



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: January 22, 2021
FROM: Board President Chandra Hampson
For Introduction: January 27, 2021
For Action: January 27, 2021

1. TITLE

Authorization to negotiate a contract for an Interim Superintendent.

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report proposes that the Board President be authorized to negotiate an employment contract with Dr. Brent Jones to serve as Interim Superintendent for the District through June 30, 2022, with a starting date no later than July 1, 2021. The contract, if one is successfully negotiated, will be presented to the Board for approval.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board authorize the Board President to negotiate, with the assistance of counsel, an employment contract with Dr. Brent Jones to serve as Interim Superintendent through June 30, 2022, with a starting date no later than July 1, 2021. The contract, if one is successfully negotiated, will be presented to the Board for approval. Immediate action is in the best interest of the District.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- a. **Background** Superintendent Juneau's contract expires on June 30, 2021. Superintendent Juneau has announced that she is not seeking renewal of her contract. State law and district policy require that the Board hire the Superintendent. RCW 28A.400.010; Board Policy No. 1005. On January 21, 2021, the Board voted to hire an Interim Superintendent to replace Superintendent Juneau.
- b. **Alternatives** a) Delay authorizing negotiations on a contract for an Interim Superintendent until a) a full community engagement process can be done for interim hiring; and/or b) delay authorizing contract negotiations until closer to the expiration of Superintendent Juneau's contract.

In addition to the importance of a deep and thorough engagement of community necessary to hire a permanent Superintendent, to which the Board is wholly committed, the Board must appoint a new District 4 Director on or before April 7, 2021. The District continues to operate during a pandemic, faces budget constraints, faces challenging decisions regarding a return to school and funding for such return, and must soon begin designing a process for the search for a permanent Superintendent. A smooth transition in the Superintendent position is a high priority. Delaying contract negotiations puts the Board at risk of not having a Superintendent ready to assume leadership upon Superintendent Juneau's departure, and is not in the best interest of the District from

either a fiscal or a human capital perspective. Dr. Jones is an experienced recent former SPS leader to whom a significant number of the members of the District’s Small Cabinet have reported and/or worked alongside in the past; this will provide a smoother transition.

c. **Research** N/A

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

There is no fiscal impact associated with authorizing the Board President to negotiate an employment contract for an Interim Superintendent. The ultimate fiscal impact will depend on the terms of the employment contract negotiated with the Interim Superintendent.

Expenditure: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

Revenue: One-time Annual Multi-Year N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

Not applicable

Tier 1: Inform

Tier 2: Consult/Involve

Tier 3: Collaborate

7. EQUITY ANALYSIS

An equity analysis for the purpose of hiring an interim Superintendent is attached. It states in part: “The appointment of an interim, particularly one that does not seek to become the Superintendent, will afford said time and space to engage in real and meaningful ways. We seek to find our next Superintendent in close collaboration with students, families and community furthest from educational justice.”

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

It is well understood that students benefit, on average from stability. But stability of systems that do not effectively represent or reflect student experience or treat student lives and experiences equitably or with care do not necessarily fall into this category. In considering Superintendent success, evaluation and now succession, relative stability is difficult to parse from the changing sands of social, health and political unrest and disaffection with leadership. Change can be a critical reflection of student well-being and demand—if that change is in fact reflective of what is central to the lives of students and contributing factors of said disaffection. Seattle School Board members have voiced and demonstrated commitment to providing that positive change by

taking on systemic issues that afflict our public education system, ranging from racism to student abuse to criminalization and lack of cultural responsiveness.

The School Board has voted to hire an interim Superintendent, one who will not be a candidate for permanent placement, to guide us the evolution of a District into one that rebuilds itself with students at front of mind and center of effort and design. With the many challenges facing Seattle Public Schools, swiftly choosing an Interim Superintendent is in the best interest of the District. This is especially the case when the candidate is an experienced SPS leader with a proven track record tied directly to critical changes and a decade of focus and progress on racial equity, who will advance the development of the District’s strategic plan and focus on African American males. Dr. Jones is a product of Seattle Public Schools, a reflection of the change our students demand and deserve, an individual committed to continuous growth and improvement as an individual and institutional leader, who has capacity and commitment to its evolution. He represents both the stability that Seattle Public Schools students need, and the change the students at the heart of the District’s Strategic Plan demand.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- Board Policy No. 1005, Responsibilities and Authority of the Board, provides the Board “shall employ a Superintendent who is charged with the day-to-day operations of the district.”
- Other: _____

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

This action implicates Board Policy No. 1005, Responsibilities and Authority of the Board, as well as RCW 28A.400.010, Employment of Superintendent – Superintendent’s qualifications, general powers, term and contract renewal.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was not discussed in committee.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, the Board President, with the assistance of counsel, will seek to negotiate an employment contract with Dr. Brent Jones to serve as Interim Superintendent for the District. The contract, if successfully negotiated, will be presented to the Board for approval.

13. **ATTACHMENTS**

- Resume: Dr. Brent Jones
- Equity Analysis

Dr. Brent C. Jones

Education:

- UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN Ph.D., Educational Administration – *Educational Leadership*
M.Ed., Educational Administration – *Adult Learning and Human Resource Development*
- UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON B.A., Zoology

Key Leadership Experiences:

Assistant General Manager, Strategy & Partnerships, KING COUNTY METRO TRANSIT, July 2019 – Current.

- Report to the General Manager and serve on the Strategic Leadership Team
- Lead policy development and strategy initiatives that drive the agency's social justice, pro-equity and anti-racism commitments - *Investing in Areas Where Needs are Greatest*
- Ensure that equity-centered budgeting practices contain investments that are informed by community stakeholder needs
- Develop mechanisms and process to ensure a pro-equity and anti-racist infrastructure is place to inform policy development, decision-making and service allocation
- Coach and mentor senior and mid-level managers to expand their capacity to lead effectively with impact
- Oversee agency Civil Rights Office

Chief Equity, Partnerships and Engagement Officer, SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, January 2016 – June 2019.

- Report to the Superintendent and serve on the Cabinet
- Spearheaded a portfolio of partnerships, strategic initiatives, community and district collaborations in support of educational and racial equity
- Provided oversight for the departments of Community and Family Engagement, Racial Equity Advancement, Partnerships, Research and Evaluation, Native Education, Seattle Housing Program and the Creative Advantage arts access pathway
- Developed and actualized the *Eliminating Opportunity Gaps* district-wide racial equity strategy
- Cultivated strategic partnerships (e.g. PTSA, City of Seattle, University of Washington, Seattle Housing Authority, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Casey Family Programs)

Assistant Superintendent/Executive Director Human Resources, SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, July 2014 – January 2016/August 2008 – July 2010.

- Report to the Superintendent and serve on the Cabinet
- Responsible for recruitment, selection, hiring, retention and employee development
- Galvanized programs, strategies and initiatives for acquiring and developing talent
- Transformed Labor Relations, Civil Rights/EEO, diversity recruitment and employee engagement
- Embedded racial equity provisions into the SEA/SPS collective bargaining agreements
- Served as EEO/Civil Rights Officer - established Civil Rights Compliance Office (EEO and Title IX)

Manager, Leadership and Organizational Development, KING COUNTY, SOLID WASTE DIVISION, Seattle, WA, July 2013 – July 2014 [term limited appointment].

- Conducted organizational assessment/gap analysis and led division-wide realignment and re-organization process
- Designed division-wide Line of Business strategy
- Constructed and sponsored division-wide Equity and Social Justice initiative
- Developed and designed an integrated competency-based leadership development program

Vice President, Human Resources & Organizational Development, PIONEER HUMAN SERVICES, Seattle, WA, June 2012– June 2013.

- Developed and implemented a new corporate-wide training delivery system
- Led corporate employee engagement initiative
- Led the revision of the recruitment, selection and hiring processes
- Revamped company employee orientation
- Developed employee job hazards analysis system
- Established human capital metrics and key performance indicators

Chief Organizational and Talent Officer, Assistant Superintendent, KENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, Kent, WA, July 2010 – June 2012.

- Executed a competency-based screening and selection process
- Implemented a comprehensive business process redesign effort across all units
- Successfully negotiated a two-year collective bargaining agreement with the teacher's union
- Increased diversity in hiring pools and retained a cadre of leaders with proven abilities to achieve the district's strategic plan goals
- Changed the staffing model to strengthen support for tiered interventions and special needs learners

Vice Chancellor, Chief Human Resources Officer, SEATTLE COLLEGES, July 2005 – August 2008

- Transitioned HR functions from a compliance model to a customer service model
- Through collective bargaining simplified the faculty compensation model, increased faculty compensation while reducing the District's financial liability
- Prevented arbitration and litigation in all employee grievances, claims and/or complaints
- Reduced lost and duplicate payment documents and job application paperwork from frequent to zero

Vice President for Human Development, GREEN RIVER COLLEGE, Auburn, WA, July 2000 – June 2005

- Managed three cohorts through *Leading Edge*, a year-long supervisor-training program
- Built a robust internal professional development program for classified staff
- Developed a series of professional development seminars facilitated by managers on topics such as diversity, budgeting, ethics, and technology
- Devised and built consensus on the *Administrative Handbook*: policies, guidelines and procedures for management
- Revamped the recruitment, selection and hiring processes for all employee groups – faculty, classified staff, and exempt employees

Executive Director, Human Resources, TUNXIS COMMUNITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE, Farmington, CT, Feb 1998-Jan 2000.

- Managed all college-wide personnel matters including professional development, employee relations, grievances and discipline
- Reported to the President and served as a member of the Cabinet
- Represented the college in labor negotiations
- Developed an employee recognition program
- Aligned college goals, evaluation, and professional development

Training Teams Facilitator, ADVANCED MICRO DEVICES, Learning & Development, Austin, TX, 1995 – 1996.

- Coached trainers in effective training techniques and delivery
- Assessed training outcomes and identified subsequent training needs
- Developed curricula for technical courses

Teacher/Program Facilitator, Adult Basic Education & Alternative High School, AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING, Austin, TX, 1993 – 1995.

- Taught environmental science - used project-based learning curriculum
- Taught Adult Basic Education - GED preparation
- Recruited students from various welfare-to-work programs, community based organizations and drop-out recovery
- Conducted academic advising, career counseling, staff training and developed curricula

Additional Professional Experiences:

- **Adjunct Faculty**, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON – Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, 2008
- **Instructor**, TUNXIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 1999 - 2000
- **Researcher**, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, CHARLES A. DANA CENTER, 1998 - 1999
- **Academic Advisor/Mentor**, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEN'S ATHLETIC PROGRAM, 1998
- **Coordinator**, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, Nontraditional Adult Student Program, 1996 - 1997
- **Program Coordinator**, MOTOROLA CORPORATION, 1995



Racial Equity Analysis Tool

Rev. 4/7/19

Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan

Theory of Action: When we focus on ensuring racial equity in our educational system, unapologetically address the needs of students of color who are furthest from educational justice, and work to undo the legacies of racism in our educational system...

By:

- Allocating resources strategically through a racial equity framework
- Delivering high-quality, standards-aligned instruction
- Creating healthy, supportive, culturally responsive environments from the classroom to central office
- Directly and consistently working in partnership with families and communities who represent students of color who are furthest from educational justice; and
- Making clear commitments and delivering on them

Then we will eliminate the opportunity and achievement gaps and every student will receive a high-quality, world-class education.

In Seattle Public Schools We Agree:

- That in order to eliminate racial inequities, it is essential that race be clearly called out and institutional racism be addressed within our own organization as well as in the broader systems with which we interact.
- To explore and develop a shared understanding relating to racial equity, and we also recognize that we are all at different places as individuals, programs, departments and school communities. We are committed to move forward with a focus that is intentional and strategic within our organization. We will openly share challenges, successes and lessons learned to help move the sum of our race equity work forward.
- To have collective buy-in to racial equity best practices, we will each take responsibility for using the racial equity tool and take a learner stance. Accountability for implementation and use within our own organization and to our respective communities (children, students, families and schools) will be essential.
- To approach racial equity analyses from an evaluative / continuous improvement perspective, as opposed to a **check list**. We will seek to strengthen programs, policies and procedures until racial inequities are eliminated.
- That if the strategy, practice, policy, or procedure works for our most vulnerable communities, it works for everyone. The reverse however, is not true.
- That we will not let the perceived barriers such as (time, agendas, schedules, etc.) prevent us from interrupting patterns of racial inequity within our schools, our departments and programs.



Racial Equity Analysis Tool

Rev. 4/7/19

Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity School Board Policy #0030

Racial Equity Analysis: The district shall review existing policies, programs, professional development and procedures to ensure the promotion of racial equity, and all applicable new policies, programs and procedures will be developed using a racial equity analysis tool.

STEP 1: Set Outcomes, Identify and Engage Stakeholders

Leadership sets key racially equitable outcomes and engages stakeholders (SPS staff and community members.)

1. What does your department/division/school define as racially equitable outcomes related to this issue? A racially equitable outcome in a Superintendent hiring process would come of finding a leader with demonstrated capacity to authentically engage and reflect families of color in Seattle Public Schools and firmly guide the district toward a future in which students of color are truly seen and served.
2. In order to engage students, families and community of color in authentic, consistent and representative ways as we seek our next leader, we will need time, space and iteration. As such, the appointment of an interim, particularly one that does not seek to become the Superintendent, will afford said time and space to engage in real and meaningful ways. We seek to find our next Superintendent in close collaboration with students, families and community furthest from educational justice.
3. How will leadership communicate key outcomes to stakeholders for racial equity to guide analysis? What this particular proposal puts forward is the need to bring forward a qualified, experienced, racial equity focused interim superintendent candidate to provide stability to our district during our many upcoming transitions, including that of Superintendent hire. One of the biggest criticisms during prior Superintendent hiring processes was the lack of community involvement. In selecting an interim who is both of community and an experienced SPS district administrator and dedicated to bridging and healing of said intersection we will help the Board reach into community, particularly communities most marginalized and of highest unmet need and ensure their centered and engaged voice in the recruitment, review and hiring process.
4. Our appointed interim will be a key partner in supporting our work to collaborate with communities of color as we jointly discover the best process, approach and individual relationship necessary to support moving the District toward a racially equitable and just future.
5. How will leadership identify and engage stakeholders: racial/ethnic groups potentially impacted by this decision, especially communities of color, including students who are English language learners and students who have special needs? The Seattle School Board will invest time and human capital in direct and iterative engagement with current, known and

STEP 2: Engage Stakeholders in Analyzing Data

Stakeholders (SPS staff and community members) gather and review quantitative and qualitative disaggregated data and specific information to determine impacts or consequences.

1. How will you collect specific information about the school, program and community conditions to help you determine if this decision will create racial inequities that would increase the opportunity gap? An ideal hiring process would include *direct* engagement between community groups and candidates over a period of time during which we would collect responses to survey data regarding candidate experience, track record and stated commitment to gap closure but with heavy focus on prior experience in systems change.



Racial Equity Analysis Tool

Rev. 4/7/19

2. Are there negative impacts for specific student demographic groups, including English language learners and students with special needs? Any change in leadership could prospectively result in worse outcomes for students furthest from educational justice as an unintended consequence. The District's history has not been one of success in gap closure. As such, more opportunity than threat remains in the potential for success in this matter.

STEP 3: Ensuring educational and racial equity /Determine Benefit or Burden

Stakeholders (SPS staff and community members) collaborate to analyze how this policy/decision/proposal/initiative/budget issue will increase or decrease educational and racial equity.

1. What are the potential benefits or unintended consequences? As stated above, leadership changes create many opportunities for unintended consequences. However, at this particular time, within the context of ongoing inequities and the exacerbating pandemic, we are in dire need of significant cultural, programmatic and service delivery redesign with a clear focus on racial equity.
2. What would it look like if this policy/decision/initiative/proposal ensured educational and racial equity for every student? A Superintendent with strong enough leadership and skill basis to operationalize truly racially equitable provision of education services would ultimately have closed gap such that, as stated in policy 0030, race is no longer a determining factor in "achievement" across a broad array of indicators.

STEP 4: Evaluate Success Indicators and/or Mitigation Plans

Stakeholders (SPS staff and community members) identify ongoing measures of success or mitigation plans for negative impacts

1. How will you evaluate and be accountable for making sure that the proposed solution ensures educational equity for all students, families and staff? If the level of involvement is sufficient, our school communities should broadly see themselves reflected in the choice of leader and ultimately, therefore, in their students' success. Whether this is measured directly via survey metrics or a general sentiment of "hope" and desire to return to school is to be determined.
2. What are specific steps you will take to address impacts (including unintended consequences), and how will you continue to partner with stakeholders to ensure educational equity for every student? This is probably the most important question, how do the relationships built during the search and hiring process result in consistent and ongoing feedback loops and engagement as well as accountability? How is the search process the beginning rather than an end.

After conducting the analysis, reflect and discuss:

What are the lessons learned? This analysis will be critical to the Superintendent hiring process.

What resources are needed to make changes? A well-resourced, staff and time primarily, and lengthy search will pay dividends in prospectively finding a longer-term leader. The more time we take to do this well, the more likely we are to have our fiscal investment be a cost neutral one at the end of the day.



Racial Equity Analysis Tool

Rev. 4/7/19

What are the next steps? Design the process for engagement, search and re-engagement with candidates before hiring. Reengaging with this process (racial equity tool), throughout the process and conferring with the Equity Partnerships and Engagement as to any appropriate modifications to the tool for Board use, particularly as we are using for a hiring process versus programmatic.