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## **RCSD holds forum on its search for new superintendent — interim or permanent**

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Rochester parents, residents and school district staff want the same thing in an interim superintendent that they want in every RCSD educator: integrity, cultural understanding and a commitment to children in the city.

That was the message from several speakers at Thursday's forum on the selection of an interim superintendent, something that the board has said it will announce within a week. That person will briefly overlap with and then succeed Carmine Peluso, who is leaving to become superintendent in Churchville-Chili.

The interim leader will not be a current district employee, Board President Cynthia Elliott said. There will be no prohibition against the interim superintendent seeking to retain the position permanently, as Peluso did. The board hopes to unveil its selection early next month.

Several speakers at Thursday's public forum said they want a leader who is versed in the many different backgrounds and experiences that students bring to school.

'We have very huge disparities ... of understanding (with) people who are put in place but don't understand what the community is facing,' said Faziri Renzaho, founder of Rochester Global Refugee Services. 'It doesn't matter where they're coming from, but they have to have a social and academic understanding of our community at large, not only for one specific group but for the entire group.'

Anthony McCabe, a teacher at the soon-to-close Franklin High School, urged the board to maintain a respectful relationship with the interim superintendent, and eventually the permanent superintendent.

'I'm asking each member of this board to keep this community in mind by treating the candidate they choose with respect, dignity and the support they need so they'll want to support our community for the long term to make a lasting positive change,' he said.

Peluso will not depart until June 30, the end of the academic and fiscal year. The hope is to bring the interim superintendent aboard for the last two months to make the transition smoother.

One well-regarded former interim superintendent, Linda Cimusz, remains at work in the district as a consultant. Elliott would not say whether she was in consideration for the position.

'For the most part, we're all on the same page with what the community recommended,' Elliott said. 'Essentially I think people want to continue the great work the superintendent has already started.'

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