



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Leah Thompson, Director of Development
BART Charter Public School

Phone: 413-743-7311, x708

Fax: 413-743-7327

Website: www.bartcharter.org

2016-2017 School Year to Be BART Founding Director's Last

BART
1 Commercial Street
P.O. Box 267
Adams, MA 01220

www.bartcharter.org
t 413 743 7311
f 413 743 7327

ADAMS — Julia G. Bowen, the founding Executive Director of BART Charter Public School who successfully opened the school, led its growth, and built a program that achieved national recognition for student achievement, will leave her position at the end of the current school year.

After 13 years in the director role, Bowen wishes to explore a new career direction. The BART Board of Trustees reluctantly accepted Bowen's planned resignation, effective June 30, 2017.

"We wish Julia well as she seeks a new venue in which to deploy her excellent and multifaceted skills as a leader," said BART Board of Trustees Chair Charles Swabey. "At the same time, we are sad that BART will no longer benefit from Julia's exceptionally talented leadership."

If the Board were to choose the timing of a leadership transition of this significance, it could not have chosen better, said Board Chair Charles Swabey.

Enrollment in BART is near the cap of 363, up from the 308 limit originally planned when the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved the creation of the school, and an expansion of the school facility has been completed.

"The Board has great confidence that the strong administrative team Julia built and the educational systems and processes that she has put in place will ensure that students continue to thrive without her leadership," Swabey said.

With Bowen as BART's top administrator, 100 percent of BART graduates were accepted to a college. Graduates also met rigorous graduation requirements such as earning a passing grade in a college course, presenting their work to a panel comprised of school and community leaders, and completing an internship in a community setting. Bowen has also recruited and developed a strong leadership team that will further ensure a smooth transition in leaders.

"The Board is mindful that BART's achievements would not have been possible without Julia's leadership," Swabey said. "Julia found the school's facility and oversaw multiple renovations and expansions, opened the school in 2004, recruited and developed a high-quality administrative team, and led improvement in student growth and performance that has earned BART numerous recognitions."

BART, a tuition-free, college prep charter school serving up to 363 students in grades 6-12, has been recognized and featured by The National Center on Time &

Learning in Advancing Arts Education Through an Expanded School Day. The NCTL supports national, state and local initiatives that add more school time to help children meet the demands of the 21st century and prepare for success in college and career.

In addition, BART has received a citation from the Massachusetts Senate for being recognized by US DOE-funded program EPIC for accomplishing breakthrough student achievement gains and, in 2015, US News & World Report ranked BART the 7th best high school in Massachusetts.

Swabey said Bowen has contributed greatly to BART's success because of her talent as a fund-raiser. Unlike district public schools, charter schools do not receive funding from the state's School Building Assistance Bureau to assist with facility construction or renovation, so they need to raise money for their buildings.

He said Bowen's talent at developing relationships with donors meant the school raised more than \$1 million toward the recent renovation and expansion of the building. Over the years, Bowen has also raised funds to improve the school's programs and better student achievement.

In a letter to the BART community, Bowen said, "Over the past 13 years, I have had the privilege of leading the school through its inception and growth to a high-quality institution that is truly changing students' (and families') lives. I have had the privilege of working alongside an incredible team of educators and staff members who care so passionately about students. And I have had the privilege to represent this amazing school to the broader community, always aware that the real work is what happens each and every day in the classroom and by the staff members who keep the school running."

Swabey said the Board is grateful that Bowen has provided ample notice of her intent to resign, as there will be time for the Board of Trustees to recruit a new director and for Bowen to work with her successor to ensure a smooth transition.

He said the Board, which is responsible for hiring and supervising the Executive Director, will charge a Search Committee, comprised of several trustees and representatives of faculty, staff, and parents, with conducting a national search for Bowen's successor. The committee will solicit input about the new leader from faculty, staff, parents, and students, conduct preliminary interviews with candidates, and recommend two to three finalists to the Board of Trustees, which will select BART's next executive director.

###