BERLIN-BOYLSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
BERLIN-BOYLSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

APPLICATION FOR SUPERINTENDENT

Personal Information:

Name Susan Gilson

Address [redacted]

[redacted]

city state zip

Email Address [redacted]

Home Phone [redacted]

Office Phone [redacted]

Cell Phone [redacted]

How may we contact you? ☐ at work ☐ at home ☐ by e-mail ☑ by cell phone

Certifications Held

Certification	State
Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent Professional	MA
School Business Administrator	MA
Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official (MCPPO)	MA

Are you licensed as a superintendent in Massachusetts? ☑ YES ☐ NO

Are you eligible for licensure as a superintendent in Massachusetts? ☑ YES ☐ NO

If not, have you submitted an application for certification as a superintendent in Massachusetts? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Date of application: _____

Current School District Information:

Are you presently under contract to a school district? Yes

If yes, when does your contract expire? 2027

Name of District Lunenburg

Position Director of Finance and Administration

Academic and Professional Training:

High School(s), Colleges, Universities Attended	Location	Degree
University of Connecticut	Storrs, Connecticut, USA	Ph.D.
University of Connecticut	Storrs, Connecticut, USA	M.A.
University of Calgary Alberta, CANADA	Advanced Graduate Studies in Fine and Performing Arts	
University of Hartford West Hartford, Connecticut, USA		B.S.E.
University of Hartford West Hartford, Connecticut, USA		B.M.Ed.

Professional Experience:

No. Years	Dates From/To	Position	School District
1	07/01/24- Present	Director of Finance and Administration	Lunenburg, MA
6	(2018-2024)	Assistant Superintendent	King Philip Regional Norfolk, MA
7	(2011-2018)	Assistant Superintendent/ MS Principal	King Philip Regional Norfolk, MA
5	(2006-2011)	MS Principal	King Philip Regional Norfolk, MA
3	(2003-2006)	Assistant Principal	King Philip Regional Norfolk, MA
8	(1992-2001)	K-5 Teacher	West Hartford CT Public Schools

Other Relevant Work Experience and Achievements:

2021 Nationwide Registries Women of Distinction Honors Edition (MA- Assistant Superintendent)

2022 Presenter, University of Central Florida

2022 Presenter, Springfield Public Schools Principals and Teachers (Digital Literacies)

2023 Decennial Accreditation Visting Team Member, New England Association of Schools and Colleges

2022-2024 MA Competitive Grant HQIM Award in support of Middle Grades Math Improvement

Memberships in Professional Organizations:

Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents

Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials

Former Member

Tri County Superintendents Roundtable

BICO Professional Development Committee

CACE Council of Administrators for Compensatory Education

References:

Please list below the names and addresses of three persons who have knowledge of your professional competence and character, whom we may contact should you become a finalist.

Name Constance Eckart Address [redacted]

Relationship Professional Colleague Phone Number [redacted]

Name Dr. Elizabeth Teahan Mendoza Address [redacted]

Relationship Former Superintendent Phone Number [redacted]

Name Dr. Richard Robbat Address [redacted]

Relationship Former Superintendent Phone Number [redacted]

A complete application form includes the following:

X 1. A completed and signed application form. **APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONFIDENTIAL.**

X 2. An up-to-date resume.

X 3. A copy of the candidate's Massachusetts superintendent license, or evidence that the candidate is eligible for licensure as a superintendent in Massachusetts and has submitted his/her application to the Department of Education.

X 4. Evidence of highest degree earned (copy of diploma, license and/or certificate).

X 5. Three recent letters of reference (within the past three years preferred) from persons **other than those listed on the previous page**.

X 6. The Committee requests a personal statement describing your major educational accomplishments and the specific leadership and management skills you can bring to the superintendency of the Berlin-Boylston Public School District.

All application documents listed above must be received in the MASC office on or before **April 4, 2025** at 3:00pm.

Please note: MASC does not maintain an applicant file for use in future searches.
A new application and application materials listed are required for each search.

I understand that my application will become public information.

Signature Susan Gilboa Date 3/10/25

Send all information to:

Berlin-Boylston Public Schools Search
c/o Tracy Novick
MASC
One McKinley Square
Boston, Massachusetts 02109
Telephone: (617) 523 – 8454
FAX: (617) 702 – 4111

Email all information to Ann-marie Martin: amartin@masc.org

For further information please contact Tracy Novick at tnovick@masc.org (508-579-5472)
Please do not contact school committee members or members of the school administration.

Susan Joan Gilson, Ph.D.

[redacted]

Professional Summary

Proven educational leader with exceptional skills in communicating, thinking critically, sound decision making, and problem solving to result in positive welcoming environments that bring the community together to vision for, support, and sustain student success.

Education

Harvard University Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA **2006-2008**
Executive Leadership Institutes
University of Connecticut Storrs, Connecticut, USA **1998-2003**
Doctor of Philosophy, Cognition and Instruction
Master of Arts, Curriculum and Instruction **1993-1995**
University of Calgary Calgary, Alberta, CANADA **1995-1996**
Certificate of Advanced Study, Fine and Performing Arts
University of Hartford West Hartford, Connecticut, USA **1987-1992**
Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Bachelor of Music Education
Both Degrees: Summa Cum Laude / Regent's Award Recipient- Top GPA Engineering
Certifications MA- School Business Director, Special Education Director, Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent, Principal (Elementary, Middle, High)
Professional CT Teaching Certifications - Math, Physics, Music, and Adult Learning
MA Certified Public Purchasing Official Designation ***2024***
Office of MA Inspector General
New England Association for Schools and Colleges- Accreditation Panelist ***2023-2024***

Experience

Lunenburg Public Schools, Lunenburg, Massachusetts **2024-Present**
Director of Administration and Finance

- **Provide direction and oversight for district financial operations**, including budgeting, accounting, and reporting to ensure fiscal responsibility and compliance with policies. This has required strategic communication with multiple stakeholders, networking with school/town leaders, and deeper analysis within the town's central hub for fiscal management (MUNIS) of the general fund, grants, revolving, and capital plan accounts.
- **Leadership of current capital projects with monthly status updates,** including budgeting and financial analysis, to ensure alignment with school development goals. *Projects in Process* - ADA STUDY FOR RENOVATION AND ASSESSMENTS AND SCHEMATIC DESIGN; TRANSPORTATION; FIRE ALARM SYSTEM UPGRADES (Turkey Hill Elementary); SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADES (LPS and THES) AND EXTERIOR DOOR REPLACEMENT (THES) ; Secured Capital Projects supported with ARPA funding: (McGovern Ford Plow Truck- District Grounds (now in build process with delivery anticipated in early spring); LMHS- Window Safety Film (installation date: 01/08/25).

- **Lead District Fiscal Representative Advising Negotiating Team for Multi-Year Contracts (Teachers; Paraprofessionals; Secretaries)** This requires developing simulation models for projection and analysis of long term projections based on contractual changes and potential budget impacts
- **Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of financial operations, recommending improvements and adjustments where necessary.** Key deliverables included sharing presentations and recommendations as part of Lunenburg's Budget Task Force Committee which informed the final summary to the Select Board and Financial Committees.
- **Oversee all district grants and funding programs**, ensuring compliance with grant requirements and reporting standards.
- **Ensure the accurate and timely submission of financial documents** to regulatory bodies and accreditation agencies (DESE, Lunenburg-Town and School)
- **Engage in all contractual challenges** which requires comprehensive knowledge of MA School Committee policy, understanding of diverse legal perspectives, education realities, and position expectations, collaborative communication with all parties, listening throughout, and ability to reach a reasonable decision that has the perception of being fair.
- **Use comprehensive experience** and education licenses to step up and do whatever is needed whenever it is needed

King Philip Regional School District, Norfolk, Massachusetts **2003-2024**
Assistant Superintendent (2018-2024)
Assistant Superintendent/ MS Principal (2011-2018)
MS Principal (2006-2011); MS Assistant Principal (2003-2006)

Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

- Support operation of the King Philip Regional School District with a focus on pandemic response and recovery, prioritizing student health and wellness while ensuring rigorous instructional programming
- Coordinate district wide professional development with multiple stakeholders to support aligned curriculum and instruction
- Engage collaboratively with King Philip Association to resolve district concerns as well as negotiate contracts for all Units
- Led analysis of district wide data used to monitor results of evidence based program used to support academic, social, and emotional learning
- Collaborate with school/district leadership teams in the budget and process in preparation of the district budget
- Creation and implementation of model frameworks to support curriculum development that promotes anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable best practices
- Coordinate and report on district compliance as required for Civil Rights and Title audits
- Led working group of community stakeholders during Strategic Planning process
- School Committee and tri-town presentation of strategic budgets during years with challenging fiscal climates

- Led district wide efforts to train, implement, and calibrate educator evaluation

Secured approximately 3 million in grant funding

Outcomes for various grants received included: Implementation of tuition free five week high school summer school programming for credit recovery; Implementation of NWEA MAPS testing as a standard assessment tool to prepare students for MCAS; Revisions in programming for Teacher Mentoring programs; Increases in innovative technologies used within district courses such as artificial intelligence, robotics, and computer programming; Implementation of tuition free one week middle school summer orientation program for all students from feeder schools; Support for Early College programming; Implementation of MA MyCap to improve guidance department Career and College programming; and Teacher Diversification to focus on high school education pathway, hiring practices, recruitment, and retention related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

King Philip Middle School Principal

- Built a community culture founded on trust and shared leadership
- Developed and implemented innovative schedule redesign at zero cost
    - Redesign supported:
        - longitudinal enrollment for HS AP World Language (no 5th year program existed prior to redesign), HS AP Calculus AB/BC (no 5th year program existed prior to redesign); and MS/HS Choral (increased numbers) and Band programs
        - increased direct learning time for all MS students
- Completed 26.5 million dollar middle school construction project and revised building infrastructure to create more welcoming learning environment
- Sponsored 2013 National Geography Bee Champion through geography club creation, selection of advisor, provision of materials
- Led curriculum development process, increased safety protocols, and crisis response
- Responsible for advancing comprehensive teaching and learning program
- Served as Supervisor of Administrative Practicums with M.S.S.A. / doctoral reviewer for Ph.D./ Ed.D candidates at Northeastern, and University of Connecticut

University of Connecticut, NEAG School of Education **2002-2003**
Student Teaching Supervisor, Storrs, CT

Mansfield Public Schools, Storrs, CT
2001-2002
Full year School Administration Practicum, Principal Internship, Mansfield, CT
U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

West Hartford Public Schools, West Hartford, CT **1992-2001**
17 School District
Teacher-Traditional and Magnet Schools designed to promote racial,ethnic, and economic integration within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Theme, West Hartford, CT
Lead writer for National Blue Ribbon Schools Award for academic excellence 2000-2001

Susan Joan Gilson, Ph.D.

[redacted]

Teacher representative, District Curriculum, Report Card, School Scheduling Committee;
Successful grants through West Hartford's Education Foundation program;
Supervised undergraduate education students from local universities

Most Recent Professional Presentations

Procurement (Lunenburg Leadership Team); Athletics Revolving Account; LMHS Student Activity Account; School District Leadership Team- Evaluation Training; Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems, Application of Concerns Based Adoption Model to Guide Change,Universal Design for Learning, Redesign of STEM Programs to Integrate Artificial Intelligence and Robotics within Secondary Education-University of Central Florida doctoral students, Redesign of STEM Programs through the Integration of Computer Science and Algebra- Springfield Public School System Principals and Teachers, Student Safety, Norfolk County Cable with District Attorney Morrisey, and Student Safety, Tri County Superintendent Roundtable

Professional Memberships

Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents- M.A.S.S.*
Council of Administrators for Administrators of Compensatory Education, C.A.C.E.
Tri County Superintendent Round Table (past member thru June,2024)
Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials- M.A.S.B.O.

Elementary & Secondary Education

UNOFFICIAL LICENSE INFORMATION

Susan Gilson
33 Alexander Rd
Hopkinton, MA 01748

This license information was generated by the educator from the Department's electronic licensure file, ELAR. It should not be taken as proof of current licensure or as an official record. The Department advises that verification of this information via ELAR is always necessary.

Educator: Susan J Gilson

License #: [redacted]

MEPID: [redacted]

Original Certification Date: 05/15/2001

FIELD(LEVEL)	CATEGORY	APPLICATION TYPE	ISSUE DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
Special Education Administrator (All Levels)	ACADEMIC	Initial	01/19/18	**
Principal/Assistant Principal (PreK-6)	ACADEMIC	Initial	05/15/01	**
Principal/Assistant Principal (9-12)	ACADEMIC	Initial	01/12/18	**
Principal/Assistant Principal (5-8)	ACADEMIC	Professional	09/14/06	09/10/26
School Business Administrator (All Levels)	ACADEMIC	Initial	01/19/18	**
*Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent (All Levels)	ACADEMIC	Professional	05/02/16	05/01/26
SEI-Admin (Level depends on prereq license)	ACADEMIC	Endorsement	02/18/16	***

*** Primary Area**

**** Valid for five (5) years of employment.**

***** Due to varying requirements, please pay attention to the specific requirements for the potential of renewing an endorsement.**

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ELAR

ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Board of Governors for Higher Education

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

STORRS, CONNECTICUT 06269-4077

Jeff von Munkwitz-Smith
University Registrar

AN OFFICIAL SIGNATURE IS WHITE WITH A BLUE BACKGROUND.

Name : Gilson,Susan Joan
Student ID: [redacted]

Print Date : 2003-01-07
Send To: SUSAN GILSON
[redacted]

- - - - Degrees Awarded - - - -

Degree : Master of Arts
Confer Date : 1995-05-21
Plan : Education M.A.
Sub-Plan : Science Education (SEC)

- - - - Beginning of Graduate Record - - - -

Summer 1993 (1993-05-22 to 1993-08-25)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 325	Intrs Curriculum Dev	3.0	A
EDCI 363	Teaching Math Elem & Mid Sch	3.0	A
EDCI 326	Curriculum Laboratory	3.0	A
Notes	: Problem Solving In School Math		
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 9.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 9.0		

Fall 1993 (1993-08-28 to 1993-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 300	Investig of Spec Topics Educ	3.0	A
Notes	: Prob Tch Elem Sci		
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 3.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 12.0		

Spring 1994 (1994-01-26 to 1994-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 420	Elem Sch Curr	3.0	A
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 3.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 15.0		

Summer 1994 (1994-05-22 to 1994-08-25)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 462	Teach Begin Reading	3.0	IA
EDCI 308	Teaching Writing in the Elemen	3.0	A
EDCI 311	Workshop in Education	3.0	A
Notes	: Science Energy Workshop For Teachrs		
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 9.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 24.0		

Fall 1994 (1994-08-26 to 1994-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 464	Matl Meth Elem Sci	3.0	A
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 3.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 27.0		

Spring 1995 (1995-01-26 to 1995-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Curriculum and Instruction MA Field of Study			
EDCI 302	Teaching in Affective Domain	3.0	A
TERM GPA : 4.000	TERM TOTALS : 3.0		
CUM GPA : 4.000	CUM TOTALS : 30.0		

Fall 1997 (1997-08-28 to 1997-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			

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Name : Gilson,Susan Joan
Student ID: [redacted]

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Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study

EPSY 343	Intro to Educ Technology	3.0	A	

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.000 CUM TOTALS : 33.0

Spring 1998 (1998-01-26 to 1998-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 335	Learning: Its Implication for	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.000 CUM TOTALS : 36.0

Summer 1998 (1998-05-22 to 1998-08-25)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 309	Quant Methods in Research I	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.000 CUM TOTALS : 39.0

Fall 1998 (1998-08-28 to 1998-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 342	Educ Tests & Measurements	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.000 CUM TOTALS : 42.0

Spring 1999 (1999-01-26 to 1999-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 313	Quant Methods in Research II	3.0	A+

TERM GPA : 4.300 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.020 CUM TOTALS : 45.0

Summer 1999 (1999-05-22 to 1999-08-25)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 441	Meth & Tech of Educ Rsrch	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 4.019 CUM TOTALS : 48.0

Fall 1999 (1999-08-28 to 1999-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDCI 365	Qualitative Meth of Educ Rsrch	3.0	B+
EPSY 300	Invest Special Topics in Educ	3.0	A
Notes : Independent Video Designs For Learn			

TERM GPA : 3.650 TERM TOTALS : 6.0

CUM GPA : 3.978 CUM TOTALS : 54.0

Spring 2000 (2000-01-26 to 2000-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDLR 370	Personnel Evaluation	3.0	A
EDLR 382	Admin of Educ Organizations	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 6.0

CUM GPA : 3.980 CUM TOTALS : 60.0

Summer 2000 (2000-05-22 to 2000-08-25)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			

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Name : Gilson,Susan Joan
Student ID: [redacted]

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EDLR 378	Contemp Educ Policy Issues	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 3.981 CUM TOTALS : 63.0

Fall 2000 (2000-08-28 to 2000-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDLR 350	Budgeting & Resource Mgmt	3.0	A
EDLR 390	Supervision of Educ Organiz	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 6.0

CUM GPA : 3.983 CUM TOTALS : 69.0

Spring 2001 (2001-01-26 to 2001-05-19)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDLR 309	Influences on Adult Learning	3.0	A

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 3.0

CUM GPA : 3.983 CUM TOTALS : 72.0

Fall 2001 (2001-08-28 to 2001-12-22)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDLR 304	Adult & Experiential Learning	3.0	A
EDLR 381	Practicum: Admin Field Exper	1.0	A+
EPSY 300	Independent Study in Education	1.0	A
Notes	: Dissertation Research		
EPSY 346	Multivariate Analysis in Educ	3.0	A
EPSY 355	Professional Sem in Cognition	1.0	A
Course Topic(s): Research Issues			

TERM GPA : 4.033 TERM TOTALS : 9.0

CUM GPA : 3.989 CUM TOTALS : 81.0

Spring 2002 (2002-01-23 to 2002-05-17)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EDLR 381	Practicum: Admin Field Exper	1.0	A
EPSY 356	Instructional Design	3.0	A-
EPSY 359	Theor of Learning, Cognition	3.0	A
EPSY 410	Situated Cognition	3.0	A+

TERM GPA : 4.000 TERM TOTALS : 10.0

CUM GPA : 3.990 CUM TOTALS : 91.0

Fall 2002 (2002-08-28 to 2002-12-20)

Course	Description	Units	Grade
Program : Graduate School			
Plan : Educational Psychology PhD Field of Study			
EPSY 410	Doctoral Seminar	0.0	AU
Course Topic(s): Distance Education			
GRAD 495	Doctoral Dissertation Research	6.0	S

TERM GPA : 0.000 TERM TOTALS : 6.0

CUM GPA : 3.990 CUM TOTALS : 97.0

- - - - - Non-Course Milestones - - - - -

2002-05-03 Doctoral General Exam
2002-05-03 - Completed

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WRENTHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Superintendent
120 Taunton Street
Wrentham, Massachusetts 02093

Dr. Vanessa C. Beauchaine
Asst. Superintendent for
Curriculum & Instruction
ELE and Title I Director

March 14, 2025

Dear Members of the Berlin-Boylston Superintendent Search Committee:

I am writing this letter of recommendation on behalf of Dr. Susan Gilson who is applying to serve as the next Superintendent of Schools for the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools. Dr. Gilson has been a trusted colleague of mine for the past ten years in her role as principal and assistant superintendent in King Philip Regional School District, while I served in the same role in Wrentham. Over the years, we have collaborated on multiple projects from our separate districts in conjunction with colleagues in Plainville and Norfolk to provide for a consistent experience for the students we serve PK-12. Dr. Gilson is a proactive, responsive, and collaborative leader and I will speak to her qualifications and abilities relative to the standards of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Superintendent Rubric.

Standard I: Instructional Leadership
Dr. Gilson is an astute instructional leader who knows the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and is intent on supporting teachers. When the new Science, Technology, and Engineering standards were released, Dr. Gilson arranged a professional development session not only for the teachers of grades 7-12, but also invited the sixth grade teachers from the three feeder towns to ensure a consistent experience for all students from prekindergarten through grade 12. We partnered together to ensure an aligned rollout of the new History & Social Science standards since the choice of which approach to take in implementing the standards in Grades 6 and 7 was left to the districts. This was a critical move since all three elementary school districts needed to use the same approach so that students would not have gaps in their learning of geography and history. Her inclusive, collaborative approach ensured that voices of the teachers in multiple schools were heard and she understands the importance of having time to discuss questions and concerns at critical junctures to propel the work forward. Dr. Gilson tirelessly worked to advance innovative programs for the King Philip students from expanding digital literacy offerings to providing "Early College" experiences. The ways in which she has sought the best opportunities for the King Philip scholars is aligned with Berlin-Boylston Public Schools mission which is "to support and challenge all students to achieve personal and academic excellence in a student-centered environment."

Standard II: Management and Operations
Dr. Gilson created a positive teaching and learning environment serving in both the role of middle school building principal and district assistant superintendent for the KP Regional District. She understands the intricacies of managing a school as well as a school system. She is a visionary leader who is ready to tackle challenges and works with various constituencies with ease to gather the information she needs to make informed decisions with the best interests of the students in mind. Over the summer of 2021, we created a new grant-funded program designed to ease the transition from the three elementary towns to the King Philip Regional School District Middle School. This involved a great amount of collaboration, communication with multiple stakeholders, logistical planning, coordination with the bus company as well as the DPW and police

department, and Dr. Gilson also took a lead role in the building to remain available to support the staff when needed. She is fiscally responsible, and ensured responsible stewardship of the general funds while actively seeking out additional grant opportunities to enhance the offerings available to students through ESSER as well as multiple competitive grants. Certified as a School Business Administrator and with experience as the district fiscal leader in Lunenburg, she is astutely aware of the laws and regulations that govern appropriate management of funds.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement

Dr. Gilson's personable, even-keeled manner enables her to connect well with those she serves. She seized opportunities to connect with students, staff, and families when she could such as visiting the elementary schools to provide an early transition experience to help students get ready for middle schools in the spring of sixth grade. In addition to introducing herself to the students and getting them excited to learn with the unveiling of the summer reading selection for the district, she brought students and teachers to the elementary schools to provide examples of elements of the fine and performing arts offerings as well. Dr. Gilson coordinated and promoted family events such as the Summer Bridge to KP program to ease the transition to middle school, providing information sessions to assist families through the seventh grade registration process, and seeking community involvement in feedback through surveys and conversations. She values and understands the importance of prioritizing family and community engagement to foster student success.

Standard IV: Professional Culture

Dr. Gilson has had high aspirations for everyone in the King Philip community, and holds herself to the same high standards. Dr. Gilson is able to strike the perfect balance of exuding warmth and compassion, while also ensuring that students have the potential to achieve all of their aspirations in an environment that does not marginalize. She would abide by the adage that one should ask others to do only what one is willing to do themselves and leads by example. To that end, she served on the Regional Equity Committee, took on an active role in hiring the Director of Diversity, Equity, and worked in concert with other administrators to assist in the facilitation of inclusive learning opportunities for the students, staff, and the greater King Philip School community. She always modeled the importance of health and wellness for students and staff and worked closely with the Director of Wellness as well. Their concerted efforts resulted in bringing numerous community events to encourage and support families.

I highly recommend Dr. Susan Gilson for the Role of Superintendent of the Berlin-Boylston Public Schools. She has had many diverse experiences over the course of her career and would be a tremendous asset to your community as a reflective, responsive, and innovative leader. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you would like any additional information about this fine candidate.

Sincerely,

Vanessa C. Beauchaine

Vanessa C. Beauchaine, Ed.D.

[redacted]

NORFOLK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief of Police
Timothy P. Heinz

14 Sharon Ave Norfolk, MA 02056
Phone: (508) 528-3206 | Fax: (508) 520-9762
Emergency: 911

Deputy Police Chief
Michelle L. Palladini

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: DR. SUSAN GILSON

Dr. Susan Gilson has my highest recommendation for her work in the King Philip School District, and the statewide network of Superintendents. She is respected as an innovative thinker and dedicated to the holistic advancement of educational institutions.

During my tenure as a Norfolk Police Officer, I had the privilege of working as a School Resource Officer at King Philip Middle School for six years. Dr. Gilson was the Principal at the time and helped launch the new position of School Resource Officer. She was open to my ideas for a program that would reduce risky behaviors by way of teaching social/emotional skills. The program, called L.E.A.P. (Leadership, Empowerment, Awareness and Protection), was piloted at the King Philip Middle School under the support and direction of Dr. Gilson. The qualitative data supported the success of the program, and Dr. Gilson invited me to speak at several conferences, including the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, School Committees, and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. The L.E.A.P. Program became a model for effective school-based policing and spread nationally.

The above is but one example of Dr. Gilson's pioneering efforts in education spaces as a school leader. As her career progressed, I saw her skillset was best utilized in a district administrative position. She was hired as the Assistant Superintendent of King Philip School District and continued to provide a student-centered approach, with a strong sense of fiscal responsibility.

Dr. Gilson's diverse background allowed her to thrive as an Assistant Superintendent where strategic planning is critical, particularly for the King Philip School District which required strong leadership. Her broad knowledge and assessment of the critical needs of the District were always centered on support of the teachers, staff and students; from building improvement, to advancements in safety practices; and a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (well before state requirements of such). Dr. Gilson puts people first through responsiveness to staff needs and ideas, and a demeanor and personal approach a that makes everyone feel included and part of the team.

Dr. Gilson's intellect and passion for this work is what makes her an excellent candidate for a Superintendent position and I look forward to seeing her success in this position.

Please reach out if you would like to speak further.

Respectfully,

Michelle Palladini

Deputy Chief of Police - Norfolk

AMSA
ADVANCED MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY
INTEGRITY. EXCELLENCE. COMMUNITY.

Phone: 508-597-2400
Fax: 508-597-2499
Web: www.amsacs.org
201 Forest Street, Marlborough, MA 01752

December 19, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Susan Gilson. I had the privilege of working alongside Susan for 15 years at King Philip Regional School District, and I can confidently attest to her exceptional qualifications and leadership capabilities that make her an outstanding candidate for the role of superintendent.

Susan's strategic and creative approaches to problem-solving were instrumental in navigating the district through numerous challenging financial situations. Her ability to assess complex issues, engage collaboratively with diverse stakeholders, and develop innovative solutions consistently demonstrated her remarkable leadership acumen. Susan's focus on the best interests of the entire school community, coupled with her commitment to transparency and equity, earned her the trust and respect of colleagues, families, and community members alike.

One of Susan's defining strengths is her unwavering dedication to student learning and continuous improvement. In every decision she made, Susan prioritized the academic, social, and emotional growth of our students. Whether designing budget strategies or implementing new programs, she ensured that resources were allocated thoughtfully to sustain and enhance educational opportunities. Her efforts were always guided by the belief that student success is at the heart of every thriving district.

Susan also demonstrated exceptional skill in securing additional resources for the district through her ability to write and be awarded significant grants. During her tenure at King Philip, these grants played a critical role in supporting the district's initiatives, alleviating financial constraints, and enhancing educational programs. Her grant-writing expertise not only strengthened the district's financial stability but also enabled the implementation of innovative practices that directly benefited students and staff.

Her ability to foster a collaborative culture was another hallmark of her leadership. She brought together teams of educators, administrators, and community members to work toward shared goals, always valuing the input and expertise of others. Her open-minded approach and genuine respect for diverse perspectives created an environment where innovative ideas flourished and meaningful progress was achieved.

As a colleague, Susan was not only a leader but also a mentor and advocate for professional growth. She encouraged her peers to think creatively, embrace challenges, and strive for excellence in all aspects of their work. Her ability to inspire and guide others is a testament to her vision and integrity.

In sum, Dr. Susan Gilson embodies the qualities of a transformational leader. Her strategic thinking, creativity, grant-writing expertise, and deep commitment to student achievement position her as an exceptional candidate for the role of superintendent. I have no doubt that she will bring the same level of dedication, innovation, and collaborative spirit to her next leadership opportunity that she demonstrated during her years at King Philip Regional School District.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [redacted] if you would like to discuss Susan's qualifications further.

Sincerely,

Executive Director
AMSA

Dr. Susan Gilson

[redacted]

Dear Search Committee:

I am writing to express my sincere interest in the position of Superintendent of Schools for the Berlin-Boylston Public School District. With exceptional leadership skills, commitment to student success, and a passion for continuous improvement and two decades of Regional School experience, I am confident I will be able to contribute to the growth and excellence in Berlin-Boylston. Through my experience in schools, I have had a wonderful opportunity to support students as an elementary teacher, middle school Principal, Director of Finance and Administration, and Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. This background has helped me to see the big picture, value every student and family as well as all staff members, and understand the importance of the strategic plan to mobilize the learning direction for the district. I appreciate how academics, social and emotional learning, technology, and fiscal resources come together to optimize results for students, teachers, and families. While I am happy in my current position, I invest fully in my work and am seeking a Superintendency a little closer to home. Berlin-Boylston is closer to home.

As a Massachusetts school leader, many changes have taken place that I have been responsible for. I have navigated building construction while the school was fully operational, led a schedule redesign and implementation effort that resulted in significant program improvements that sustained multiple grades and survived successive budgetary challenges. Leading teams in review of student performance data has motivated decision-making that has advanced school and district programs. As Director of Finance, I have played an integral role in contract negotiations, developed budgets that are responsible and realistic, taken on leadership roles in moving Capital Plans forward, and been strategic in use of funds for best educational value.

Throughout my career, I have been proud of the multi millions in grant funds awarded to me for the support of educational programs. Math and reading intervention, teacher mentoring, a district-wide effort to update our curriculum, and district changes in educator evaluation are among the initiatives supported. In 2023, I was honored to have hosted a district wide visit with DESE's current Commissioner for observation of the exemplary, innovative STEM programs that were a result of my efforts with a 3 year Digital Literacy grant.

One of the biggest rewards in my life comes from investing in others and celebrating the success of our teachers, students, and families. During my tenure as Principal, several of my teachers earned recognition as finalists for either the Massachusetts State Teacher of the Year or the Presidential Mathematics Award. Having been in the same district long enough to see the benefit of secondary school journeys of previous students, my joy also comes from seeing students who have struggled in earlier grades, been able to learn from their mistakes, and emerged as high school students more prepared to take on the world.

I have many experiences that bring a unique perspective to my day to day work and long range planning. Thank you for considering my application and I will look forward to a further opportunity to meet with your committee.

Sincerely,



Dr. Susan Gilson

[redacted]

Leadership and Management

While I have many accomplishments and references, my journey as a leader has been so much more. This is my personal statement about how my leadership and management philosophies become interconnected and work together to promote success for school districts.

Being a leader demands that you draw on characteristics that welcome the people, define success, catch people doing things right, and allow you to be curious when things don't go as well as planned. In education, these strategies are supported by our environment in many formal and informal ways. While there are contracts, school committee policies, handbooks, and evaluation rubrics, I also find there are many other informal ways that are very engaging and personable, and make quite a contribution to your district culture.

Taking every opportunity to welcome staff into the district makes a difference. Every time a new person is hired, it is important to meet the person you are hiring. Celebrate the sign on so that immediately the person feels that they are a valued new member of the district. At new teacher orientation, I often share "The Starfish Story" which is about a boy on the beach who is picking up every starfish, one at a time, to toss it back into the ocean. Within minutes, this story beautifully recognizes the important role that a teacher plays in the teaching of all students in the classroom. Every day, every teacher acts to make a difference in the life of another.

Defining success is all about setting vision, parameters, and providing specific feedback on the journey as individuals and as a team moving towards success. There are major areas that define what success is for education. It is all about how we teach, how we engage in culturally responsive teaching, what we do to develop as professionals, and what we continue to learn about curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Success in these areas is measured through performance based on multiple parts of our evaluation system. Other areas that measure success are through daily conversation with others, and through collaborative feedback on school improvement plans, and the district strategic plan. There are both qualitative and quantitative ways to describe progress on these joint efforts.

Being an excellent leader means catching people doing things right and taking every opportunity to tell them. I most enjoy my walks in the buildings so that I can see and hear students and staff in the middle of the learning process. It is their opportunity to talk to me and mine to talk to them. Tell them about what they are doing to demonstrate success and you begin to build a culture that values success. Repeat the pattern, and step by step, you can energize and transform the culture. Great managers, while they can weave in motivational behaviors, pay attention to detail, monitor and measure change meticulously, and can cite results connected with school improvement plans and strategic plans.

It is also important to show that you are curious when things don't go as well as planned. I met with a math department when growth scores dipped and asked for their suggestions and help with the interpretation of the data. Noticing the curiosity and using an objective set of strategies for analysis yielded some productive, honest conversations. Improvements made included implementation of a co-teaching model within math classrooms, building consensus for use of an evidence based program vetted by CURATE/Edreports, and providing training to support implementation which included calibration amongst the teachers for assessments.

Dr. Susan Gilson

[redacted]

Ultimately, continued conversation and data monitoring led to significant increase in growth scores.

As an administrator, I remember details that help me get to know and support people in all of life events. While birthday and sympathy cards are important, knowing and remembering their families and continued life realities help me to connect with all people. Being diligent with data, providing specific timely constructive feedback, monitoring results, and getting to really understand the people support my connection within a culture that gets phenomenal results.

Defining moments have come at different times during my leadership. Being prepared with a comprehensive background in technology, and having pursued doctoral research embedded in a wireless laptop school during its first year of operation, provided me with a skillset to guide staff when we needed to move into remote learning with 10 consecutive days of professional development with minimal advance notice. Other defining moments have presented at times of fiscal crisis. As a continual learner, my most recent challenge has been to learn to navigate as a school business official. In a time when Chapter 70 reimbursement is not keeping pace with inflation, and healthcare, transportation, and special education costs are rising, I have learned through my experiences how to prioritize, sustain, and defend education while working with the town selectboard and financial committees to maintain fiscal health of the community.