



# POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

11 College Avenue, Poughkeepsie, New York 12603 | Telephone 845-451-4900 | Fax 845-451-4955

Dr. Felicia Watson  
Board President

Ms. Debra Long  
Board Vice-President

Dr. Andrew Rieser  
Board Member

Mrs. Doreen Clifford  
Board Member

Mrs. Michelle Martinez-Leffert  
Board Member

## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### Contact:

Dr. Felicia A. Watson, President  
Poughkeepsie City School District Board of Education  
Phone: 914.456.5085  
Email: [fwatson@poughkeepsieschools.org](mailto:fwatson@poughkeepsieschools.org)

Dr. Eric J. Rosser  
Phone: 716.226.6620

### BOARD OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF NEW SUPERINTENDENT

*Official Appointment at Board of Education Meeting July 15, 2019 5:00 pm, City Hall*

Poughkeepsie, New York (July 15, 2019) – The Board of Education of the Poughkeepsie City School District voted unanimously to appoint Dr. Eric J. Rosser of Buffalo, N.Y. as the new Superintendent of the Poughkeepsie City School District (PCSD). The announcement was made at a Special Board Meeting on Monday, July 15, 2019 at 5:00 pm at City Hall, 62 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

According to Board President Felicia Watson, Dr. Rosser currently serves as the Associate Superintendent for Student Support Services of the Buffalo Public Schools, a position he has held since 2015. Dr. Rosser will begin his transition immediately and will officially assume leadership of the District on August 5, 2019.

“The Board believes that Dr. Rosser will foster a new era of healing and inclusion that has been desperately needed in the Poughkeepsie City School District.” Watson stated. “His systematic approach to public education, coupled with his diverse breath of experience, will serve him well in driving districtwide educational reform that our students and teachers need and deserve. Dr. Rosser’s innovative thinking and commitment to classroom rigor reflects his belief that education is every child’s civil right. Like a phoenix, from the ashes, this district will rise. We believe that it is under his leadership that this will occur.”

Rosser is anxiously looking forward to joining the PCSD team. “I am ecstatic to serve as Superintendent of the Poughkeepsie City School District,” he told Dr. Watson. “It is a humbling honor to join this community and work with a team of dedicated adults in creating greater access and opportunities for PCSD students. I believe it is every child’s civil right to an equal and high-quality education and look forward to guaranteeing that this belief is delivered upon.”

Dr. Rosser began his career in education as a teacher in the Buffalo Public Schools from 1994 to 1999. Prior to his current position at Buffalo Public Schools, Dr. Rosser served for five years as Director of Student Support Services and Compliance and for three years as Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services. He oversaw the implementation of various reform initiatives in the Buffalo Public Schools, including the co-development of the District’s Student Success Plan, the strategic plan for improving student outcomes, and other strategic initiatives of the District’s comprehensive reform model.

In 2007 he relocated from Buffalo, N.Y. to Atlanta, Ga. to oversee the Atlanta Public Schools’ signature reform initiative as a Program Administrator. Dr. Rosser also served as Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Operations and Interim Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. Dr. Rosser was responsible for the District’s signature reform initiative designed to increase the academic outcomes of over 13,000 K-12 students in the school system’s lowest performing schools.

He has also served as Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in Washington, D.C. Dr. Rosser oversaw the implementation of the District of Columbia's State Accountability School District Turnaround Model. He also led the establishment of the accountability system for early learning facilities and programs throughout the District of Columbia.

The PCSD Board of Education selected Dr. Rosser because of his thorough understanding of all facets of school district operations; his demonstrated success in advocating for students and families; and his ability to develop collaborative relationships with school leaders and staff. His affability, unwavering integrity, and commitment to education reform makes him the right fit for the PCSD.

Dr. Rosser's experience with school turnaround efforts, instructional and student support background, understanding of the role of culture in education, and experience in developing partnerships with community stakeholders (including parents, local and state government, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, and the philanthropic community), uniquely qualifies him to serve as Poughkeepsie's superintendent.

The hiring of Dr. Rosser follows an extensive search led by consultants Dr. Thomas Ramming and Dr. Teresa Lawrence of the Western New York Educational Service Council that began on March 12, 2019. The process included eight focus groups held on April 1-2, 2019, and an on-line survey (in English and Spanish) that garnered input from community leaders, business owners, legislators, advocates, unions, district staff, families and students. The feedback provided a comprehensive profile for the new superintendent.

Employment terms for Dr. Rosser include a three-year contract with a base salary of \$205,000, which is comparable to superintendent salaries in the region. This is a competitive contract that reflects his extensive experience and the duties and responsibilities of the position. Board President Watson stated, "Dr. Rosser has a big job to do in moving this district forward. The expectations are very high. A phase of organizational healing followed by the establishment of new systems and procedures is what this district needs to get back on track." Board President Watson added that accountability will be a huge factor in establishing this platform and the Board has no doubt that Dr. Rosser will lead the district in getting it done.

Dr. Rosser is married and has two grown children. Originally from Cincinnati, Ohio, Dr. Rosser has resided in New York State for more than twenty years. He looks forward to relocating to the City of Poughkeepsie and plans to be very active in our community.

Dr. Rosser will be presented to the PCSD and community during a Board Meeting on July 24, 2019 at 5:00 pm at the Poughkeepsie High School, 70 Forbus Street, Poughkeepsie, N.Y. He will take an oath of office administered by the Honorable Tom O'Neill, followed by a brief, informal reception. Later in the evening, an invitation-only reception will be held at Vassar College's Alumnae House.

On August 14, 2019 at the Board of Education Meeting, Dr. Rosser will present his Entry Plan followed by a formal Welcome Reception for all staff, students, families, and community members.

The Board wishes to thank the district teachers, administrators, staff, students, families, and the community-at-large for their valuable input. Hiring a superintendent is one of the most important responsibilities of any school board. Partnering with each of you has made this task and process seamless. Indeed, we are Stronger Together! Pioneer Strong!

###