budget of the school district.

It is essential that the Superintendent demonstrate: a) educational leadership; b) administrative and leadership skills; and c) the ability to communicate and interface with effectively with the Boston community and its institutions. A specific job description will be developed.

IV. Qualifications

The selected firm must have recent experience (in the past 18 months) in conducting a successful search (selection of a candidate and acceptance of a position, as facilitated by your firm) for a Superintendent of Schools for an urban PreK-12 school district with at least 20,000 students and which has authorized Charter Schools. If a firm does not have such experience or does not submit information in the proposal regarding this qualification, the proposal may be deemed non-responsive and may be eliminated from further consideration.

V. Search Committee Membership

Co-leads:

- Hardin Coleman, Member, Boston School Committee and Dean, Boston University School of Education
- Robert Gallery, President, Bank of America Massachusetts and Board Member, Boston Plan for Excellence

Members:

- Michael Contompasis, Retired BPS Superintendent
- Dr. Pam Eddinger, President, Bunker Hill Community College
- Bill Henderson, Retired BPS Principal
- Michael O'Neill, Chairperson, Boston School Committee
- Laura Perille, CEO and President, EdVestors, BPS Parent
- Jeri Robinson, Vice President for Early Childhood Initiatives, Boston Children's Museum and Co-lead, Mayor's Education Transition Team
- Regina Robinson, Roosevelt Parent and Member, BPS SPED-PAC
- Richard Stutman, President Boston Teachers Union
- Dr. Dania Vasquez, Headmaster, Margarita Muniz Academy
- Andrew Vega, TNTF Fishman Prize in Excellence Finalist, 8th Grade Teacher, Orchard Gardens