



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Rise Charter School Board Appoints Dr. Celeta Watson as its New Superintendent/Executive Director**

East Point, Georgia – **June 15, 2023** – Rise Charter Schools is pleased to announce the unanimous decision of the Rise Charter School Board to appoint Dr. Celeta Watson as the new Superintendent/Executive Director. With a resounding vote of confidence, the board recognizes Dr. Watson's exceptional qualifications and leadership abilities, making her the ideal candidate for this pivotal role.

Dr. Watson brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record as a turnaround leader in the field of education. With 20 years dedicated to shaping the lives of students, she has excelled in various educational sectors, including private, public, and higher education. Most recently, Dr. Watson served as the Senior Director of Improvement Services for Cognia, a national school and college accreditation organization that supports 36,000 institutions across 90 countries. Her instrumental role in leading Cognia's first school turnaround pilot and transformation initiative showcased her remarkable abilities as an educational leader.

Believing that every student has greatness within them, Dr. Watson is guided by the educational mandates of educating the whole child. Her extensive work in school, district, and state turnaround reflects her unwavering commitment to this mission. Notably, Dr. Watson served as the superintendent of one of Georgia's lowest-performing school systems in rural Georgia, where she successfully led the district in regaining its accreditation after a two-year probationary period.

During her tenure, Dr. Watson's leadership resulted in an outstanding increase of over 85 points in the district's overall SACS/AdvancED accreditation score within a remarkable nine-month period. Additionally, she spearheaded the revision and update of more than 284 education policies and secured over \$2.5 million in grants during her time as superintendent. Dr. Watson's expertise also extends to areas such as performance evaluations, strategic planning, STEM curriculum and instruction, grant writing, and corporate partnerships.

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Dr. Watson's impact reaches beyond individual schools and districts. In Jacksonville, Florida, she successfully transformed a middle school from an "F" designation to a "C" designation, demonstrating her exceptional ability to effect change. Furthermore, as a School Improvement and Professional Learning Specialist at the Georgia Department of Education, Dr. Watson organized and facilitated state-wide professional learning opportunities for over 3,000 Georgia leaders assigned to low-performing schools. Her remarkable achievements resulted in the removal of 70 percent of Title I schools from the state's needs improvement list.

With earned degrees from Grambling State University, Savannah State University, and a recent Ed.D. from Liberty University, Celeta possesses a solid educational foundation. Her commitment to continuous professional growth is exemplified by her acceptance into the esteemed Harvard Institute for Superintendents and District Leaders.

The Rise Charter School community eagerly anticipates the positive impact Dr. Celeta Watson will bring to the organization. With her exceptional leadership, experience, and expertise, Rise Charter Schools is poised to further advance its mission of providing high-quality education and comprehensive support to students in East Point, Georgia.

For media inquiries or to schedule an interview with Dr. Celeta Watson, please contact:  
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About Rise Charter Schools:

Rise Charter Schools is a renowned educational institution dedicated to providing high-quality education and comprehensive support to students in East Point, Georgia. With the unanimous appointment of Dr. Celeta Watson as the new Superintendent/Executive Director, Rise Charter Schools is committed to fostering academic achievement, character development, and lifelong success for all students.