

## **HORIZON CHARTER SCHOOLS SELECTS FINALIST FOR SUPERINTENDENT/CEO POSITION DR. JOHN GARRARD, CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER, VISIONS IN EDUCATION CHARTER SCHOOL**

After conducting a nationwide expansive search, the Horizon Charter Schools Board of Education is honored to announce Dr. John Garrard as the finalist to replace Interim Superintendent/CEO, Diann Kitamura.

The search was a lengthy process of gathering input from employees of the district and members of the community which included the review of many applicants recruited by Leadership Associates. The Horizon Charter School Board of Education will consider a contract with Dr. Garrard and is expected to approve an offer of employment at its January 20, 2022, regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Dr. Garrard brings more than 22 years of experience in elementary, middle, and high school education to the position and currently serves Visions in Education Charter Schools as the Chief Academic Officer, a position he has held for 3 1/2 years. Before that Dr. Garrard served as Director, Admissions and Family Services for 6 years after serving as a high school, Vice-Principal, and K-8 Principal for 8 years in the San Juan Unified School District. Prior to that, he served as K-8 Vice-Principal and High School Assistant Principal and teacher in the Lodi Unified School District for 5 years. In each of these roles, he has demonstrated high expectations, compassion, dedication, and a commitment to strong collaboration and communication with students, families, staff, and the community.

Horizon Charter School Board President Joe Dutra stated "We are excited to bring a strong and proven leader to our school district. After our extensive search and interview process with very strong competitors, we found John, who comes from a Charter School System like Horizon Charter School. He is an excellent instructional leader, cares deeply about children, and brings us new perspectives and an excellent vision, especially his commitment to innovation, professional learning, and equity." Dutra adds, "His sincere desire to listen to all viewpoints and his relationships with parents and community are excellent. He is known for valuing the true purpose of alternative forms of teaching and learning as well as his high level of integrity and collaboration. He is a strong communicator who exemplifies transparent leadership and truly enjoys working with others. His expectations for himself and others are very high and always centered on accelerating student achievement and wellbeing. He admires and respects the people with whom he works. John led the way in developing equity for all students, families, and communities in his district. He has a keen sense of social justice that has served families well."

Dr. Garrard earned a bachelor's degree from California State University, Stanislaus, a master's degree from the University of the Pacific, and a Doctoral degree in educational leadership from the University of the Pacific. Dr. Garrard and his wife Christine, a fellow home school teacher, have been married for over 20 years and are the proud parents of twin boys, Christian and Charley (20), and daughter, Maren (18). He values opportunities to engage and build his family and community. His family loves to travel, hike, and spend time with their black lab, Penny.

For further information or interviews, please contact Communications Director, Mickie Giacomini, [mgiacomini@hcs.k12.ca.us](mailto:mgiacomini@hcs.k12.ca.us) 916-204-0156

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