

Cambridge Public Schools

DR. SERGIO PAEZ

STATEMENT OF INTEREST

I am interested in becoming the Superintendent of Cambridge Public Schools to be able to apply my skills and knowledge to help transform the district from good to great. I would like to have the opportunity to lead the district to the forefront of global education, where students are provided the means to obtain the skills necessary to compete and are positioned to transform our world into a better place.

Over the course of my professional life, I have developed a set of leadership skills that have made me very successful in educating the students in front of me in the classroom. As a transformational leader, I was able to create strong teams in the community, the district and at the school level. I have both the passion and the commitment necessary to work in diverse environments. I understand the complexities of navigating the sometimes difficult journey involved in achieving high levels of education. I believe that my own personal experience growing up in a home in which English was not the first language has provided me with the knowledge and the understanding that are essential to helping students navigate the educational system successfully.

As an educator for over 20 years and coming from a multicultural/multilingual background, I had the opportunity to interact in very demanding and academically rigorous environments. I was able to travel extensively giving me exposure to different educational systems and helping me to understand how to develop the best skills for the 21st century. As an educator, I believe that I can effect positive, progressive change. My experience working in medium (5500-8000 students) and large urban settings (24,000 students) along with working on statewide initiatives in Massachusetts have helped me to develop a comprehensive knowledge base in educational leadership. I have extensive experience in implementing turnaround work, overseeing vocational and technical education, advocating for gifted and talented programs, and creating specialized interventions for English Language Learners and students with learning disabilities.

I believe that respect, high expectations and opportunities to support students in reaching their highest potential are essential to improving educational environments and to assisting students in becoming active members of a global community. Lastly, I am very aware that family engagement and community involvement play a significant role in shaping both the child and the educational settings. Relationships with all partners are particularly important when transformation is needed in public education.

Please list the five accomplishments in your professional career of which you take the greatest satisfaction and why you do so.

- 1.** The current early literacy initiative in my district is a ground breaking program that helps the entire community. This initiative will significantly impact the academic future of these students as they move forward through the grades. We developed a series of programs to ensure students reach kindergarten with no academic gaps. This work requires many community partners and many resources to ensure early intervention strategies are aligned. The scope of this work spans from birth to third grade. There are four distinct groups that each focus on one of the following: improving attendance, kindergarten readiness, parent engagement and curriculum alignment.
- 2.** Creating a new school (2007) for refugees in Worcester was one of the most professionally satisfying initiatives in which I have been involved. The journey to come from a war torn region into our country is very challenging from the human perspective. By creating the set of supports to help dozens of families, I was able to help define the essence of education in this country and reassure my belief that education is the biggest equalizer. This school has become a model on how to educate students with interrupted education in Massachusetts.
- 3.** Creating an innovative rigorous academic environment for English Language Learners has been another gratifying experience. In these newly designed classrooms (ESL Labs), students can discover the new language in an environment of respect and high expectations. They can learn the English language along with the content knowledge (ESL-Content) they need to master the requirements to graduate. This multi-sensory method helped hundreds of students get the skills necessary to experience academic success. This method became a model to many districts in Massachusetts.

4. Creating Dual Language programs in 3 different districts provided the English only community the opportunity to have their children become bilingual in a rigorous environment. These programs have been very popular and successful in every district in which they are well implemented and supported. The design is to start in PK and continue for as long as the quality of the program can be sustained.

5. Creating a Masters in ESL for aspiring staff within the district was a great way to help the new generation of teachers get the skills they needed to support the students in front of them. The challenge in education is that very few universities are proactively helping new teachers become licensed in ESL. Traditional teachers' colleges have few programs to support teachers in acquiring the skills necessary to be effective in educating students in urban settings. This initiative not only became a great recruitment tool but also the best way to ensure educators had the set of skills necessary to help students in their classrooms from day one.