

GREENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES: Wednesday, June 15, 2016
Greenfield High School Library, Greenfield MA
Approved 07.13.2016

Present: Timothy Farrell (TF); Jordana Harper, Superintendent (JH); Susan Hollins (SH); Adrienne Nunez (AN); Nathaniel Tripp (NT); Cameron Ward (CW) (arrived 6:08); Francina Wisnewski (FW).

Absent: William Martin (WM)

Also present: Other school staff and citizens.

I. Call to Order

With a quorum present (TF, SH, AN, NT, FW), Chair Farrell opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

II. Business Topics

A. Director of Pupil Services Finalist Interviews

1. William Bazyk (Director of Special Education, Battenkill Valley Supervisory Union VT)

2. Dianne Ellis (Principal, Pleasant Street School, Athol MA)

Questions asked of each candidate:

- 1) Please tell us about your professional preparation for the role of Director of Pupil Services. What skills or credentials do you bring to our district that will support the needs of all students in the Greenfield Public Schools? (TF)
- 2) What specifically draws you to apply for Director of Pupil Services in Greenfield at this time? How does this position fit into your long-range goals and career plans? (AN)
- 3) The district has an obligation to meet certain legal standards as well as to ensure we are meeting student needs. Please describe your approach to ensuring compliance. Give specific examples of what this would look like. (AN)
- 4) With concrete examples, how do you work to support school nurses? What do you value most about their role? (FW)
- 5) School systems and individual schools are rated by the Department of Education as Level 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. Currently, Greenfield has all Level 1 and 2 schools. Can you clarify how the performance of students receiving special education impacts each school's rating? How can you help assure Greenfield sustains all Level 1 and 2 schools? (SH)
- 6) This question relates to working with students whose behaviors cause concern in the school system (students who are regularly disruptive or easily triggered to outbursts). Have you ever designed programs or school accommodations for these students? If so, at what grade levels? What characteristics make these programs or accommodations successful or unsuccessful? (SH)
- 7) The Director of Pupil Services has responsibility for oversight of Early Childhood programming. What is your experience in this area, and what steps would you take to ensure strong quality of education at the preK level? (FW)
- 8) Managing a strong budget is essential to this position. What do you see as the largest cost drivers in a district of our size and composition? How can you mitigate against unanticipated costs to provide long-term stability in student services? (NT)
- 9) Please describe your experience in working with under-served populations, including ELL, Special Ed, low-income, and students on 504 plans. (NT)

- 10) a. Describe specific steps you have taken or would take in Greenfield to effectively engage parents/family members. (TF)
b. What is the role of a Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and how would you as Director support it? (TF)
- 11) If you were selected as the next Director of Pupil Services, what steps would you take immediately to support the district and build relationships with teachers, principals, central office staff, and the broader community? (AN)
- 12) Greenfield is going through a Coordinated Program Review and will go through site audits in the 2016-2017 school year. What is your experience with CPR Review, as well as other audits such as Circuit Breaker, PQA, etc. (TF)
- 13) Anything you would like to add or ask us? (TF)

II. Executive Session

NT made a motion to go into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with non-union personnel. SH 2nd. Roll call vote – Yes: SH, NT, FW, TF, AN, CW. Moved into executive session at 7:41 p.m.

CW moved to return to public session. 2nd SH. Roll call vote – Yes: SH, NT, FW, TF, AN, CW. Motion passed unanimously. Public session resumed at 8:58 p.m.

III. Decision on Hiring Director of Pupil Services

AN made a motion to offer position of Director of Pupil Services and enter into contract negotiations with Dianne Ellis. FW 2nd. Roll call vote: Yes: FW, TF, AN, CW. No: NT. Abstain: SH. Motion passed 4-1-1.

Discussion: Process followed thoroughly. Very difficult decision: both candidates strong, have skills and experience to succeed. Praise for Ellis's skills in communication, building community relationships, ability to solve budget challenges.

VIII. Adjournment

NT moved to adjourn. AN 2nd. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Farber
Recording Secretary