

Prospective Interim Superintendent for Alachua County Public Schools brings extensive expertise, ambitious goals to the position

Dr. Carlee Simon, who has been tapped by the School Board to serve as the Interim Superintendent of Alachua County Public Schools, brings significant expertise and experience and a passion for education to the position.



Dr. Simon was chosen from among seven candidates whose names were submitted by the School Board ahead of a special Board meeting held Friday, December 4 to discuss the selection of an interim Superintendent.

“She has a clear vision for the district,” said School Board chair Dr. Leanetta McNealy. “Her expertise will help guide us through many challenges of budgeting and financial constraints, and she has a history of being a strong collaborator, which will be a plus in welcoming interactions with the community.”

Dr. Simon says she will be listening to the ideas and concerns of teachers, staff, families and the community at large.

“We need their voices,” said Dr. Simon. “The district doesn’t exist in a vacuum, and if we are going to make progress in addressing some of our most stubbornly persistent problems, such as our unacceptably wide racial opportunity gaps, we need to meaningfully engage the community and other stakeholders.”

Dr. Simon currently serves as a faculty member at the University of North Florida, where she has developed and delivered online graduate courses in School Finance and Early Childhood Leadership Policy and Law for school principals, district administrators and other working professionals. Her career includes eight years as Executive Director/Director of the National Education Finance Academy, a professional organization, and in a leadership capacity with the American Education Finance Association. She also has ten years of instructional and curriculum experience in the K-12 setting, having served as both a math teacher and a subject matter expert in Florida schools, including P.K Yonge Developmental Research School and the Florida Virtual School.

Dr. Simon’s scholarly work on a wide variety of educational issues ranging from school design to teacher evaluations to school funding has been published in numerous professional journals, and she’s been a featured presenter at many state, national and international conferences.

Dr. Simon currently holds a Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Policy from the University of Florida and is completing a second Ph.D. at UF in Design, Construction and Urban Planning, with a focus on addressing educational equity. She’s also earned state certification in Educational Leadership, Engineering and Technology Education and Mathematics.

Dr. Simon’s achievements have earned her a number of awards and honors from state and national organizations, including the University Council for Educational Administration, the National Education Finance Academy, the Florida chapter of the American Planning Association and the University of Florida.

Dr. Simon says her expertise in a wide range of educational issues, including educational finance, distance learning, and fostering an inclusive approach to educational leadership, are well-suited to the district’s needs.

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"I believe my exposure to different approaches to solving problems similar to those we face here in Alachua County will serve me well as Interim Superintendent," said Dr. Simon. "For example, my background in education finance will be crucial as we deal with the financial impact of COVID."

Dr. Simon has been a passionate advocate for students and staff in the district. She currently serves on the Education Task Force and was chair of the renaming committee for Carolyn Parker Elementary School. She herself is a graduate of Alachua County Public Schools (Eastside High School) and her children attend schools within the district.

"As both a parent and educator, my immediate concern is to provide a safe and healthy educational environment for all students and staff while balancing the need for effective instruction," said Dr. Simon. "I also plan to do everything in my power to help the School Board members carry out their vision for our district."

A contract between Dr. Simon and the district is currently being negotiated. The Board will vote on that contract during its regular business meeting on December 15, with Dr. Simon expected to officially begin her duties on December 16.

A more detailed biography of Dr. Simon is available at: <https://bit.ly/371d8yB>

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