



# news

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Dr. Wayne N. Walters Selected to Lead Pittsburgh Public Schools as Permanent Superintendent for Next Five Years**

*National search validates Dr. Walters to lead District for his record on high standards in education, unmatched integrity, and dedication to students; new role effective August 1, 2022*

PITTSBURGH, July 21, 2022 – The Pittsburgh Board of Public Education selected Dr. Wayne N. Walters to lead Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) as its permanent Superintendent. This follows a national search where Dr. Walters’ depth of experience and unmatched skill level validated that he was the ideal person to assume the permanent top leadership role for the District. The Board is expected to approve Dr. Walters’ appointment for a five-year term at its next Legislative Session meeting on Wednesday, July 27, 2022.

“Dr. Walters brings a career-long dedication to high standards in education along with unmatched integrity,” said Board President Sala Udin, noting Dr. Walters’ 30-plus year tenure with the District. “People who know him know that he has incredibly high standards for students regarding academic achievement and integrity.”

Dr. Walters has served in the District as a Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of 6-12 Schools, Assistant Superintendent of Professional Development and Special Programming, and, most recently, since October 2021, Interim Superintendent of Pittsburgh Public Schools.

“I remain unapologetically student-centered, committed, and passionate about our students, teachers, staff, and families of the Pittsburgh Public Schools,” said Dr. Walters. “I know firsthand the many challenges our District faces, but I believe competence, confidence, and collaboration go a long way in creating quality, equitable, well-rounded experiences and spaces of learning and joy for our students. I am genuinely excited about the tremendous opportunities ahead.”

Dr. Walters assumes the permanent post on Monday, August 1, 2022.

### **National Search Validated Selection**

The Board hired search consultant BWP & Associates (BWP) in March to lead the national search to identify qualified candidates to fill the post of permanent Superintendent for the District.

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There were 29 applicants who applied from 13 states and one other country. The insights garnered from community outreach efforts as part of this process were utilized in the recruiting and selection process. BWP submitted its final report to the Board in late June, which included five finalists. The nine-member Board made the ultimate hiring decision naming Dr. Walters as the next permanent Superintendent.

Mr. Udin noted that the national search process validated that Dr. Walters is indeed the right individual for this critical leadership position. Throughout the search process, the Board recognized that Dr. Walters was superior in his expectations for academic achievement, staff and student accountability, and the well-being of the entire PPS family.

Dr. Walters' significant experience, coupled with the reputation he has earned among teachers, administrators, students, and parents, made him the stand-out candidate in this national search, according to Mr. Udin. "We expect student achievement, professional performance of staff and faculty, and collaboration internally and with community stakeholders to be elevated to a higher level," he said.

### **A Reset Strategy**

The Board said it is viewing Dr. Walters' appointment as permanent Superintendent as a "reset period" with an opportunity for recommitment to public education in Pittsburgh. As part of this reset, the community can expect numerous changes—particularly by enhancing communications with the community, rebuilding confidence in the District, and letting students' voices be heard. As a result, the Board expects improved morale in the District for students, families, and staff alike.

Moving forward, the Board and Dr. Walters will collaborate in developing goals and a strategic plan for the District. The Board said that having someone so intimately familiar with the District is a distinct advantage in that Dr. Walters knows how to get things done efficiently and effectively. Relationships with school unions and employee organizations—which are now healthy and respectful—will continue to improve. In addition, Dr. Walters will continue developing key relationships and new partnerships, including those established with the Mayor's office, City Council, surrounding universities, community-based groups, the philanthropic community, and The Pittsburgh Promise to garner support for advancing the District's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

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### **Public Input a Key**

Public input was vital in determining the kind of leadership that the District needs and deserves. All told, 1,716 people participated in community feedback activities via an online survey, interviews, focus groups, and community forums, in addition to a public hearing. Administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community member constituent groups were represented throughout the process.

Insights garnered from the community outreach efforts helped to build the foundation on which BWP developed the Leadership Profile, which was used in the recruiting process. The Leadership Profile identified the traits needed in a leader best to serve PPS students, educators, and the community and was presented by BWP to the Board at a public meeting in May.

“Community engagement was an essential part of this process, and we thank all those who have participated in providing valuable input for the mutual benefit of the search process,” said Mr. Udin. “We are also grateful for the two foundations that stepped forward—the Richard King Mellon Foundation and The Pittsburgh Foundation—to support the national search that validated Dr. Walters as a true leader and the best candidate for our community.”

Specific terms of Dr. Walters’ contract will be highlighted next week at the Board’s Legislative Session meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, July 27.

The first day of school for teachers in the Pittsburgh Public Schools is Tuesday, August 23, 2022. The new school year for students commences on Monday, August 29, 2022. Kindergarten will begin Thursday, September 1.

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