



May 13, 2025

To the Members of the Winston-Salem Forsyth County School Board:

The recent retirement announcement by Superintendent Tricia McManus confronts our community with a time of transition at a critical juncture for the students and families served by our school district. Her departure marks the loss of what is rare in Forsyth County: a transformational leader who brought a bold vision for system-wide and community-wide transformation rooted in collaboration, healing-centered practices, and a deep commitment to all students and families. The momentum she helped build for a more just and inclusive district must not be deferred in the face of budgetary and other administrative concerns. Choosing the next superintendent is not merely a personnel decision; it is a defining moment for all of us, one with clear implications for the future we are striving together to build: a school district where every school is a good school, not just measured by test scores or reputation, but by the dignity, safety, and the opportunities it provides for every child. As you move expeditiously to appoint an interim successor, we believe that the following priorities must be centered:

- I. The Interim Superintendent must be a catalyst to **continue the systems change work** of molding a school district that deeply invests in creating a sense of belonging for all students, addressing unmet needs in alignment with the [Whole School Whole Child](#) agenda, and is dedicated to healing-centered and restorative practices that support every child's success;
- II. The Interim Superintendent must be deeply **invested in community partnerships**, and the sentiment that "we cannot do this alone," as they navigate an important transition through budgetary challenges, administrative restructuring,

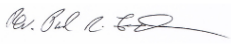
and stewarding the progress that has been made in implementing the Code of Conduct, Character and Support;

- III. The Interim Superintendent must be committed to **co-governing with community**, in order to ensure that the voices of students and families represented in the district and most impacted by district decisions are at the table for every step of the decision making process;
- IV. The Interim Superintendent must be committed to **investing in best practices** for effective family engagement, including English Language Learners, recognizing the indispensable role that it plays in shrinking the achievement gap, reducing exclusionary disciplinary practices, making our schools safe for students, their families, and staff, and ensuring that each and every student can succeed;
- V. The Interim Superintendent should be an **advocate for fully funded public education**, adequate pay to recruit and retain quality educators and equitable pay for all classified employees;
- VI. The Interim Superintendent shall work to **shift the culture** of the school district to ensure district staff's wellness and social emotional needs, shifting the climate from fear to innovation, educational excellence and care;¹

We, the undersigned, are grateful for your consideration of these concerns, and we look forward to further discussion with us and our community partners.

Let's move forward together.






Clay Coake
Megan M. Gregory
Alvin Atkinson
John Bost
Valerie Glass
Dean M. Clifford
Karen Cuthrell
County Commissioner Malishai Woodbury



Lori Farrington
Marc Madrigal
Nahida McDaniel
Lori Fuller

¹ One framework that supports this shift is the [Feeling Friends 4Cs](#);