

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, May 24, 2016
Greenfield High School Library, Greenfield MA
Approved 06.08.16

Present: Timothy Farrell (TF); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); William Martin (WM) (arrived 6:07); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Nathaniel Tripp (NT); Francina Wisnewski (FW).
Absent: Cameron Ward (CW)
Also present: Other school staff, citizens, and the press.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (TF, SH, AN, NT, FW), Chair Farrell opened the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

II. Business Topics

A. Finalist Interviews: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development

- 1. Valorie Miller** (former Director of Instructional Services, Winchendon MA)
- 2. Elizabeth (Beth) Pratt** (former Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Leominster MA)

JH reviewed the process leading to tonight's interview of finalists.

Questions asked of each candidate:

Introduction & Academic Preparation

1. Please tell us about your preparation for the role of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development. In particular, please explain your academic background—your degrees and the types of coursework in those degree programs. (TF)

References

2. If we contacted your last three employers, what would they say are your strengths and weaknesses? (TF)

Educator Evaluation & Teacher Motivation

3. What examples would you offer for effective evaluation processes for teachers and administrators that actually work to improve performance and motivate teachers and administrators? How would a process like this be consistent with the current requirements of the professional standards, curriculum frameworks, and proper roles and responsibilities? In particular, describe a process that would work best, in your opinion, over a reasonable period of time. (TF)

Resolution & Decision-Making

4. There are times when simple intelligence is not enough to resolve a problem. Can you describe a complex problem, situation, or crisis that you confronted where you had to rely on more than intelligence, but when you had to call upon your other skills and abilities for, say, communicating, thinking quickly, working with people, political savvy, instincts, academic training, *and* intellect? (FW)

Leadership

5. If selected for this position, in three years, how would you define success for your position? (NT)

Financial Analytical Ability

6. Please describe a tough financial problem you have faced in your job. What did you do about it? (AN)
7. What is the total budget you've overseen or been responsible for in your most recent position? (WM)

Management Effectiveness

8. What do you consider the most important contribution(s) your administration has made to the education of its students? Or, to the community? (AN)

Judgment

9. a) Can you give us an example of a decision you made in the last six months that proved to be a good one, and what influenced your course of action? (NT)
- b) Please also describe a recent decision that you wish you could do over again and why, and what steps you would take to approach it differently. (NT)

Communication & Team Building

10. What is the role of a team in school leadership? Give examples of how in your current role you support the principals, superintendent, teachers, or families through teamwork. (TF)

Preparation to Step into Superintendent's Role

11. What experience or skills do you have that would enable you to step in as the acting superintendent of the district, if so requested – for example, in the superintendent's absence? (SH)

Local Community

12. In your research of Greenfield Public Schools, what do you find most unique about our community? What strengths draw you to the district and how would you build on them to continue to provide an excellent education to every Greenfield student? (WM)

Supporting All Learners

13. What is your experience with underserved populations – ELL, Special Education, low income, transient, or minority students? How would you work to provide equity for all learners? Please be specific. (FW)

Curriculum: Aligned/Non-aligned

14. This question is about offering aligned curriculum vs. non-aligned curriculum. With this alignment/non-alignment topic, what are your thoughts about innovation schools and curriculum acceleration? (SH)

Conclusion/ Recommendation

15. What else would you like the Committee to be aware of regarding your candidacy, and do you have any questions for us? (TF)

B. Director of Pupil Services Job Posting

Personnel Subcte was not able to meet prior to review job description.

AN moved to direct superintendent to post the director of pupil services vacancy announcement tomorrow, May 25, 2016. WM 2nd.

Discussion: Some responsibilities (Title IX) could move to assistant supt. Wellness policy. WM noted additional vacancies, recommended city-school partnerships for HR administration and cost-saving transportation strategies. Require MA certification *or eligibility for certification*. Job

description to include “overseeing out-of-district placements and specialty programs.” Concern that this is second resignation in two years.

Motion passed 5-1.

C. Decision on Hiring Assistant Superintendent

WM moved to enter into negotiations to hire Elizabeth Pratt as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development. FW 2nd.

Discussion: Candidates’ strengths and merits. Screening process long, thorough, inclusive, concluding in tonight’s interviews. Considered leadership role of assistant supt. as well as curriculum, instruction, PD. JH summarized references, outstanding on both candidates. Both candidates excellent. Position starts July 1 or sooner. Consensus to vote tonight.

JH reviewed strengths of both candidates, recommended Pratt.

Roll call vote – Yes: SH, NT, FW, AN, WM, TF. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Executive Session

FW made a motion to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining. SH 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: TF, SH, WM, AN, NT, FW. Moved into executive session at 9:33 p.m.

NT moved to return to public session. 2nd WM. Roll call vote – Yes: TF, SH, WM, AN, NT, FW. Motion passed unanimously. Public session resumed at 9:59 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

SH moved to adjourn. WM 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary