

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 20, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

In-Person: Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library, 70 Websterville Road, Barre

Virtual Option: In Person Only

Public comment is welcomed and limited to 2 minutes per agenda item. The board will hear public comments and questions, but won't respond directly during public comments. This can feel impersonal, but is in place to allow the board to stay on task and address the work of the board for that meeting.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Additions or Deletions with Motion to Approve the Agenda
3. Public Comment
4. Current Business
 - 4.1 Elect Search Committee Chair
 - 4.2 Committee Screening and Interviewing Workshop (materials attached)
5. Next Meeting Dates: (enter date), Spaulding High School Library/via Google Meet
6. Executive Session If Needed
7. Adjournment

Barre Unifield Union School District

Superintendent Search Committee
Training Manual



New England School Development Council

28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752 ➤ Tel: 508-481-9444 ➤ www.nesdec.org

**Barre Unified Union School District
Superintendent Search
Successful Candidate Profile**

March 2025

This document provides the *Successful Candidate Profile* to inform the candidate selection process.

Barre Unified Union School District Superintendent Search

SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

During the week of February 10, 2025, the Barre Unified Union School District (BUUSD) School Board, with the assistance of the New England School Development Council (NESDEC), conducted a Community Needs Assessment through a series of focus groups and an online survey.

Participants provided their responses to two prompts:

- What are the qualities, characteristics, skills, knowledge and experiences you desire in a new Superintendent of Schools?
- What do you see as the pressing tasks and challenges ahead for him or her in year one?

The Barre Unified Union School Board reviewed and analyzed the community's input and then added its own perspective to create the BUUSD *Successful Candidate Profile*. The *Successful Candidate Profile* is designed to guide the Superintendent Search interview and selection process.

The Barre Unified Union School Board wishes to thank and commend all those who participated in the community needs assessment process.

Respectfully submitted,
The Barre Unified Union School Board

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The community of Barre expects a high level of competence across all aspects of the position of Superintendent.

To ensure the selected Superintendent is a particular match for our district's needs and goals, *preference will be given to the educational leader who demonstrates a significant depth of skill and knowledge in the following key areas:*

- ❖ **Educational Leadership**
- ❖ **Unifying Practices**
- ❖ **Collaborative Leadership**
- ❖ **Operations Management**

The successful candidate will establish evidence of such expertise in the following ways:

Educational Leadership

A leader who:

- Has a strong educational background anchored in an understanding of the classroom experience. Understands the importance of keeping the focus on student achievement.
- Is knowledgeable in the use of data and understands current research to support both student improvement and staff development.
- Has the knowledge, background, and experience to create short- and long-term goals that meet the wide range of students' needs and services in the district.
- Demonstrates the ability to unify districtwide programs (academic, special education and extracurricular) to bolster students' academic, social-emotional, and physical development.
- Is an innovative thinker in an academic sense. Places a focus on creating not only academic programs for our struggling students, but also those that enhance the child who is excelling in school.
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to leading the effort to define and deliver an effective, consistent 21st Century education program for students of all backgrounds and ability levels.
- Understands the importance of building relationships with teachers, parents and community members, which is essential to achieving student success.
- Can create consistency in services, resources, and academic support across all the Barre Unified Union Schools.

Unifying Practices

A leader who:

- Can establish clear expectations and ensure a high level of consistency of those expectations districtwide.
- Can develop and share a vision for the district that is focused on creating unity in a manner that allows all stakeholders to understand the direction the district is moving in.

- Can bring together and work with building administrators and teachers to provide the support and resources they need to reach their full potential.
- Establishes pathways to encourage input from the variety of stakeholder groups that make up the Barre Unified Union School District.
- Has the ability to work with different populations while building relationships with the stakeholders who make up the district and community.

Collaborative Leadership

A leader who:

- Demonstrates a willingness to build a vision for the Barre Unified Union School District alongside district and community stakeholders.
- Demonstrates a collaborative approach to leadership. Listens to and works with staff, supports collaborative problem solving, and values the expertise of teachers. Is someone who is open to staff feedback and input with a willingness to work with others.
- Has strong communication skills and can connect with the multiple stakeholder groups within the district, municipal departments, and the community.
- Understands the value of building relationships and the importance of relating to and connecting with individuals to build districtwide unity.
- Someone who can develop a presence in the district and in the community and values the community he/she works in.
- Will take the time to learn about the district and community by engaging with stakeholders. Demonstrates a true desire to learn about the Barre Unified Union School District.

Operations Management

A leader who:

- Has a strong working knowledge of school finance, including budget development and management; has the ability to effectively communicate regarding budgetary issues with the School Board, staff, community and local municipal officials; has clear understanding of federal, state, and local funding issues.
- Is skilled at working with the budget and can evaluate the school budget to find cost saving measure that will not affect student achievement.
- Has a solid understanding of how to develop a school budget through collaboration with the finance manager and municipal departments.
- Is innovative and explores other funding sources and partnerships to support district programs and activities.
- Has experience in negotiations and working with unions. Demonstrates the skillset to bring different groups together and work toward a common goal.
- Understands the state of Vermont's current practices regarding school funding and regionalization plans.
- Is comfortable delegating and supervising when a task or problem is given to them to ensure situations are dealt with in a timely manner.

CHALLENGES AND TASKS IN YEAR ONE

Challenges

- Barre Unified Union School District is a diverse community with different needs. The new Superintendent must consider all stakeholders (both in the school community and in Barre community at large) and develop a plan to meet all needs and unify the communities.
- Build a school budget that is fiscally sound, and focused on student achievement, by engaging district leaders, staff, municipalities and stakeholders.
- A need to create and articulate both short-term and long-term goals to improve our education system for students, staff, and the community.
- Address the inconsistencies found in the policies, procedures, and building culture in the district's school buildings. Focus on student discipline and methods of supporting students with behavioral needs.
- Establish a collaborative relationship with the school board to support the development of a working relationship to restore trust in the leadership of the Barre Unified Union School District.

Tasks

- Take time to learn about the Barre Unified Union School District and the community by engaging with the variety of stakeholders making up the district.
- Establish a communication pathway to share information and receive feedback from building administration, staff, parents, students, and the community to support relationship development.
- Review student academic and extracurricular programs focusing on areas of strength and how to improve weaknesses.
- Get to know building administrators and staff to support their work; create open, honest and consistent systems to evaluate and supervise district staff. Focus on practices to retain professional staff.
- Be involved in the community, get to know the community and its values; discern what the community wants from the schools.



New England School Development Council

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH
SCREENING AND INTERVIEW WORKSHOP
MEETING #1: MARCH 20, 2025**

PUBLIC SESSION

1. INTRODUCTIONS

- a. Role of consultant
- b. Role of Screening Committee
- c. Role of School Board

2. OVERVIEW OF SEARCH PROCESS

- a. Status of search to date
- b. Search timeline

3. SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE PROFILE

- a. Overview of community input and School Board analysis
- b. Use of the *Successful Candidate Profile* in preliminary screening process

4. REVIEW PRELIMINARY SCREENING PROCESS

- a. Managing applications
- b. Determining applicants for interview
- c. Guidelines for conducting preliminary screening interviews
- d. Guidelines for recommending applicants for further consideration by School Board

5. ORGANIZING FOR THE PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

- a. Set dates for interviews
- b. Schedule/length
- c. Select themes
- d. Develop interview questions
- e. Determine location for interviews
- f. Greeter/escort
- g. Selection procedure

6. CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- a. Ice-breaker
- b. Questions based upon approved themes
- c. Type of questions to avoid
- d. Listening and observing
- e. Closing the interview
- f. Taking notes

7. OTHER ISSUES

- a. Confidentiality vital
 - 1) No contact with references or other sources
 - 2) Review acceptable Internet sources
- b. Communicating with the press and with colleagues

HOMEWORK

- Review Candidate Profile
- Review applications
- Complete "Rating Sheet"
- Develop Interview questions
- Check your calendar

**Date of next meeting:
Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

8. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS



New England School Development Council

28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752 ➤ Tel: 508-481-9444 ➤ www.nesdec.org

TO: BUUSD Superintendent Search Screening Committee Members
FROM: New England School Development Council (NESDEC)
DATE: March 20, 2025
RE: Homework

The following guide is designed to assist Screening Committee members as they begin the preliminary screening of applicants.

Remember: The names, information and candidate applications are confidential, as is any discussion which takes place in executive (private) session. Please do not discuss any candidate outside of Screening Committee meetings (executive session).

READING THE APPLICATIONS

1. Ensure that you have access to a complete set of applications. Usually the applications are made available in a secure section of the NESDEC website. You will be provided the website address and password. During Committee discussions we will often refer to candidates by their number (for example, Candidate #12).
2. **Carefully read each application.** Take notes on any areas you feel are areas of strength or need. Your notes will aid you in Screening Committee discussions. However, please be advised that your notes, under certain circumstances, can be considered public documents.
3. **Complete the "Interest Indicator" in your packet noting whether you are "definitely" interested in interviewing a candidate, "somewhat" interested in interviewing a candidate, or "not" interested in interviewing a candidate.** Then, enter your answers on the corresponding online survey. Bring the completed sheet to our next Screening Committee meeting. The sheet and the results of the survey, along with your supporting notes, will be the start of our discussions. Please keep in mind that the Interest Indicator sheet is a confidential document.

PREPARING YOUR INTERVIEW QUESTION(S)

4. Choose a theme for your interview question – you may want to choose a theme from the ones listed in this packet, or you may have an area of particular interest to you.

5. Read over the sample interview questions that were included in your NESDEC orientation packet. Write a draft question; for example, you may use one sample question or a combination of two or more samples – or create your own question.
6. Bring your draft question to our next Screening Committee meeting.

CHECK YOUR CALENDAR

7. At an upcoming meeting, we will confirm the interview dates.

If you have any questions about the preliminary screening process, feel free to contact your consultant.

Thank you.

**Barre Unified Union School District
Superintendent Search
Review of Candidate Applications**

Please review the application of all candidates prior to completing this form. You should then indicate your level of interest in each candidate as guided by the following chart.

Definitely interested in interviewing this candidate
Somewhat interested in interviewing this candidate
Not interested in interviewing this candidate

Name of Candidate		Place an X in the Box of Your Rating		
		Definitely Interested	Somewhat Interested	Not Interested
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				



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INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES A NESDEC ACTION GUIDE

Interviewing candidates should be one of the most enjoyable aspects of the entire recruiting process. This applies for both the interviewers and the person to be interviewed. This kind of atmosphere is basic to this monograph. Most of what we say here is equally appropriate for all levels of interviews. The only difference should be in the time spent on the interview and the intensity of the questioning.

PRELIMINARIES:

1. Everyone involved in doing the interview should be on time.
2. Choose a location that is pleasant and comfortable. If your state requires open interviews, try to anticipate the size of the audience so everyone is adequately seated.
3. All members of the Committee charged with interviewing should be present for every interview.
4. Allow ample time for the interview so no one feels hurried, but stick to the schedule. The chairperson should keep the interview on schedule.

THE QUESTIONS:

5. The Committee should prepare some questions in advance and repeat the same list for each candidate. In this way you will have a basis for comparison. (A list of suggested questions will be supplied by your Consultant.)
6. Your first questions should be aimed at putting everyone at ease. A current topic of the day, the weather, or anything of common interest from the candidate's application form might serve as a good icebreaker.
7. Your questions should not duplicate information already available on the candidate's application. Although it is quite appropriate to let the candidate know you have studied the application by asking a question that relates to information included there. For example: "I read in your application that you have set up a community-wide Adult Education Council in your present position. I would be very interested in hearing how this works."
8. Don't try to "bait" a candidate with your questions. Remember, anyone good enough to be selected for an interview for your community is probably a pretty able person by all rights. Trying to place him or her in an embarrassing position may give an inaccurate picture of how the Committee operates and you may "turn-off" just the candidate you would most like to attract. There are ample ways to test the candidate's ability to think and respond intelligently by judicious questions.

9. You should not ask questions dealing with a person's age, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, health, or ethnicity.
10. Avoid questions that rely on specific details about your district. This presupposes knowledge of your school system which the candidate, particularly if this is the first interview, may not have.
11. Decide in advance which questions each person on the interviewing committee will ask and in what order.
12. It is appropriate to ask a follow-up question, to ask for clarification of a candidate's responses, or to ask an unplanned question that a candidate's response has suggested.
13. After each interview, you should allow time to write down your reactions. The most objective reactions will come when you respond directly following the interview. It is surprising how confusing it becomes if you leave this task for the end of the day or evening after you have talked to a number of candidates. NESDEC's "Interview Evaluation Form" provides a good basis for this rating.

CLOSING DETAILS:

In closing the interview, the candidate should be informed about next steps – the timetable the Committee hopes to follow, whether there will be additional interviews or visitations to the communities of finalists, etc.



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Barre Unified Union School District Interview Questions: Themes and Examples

Opening Question

- Why did you apply for the superintendent's position in (Name of District)?
- Take a moment to summarize your work experience and why you would like to be superintendent here in (Name of District)?

Accomplishments/Challenges

- Give some examples of how your strength as a leader has made a significant difference in the school or school system you have led.
- Tell us about the two or three most important improvements you have initiated that were implemented in the school system.
- Tell us about a time you worked effectively under a great deal of pressure.
- What has been your greatest professional disappointment and what did you learn from it?
- Can you share with us an innovative practice or program that you have instituted in your professional past? Discuss high and low points of its implementation.

Leadership/Professional Development

- As a superintendent, how do you lead toward excellence in all aspects of school system operation, such as academics, buildings and grounds, professional development, daily operation, staff evaluation, etc.?
- How do you judge the validity and practicality of a new concept in education? If you thought it had considerable merit, how would you introduce it to the school system and deal with possible resistance to it?
- Tell us about a recent and significant example of your own professional development. How did this professional development result in a change in your thinking and practice?
- What are the most important components of a successful and effective school system?
- What do you read to remain current in education, and from those readings, what seems to be the three biggest issues facing public education?

Budget

- Explain the process you use in developing a school system budget and how you go about selling your proposed budget to the school committee and community.

- If you were forced to cut programs partially or completely, name three or four that would be the last ones you would cut. In other words, what school system programs do you value most?
- How does an effective superintendent build and maintain relationships with municipal leadership?
- What is the most significant core value and/or guiding belief of an effective student services/special education program, and how do you provide evidence of this core value and/or guiding belief in the annual budget development process?

Collective Bargaining

- Can you share your role as a superintendent in collective bargaining and/or your experiences in collective bargaining?

Communication/Gaining Support for Schools

- As the new superintendent, how would you go about building relationships of trust and collaboration with faculty and staff? Secondly, how would you go about building trust with parents and the community at large?
- Describe the various ways you would communicate as the superintendent to the school committee, staff, parents, students and community. Give examples of the types of media you might use and the tone, style or manner you try to express.
- How would you convey to people in the school system and community that you want them to share their ideas and concerns with you? How do you convince them that you will seriously consider what they have to say?
- How do you make yourself visible and accessible in the school system and community?
- How would a parent, principal, teacher or student in your district describe you?
- How do you collaborate with parents? How do you deal with parents who pressure you for changes you don't think are in the best interest of the school system?
- What are the tools that you use to communicate with stakeholders? How do you evaluate the quality of your communication via these tools?

Conflict/Dispute Resolution/Problem Solving

- How do you resolve parent, principal, teacher and student complaints?
- How do you collaborate with teachers? How do you deal with them when they express views you oppose?

Curriculum Development/Implementation/Assessment

- What procedures do you use to determine the quality and effectiveness of a curriculum? How do you ascertain that it is being implemented as intended?

Decision-making

- Explain how you use data to make decisions about programs being considered as additions to, modifications of or deletions from the budget. What type of data is most useful in determining what programs should be retained or cut?

- Other than the regular communications that you provide to all concerned with the school system, what do you think is critical to communicate at the time of a crisis?
- What procedures do you use in making decisions? What types of decisions would you make on your own using your own judgment? In what types of decisions would you involve others? How?
- Describe a specific decision-making process you used in a school system on a particular issue that worked out well. Describe a decision-making process you used that did not work out well and explain what you learned from that experience.

Personnel Evaluation

- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of teachers?
- How do you evaluate the effectiveness of administrators?
- How do you make employees of the school system accountable?
- What qualities do you look for in a good classroom teacher?
- What qualities do you look for in a good principal?
- What is the difference between a good principal and an excellent one?

Planning

- Can you share any experiences where you were involved with reconfiguring a school calendar or school day, made changes to the grade level configuration, or a completed a consolidation of school buildings?
- If you got the job as superintendent, how would you proceed to learn about the culture and core values of the district? First steps?
- How have you implemented specific initiatives outlined in a district Strategic Plan?

Problem-solving

- Describe a strategy that you have used in your prior role to empower faculty and staff in the decision-making process.

Technology Integration

- Ideally, how should technology be used in a school system and how should it be integrated into teaching and learning?

Closing Question

- Is there something you hoped we would ask that you were prepared to answer?

**Barre Unified Union District
Screening Interview Schedule**

First Training Meeting: March 20, 2025

Time: 4:00-6:00

Location: TBD

Second Training Meeting: March 25, 2025

Time: 4:00-6:00

Location: TBD

Interview Schedule Week of: 3/31-4/3

Location: TBD

DATE: TBD Time: 4:00-TBD

	Organization Mtg.	
	Interview	
	Org. Mtg.	
	Interview	
	Org. Mtg.	
	Interview	

DATE: TBD Time: 4:00-TBD

	Organization Mtg.	
	Interview	
	Org. Mtg.	
	Interview	
	Org. Mtg.	
	Interview	

DATE: TBD Time: 4:00-TBD

	Organization Mtg.	
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DATE: Time:

	Organization Mtg.	
	Interview	
	Org. Mtg.	
	Interview	



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CANDIDATE INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM (sample)

Introduction

The superintendent, principal or other executive must project by demeanor, written and spoken words and actions all those attributes that epitomize successful leadership in relatively brief appearances – not unlike the interview session you are about to undertake. Therefore, impressions, perceptions and reactions during the interview are valid success indicators and should be considered along with material contained in the application file to assess the candidate's potential as a community leader.

While the following form is only a suggested guide, we strongly urge that this scale, or one like it, be used as it is very easy to forget much that transpires in the interviews even though the numbers of people may be small. We recommend that you take copious notes, make graphics, doodles or anything else that will help you recall your impressions of the various candidates. At some point, you will have to make a judgment about each candidate, and the more vivid your recollection is, the better your choice will be.

NAME OF CANDIDATE _____

Date of Interview _____

<u>Application Materials</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>High</u>
1. Appearance of application material	_____	_____	_____
2. College/University preparation	_____	_____	_____
3. Classroom experience	_____	_____	_____
4. Administrative experience	_____	_____	_____
5. Other education-related experience	_____	_____	_____
6. Non-education-related experience	_____	_____	_____
7. Professional activities	_____	_____	_____
8. Community activities	_____	_____	_____
9. Appropriateness of past experience for our vacancy	_____	_____	_____
10. Written sample	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Interview Perceptions**Low****Average****High**

1. Evidence of a concern for children and young people
2. Punctuality
3. Effectiveness as a communicator
4. Response to difficult questions
5. Appropriateness of educational positions set forth in the interview with regard to the needs of our community
6. Evidence of decisiveness
7. Evidence of innovation and creativity
8. Evidence of tactfulness and diplomacy
9. Evidence of sincerity
10. Evidence of a sense of humor
11. Evidence of inspiring leadership
12. Evidence of confidence (either lack of confidence or over-confidence would get a low mark!)
13. Evidence of willingness to listen to others
14. Evidence of willingness to be involved in the community

COMMENTS:

General Reactions**Low****Average****High**

1. Do you feel this candidate would like to be chosen to fill our vacancy?
2. Do you sense that this candidate would meet the needs of our school system at this time?
3. Do you feel that this candidate is someone with whom the school committee/board could work effectively?

COMMENTS:

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PERSONAL PROPERTY OF THE MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OR BOARD THAT IS CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW. ITS PURPOSE IS ONLY TO ASSIST THE INDIVIDUAL IN MAKING AS FAIR AND OBJECTIVE JUDGMENTS AS POSSIBLE. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO SHARE THIS EVALUATION WITH ANYONE ELSE!