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Growing Learners. Growing Leaders.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hiawatha Academies' Board Announces New Executive Director

MINNEAPOLIS – Hiawatha Academies' Board of Directors is proud to announce Colette Owens, an accomplished educational leader from St. Louis, as its new executive director. Ms. Owens, a 15-year educator and administrator, will succeed Eli Kramer, who will step down from the position next month.

"We are excited to welcome Ms. Owens to the Hiawatha family," said board chair Margarita Dimas Cultu. The board search committee, which launched in January, went through a rigorous process of engagement with staff, families and partners before beginning the search. They were impressed with Ms. Owens' strong knowledge and background in academic strategy, coaching and development of leaders, and equity lens which were important to Hiawatha's constituents.

Before serving as interim director of curriculum and director of strategy and special projects for St. Louis Public Schools, Ms. Owens began her career as a Special Education teacher and went on to hold several senior leadership positions for Teach for America – St. Louis, where she primarily focused on teacher leadership development, strategic planning and aligning the organization's priorities and structures.

"Hiawatha Academies has had a strong legacy of success and I'm excited to build on Hiawatha's strengths and work on improving our areas of growth," Ms. Owens said.

With a deep commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity, Ms. Owens believes that a high-quality school embraces and supports the growth of all learners and embodies the values of equity and justice.

The Board remains committed to its strong strategic plan and mission to empower all its scholars with the knowledge, character and leadership skills to graduate from college and serve the common good.

"Ms. Owens has a track record of success in leading and executing outcome-based school improvement plans," said Ms. Cultu. "After a long search and some wonderful prospects, the board is pleased to have selected Ms. Owens. She will enhance Hiawatha's culture and create a renewed sense of urgency and excitement for the future."

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About Hiawatha Academies

Hiawatha Academies is a network of high-performing K-12 college preparatory charter schools located in South Minneapolis. Our mission is to empower all Hiawatha scholars with the knowledge, character and leadership skills to graduate from college and serve the common good. Our equity vision is to honor the humanity of all people, we actively disrupt systemic inequity in pursuit of an equitable world. Visit our website at www.hiawathaacademies.org