

Dr. Roberta Mayor
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Oakland Unified School District Press Advisory *For Immediate Release*

Oakland School Board Names Tony Smith New Superintendent *Deputy Superintendent of San Francisco Unified selected by unanimous vote*

Oakland – May 22, 2009 – OUSD completed its nationwide search for an educational leader today when it named Dr. Anthony Smith the new Superintendent of Oakland Public Schools. Smith, the Deputy Superintendent of the San Francisco Unified School District, was elected by unanimous vote of the seven-member Oakland Board of Education, concluding a process that entered its final stage May 13 with the announcement of three finalists for the District's top post.



New OUSD Superintendent Tony Smith

Smith; Barbara Adams, the Chief Academic Officer for Boston Public Schools; and Edward Velasquez, Superintendent of the Montebello Unified School District in Los Angeles County, emerged from a crowded field to vie for the Superintendency. On Wednesday, May 20, the three candidates appeared in an open forum where they mingled with the public at Oakland Technical High School before appearing in three, separate hour-long question-and-answer sessions. The town hall-style meeting helped inform board deliberations which ultimately resulted in Smith's unanimous selection.

"I am honored and humbled by the opportunity that the Board, and by extension, the people of Oakland, have presented me," Smith said. "Public schools are a sacred trust tasked with developing the most precious asset a city has to offer – its children. We are creating a covenant with the entire city of

every student. every classroom. every day.

Oakland to put children and families at the center of our conversation. As OUSD Superintendent, I will strive relentlessly to ensure that our students learn, live, work and play in a school system that helps them fully realize their potential.

“Accomplishing this goal will require an unflinching commitment to rigorous standards and the values of achievement, equity and accountability,” Smith continued. The road ahead will not be easy, but the cost of not putting ourselves fully behind this work is unthinkable. The children of Oakland – not some of them, but all of them – deserve a future bright with possibility and an education that prepares them for it. Our success depends on all of Oakland working together to and the Board recognized that in its show of unity.”

Smith has served as Deputy Superintendent for the 55,000 student San Francisco Unified School District since November 2007. This appointment followed his tenure as Superintendent of the Emery Unified School District (EUSD) in Emeryville, California. Smith took the reigns in Emeryville as its Board of Education regained control at the end of State Administration in 2004. Prior to leading Emery Unified, Smith was Director of the Emeryville Citywide Initiative, with particular responsibility for the Math, Science, Technology Initiative (MSTI), a joint project of EUSD, the City of Emeryville, the Emery Ed Fund and the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools (BayCES). In this role, Smith fostered the development of a local, state and federal agenda promoting greater attention to parent, community and teacher voices as well as the creation and support of high-quality, equitable, small autonomous schools.

From 1997 to 2001, Smith served as Director of the Academy for Excellence, Equity and Leadership in Teaching and Director of the Transitions Project at BayCES, an educational non-profit that offers coaching and technical assistance to schools and districts as part of an effort to promote equity in education. In these roles, he was responsible for fundraising, management and human resources, curriculum development, training and facilitation, leadership development and coaching and youth engagement for projects related to secondary school and English Learner literacy. He also developed strategies for District-wide interventions and managed relationships between UC Berkeley, six California high schools, BayCES and the Hewlett Foundation.

Prior to joining BayCES, Smith worked as a management consultant for Oakland-based Growers Produce and as a program evaluator with An Alliance for Action, an effort to ally the National Collegiate

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Athletic Association (NCAA), major North American professional sports leagues and community-based organizations in a project aimed at aiding at-risk youth.

In 1992, Smith received his B.A. in English from the University of California, Berkeley, where he was captain of the football team and Graduate Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach before going on to earn his Masters and Doctorate Degrees in Division of Language and Literacy from Cal's Graduate School of Education, degrees he received in 1993 and 2002, respectively.

Smith, an Oakland resident, becomes OUSD's first permanent, locally-appointed Superintendent since the State took control of the District in 2003. Upon reassuming partial control of District operations in April 2008, the Board appointed Dr. Roberta Mayor as Interim Superintendent with the charge of strengthening District finances and preparing for the full return of local governance. Concurrently, the Board designed the process that would result in the selection of a permanent Superintendent and tapped the veteran firm of Ray & Associates, Inc. to lead the search.

Ray & Associates conducted a series of public meetings in neighborhoods throughout Oakland to solicit opinion on the qualifications, strategies, values and managerial skills the new Superintendent should possess. The Board incorporated this input with its stated desire for a leader that would uphold the District's commitment to the values of achievement, equity and accountability, pursue its mission of high-quality instruction in every classroom and continue the progress that has added 73 points to OUSD's Academic Performance Index (API) score in the past four years, making it California's most improved large, urban district during this time.

Choosing from amongst a deep field of qualified candidates, the Board selected Adams, Smith and Velasquez for the final stage, which included the May 20 town hall meeting and a May 21 appearance before an advisory panel appointed by the Board. After taking a non-binding recommendation from the advisory panel, the Board elected Smith by unanimous vote. Pending contract negotiations, Smith will assume his duties as the new Superintendent of Oakland Public Schools on July 1, 2009.

"The Board was pleased to select an educator with the stature, the intellect, and the commitment of Dr. Tony Smith as Superintendent of the District," said Oakland Board of Education President Noel Gallo. "He is an Oakland resident with deep ties to the area, a record of fighting for equity and a profound determination to always put children first. Tony's demonstrated that he's willing to do what's necessary to improve the prospects of public school children, yet nimble enough to unite different and **every student. every classroom. every day.**"

sometimes divided constituencies in this common cause. His leadership skills will prove invaluable as we work to give Oakland a school system worthy of this city and the trust of its people.”

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