

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Special Meeting

July 14, 2015

Called for 9:00-10:30 AM in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent Search Interview Committee Make Up.

Members Present: Ms. Cronin, Mr. Fantini (~~Absent~~), Mr. Harding (~~Absent~~), Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan, Mr. Osborne (~~Absent~~) and Mayor Maher

Mayor Maher in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM.

Public Comment:

The following individual was heard:

- Karen Engels, Wendell St., urged the Committee to actively involve teachers and families in the superintendent search process; read personal comments (on file in the School Committee office) on: 1) What is the right balance of district-level and school-based decision making? 2) How can we best meet the increasingly intense social and emotional needs of our students? and 3) What is our vision for a robust assessment system?
- Lauren Gribbs, Newport Rd., expressed desire to have at least one candidate of color as a finalist for superintendent and would like the candidates to focus on diversity by race in hiring applicants for teacher positions in the Cambridge Public Schools
- Craig Kelly, Cambridge City Councillor, noted that he doesn't think the Superintendent's search should be rushed. If the right candidate is not found by October, then an interim Superintendent should be hired. He expressed a preference for a superintendent who understands the importance of effective school climate for teaching and learning and the need for a superintendent to have a better understanding of how education and poverty mix. He also wanted a superintendent to understand the strong connection across the school department into the city and across the school department into various housing components

On a motion by Ms. Cronin, seconded by Ms. Kelly, it was voted to close public comment.

Mayor Maher distributed information on previous Superintendent searches, as well as an updated Proposed Superintendent Search timeline (7/13/15) presented by the Mayor, an updated Proposed Superintendent Search timeline 7/13/15 presented by Hank Gmitro, HYA, and the proposed Initial Community Interview Committee make-up. (All distributed information on file in the School Committee office).

The Mayor walked the Members through the components of following Superintendent's searches:

Superintendent Search 1997 (Bobbi D'Alessandro)
Superintendent Search 2003 (Tom Fowler Finn)
Superintendent Search 2008 (Jeffrey Young)

Mayor Maher discussed the proposed composition of the Initial Community Interview Committee.

He noted that interested people would send in a letter of interest to be on this committee. The School Committee would make the selections from these letters or could recruit or nominate community members. HYA will help create a paper and an on-line option to self-nominate. The Mayor also discussed whether the School Committee should have representation on this committee.

Mayor Maher reviewed the updated proposed Superintendent Search timeline 7/13/15 presented by Mayor Maher and walked the Members through the 6 phases.

Mayor Maher asked the Members for their thoughts, questions and concerns on the proposed Superintendent search timeline and the composition of the proposed Initial Community Interview Committee. He recommended that School Committee representation be a smaller number on the Initial Community Interview Committee which would empower our community partners. The Members discussed their individual preferences on School Committee representation on the Initial Community Interview Committee. A suggestion was that one Member is on this interview committee to serve as a link and for the continuity of the process and that the Chair could possibly serve in this capacity. Another possibility mentioned was that two School Committee Members on a rotating basis attend the Initial Community Interviews as observers only, to answer questions if asked and to report back to the full Committee.

The Members had the following questions, comments and concerns:

- Timeline concern of having leadership profile report presented to the School Committee on September 15th and having large group of resumes 2 weeks later
- Leadership profile should not be generic; it needs to match what we need now
- Can we push up the development of the leadership profile report
- Would like a pool of 12-15 resumes presented at the meeting of September 29th with the hope of forwarding 7-9 resumes to the Initial Community Interview Committee
- Can the findings of online survey be made public
- Phase 1 meeting on September 29th with HYA and School Committee to discuss top resumes needs to be an all day meeting
- Need to meet in executive session to discuss scope of contract and financial consideration
- Once a negotiated contract is accepted by candidate; announce the decision
- Would like as little School Committee membership on the Initial Community Interview Committee as possible
- Important to have as much community input as possible
- Candidates are already applying
- Need to be more precise on time commitment for Community Interview Committee; they would need to meet, draw up questions and get to know each other
- Does HYA provide a ranking system for use by the Initial Community Interview Committee
- The members of the Initial Community Interview Committee would have to sign a confidentiality agreement
- The School Committee may host independent fact finding community meetings such as Somerville has done
- Hope to have bi-lingual and special education representation on the Initial Interview Committee
- Need to revise the language pertaining to the "independent affirmative action representative" Community Interview Committee member. Need a representative with strong experience and background in raising academic standards for under-served sub groups.

Mayor Maher shared that he could host a reception prior to the Initial Community Interview panel coming together in an informal setting to meet the School Committee and each other.

On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted that the School Committee adopt the composition of the fifteen member proposed Initial Community Interview Committee

presented by Mayor Maher. The School Committee expressed a desire to have bi-lingual and special education representation on the Initial Interview Committee. In addition, the School Committee requested the Mayor to revise the language pertaining to the affirmative action representative. The School Committee's action purposely omits School Committee member representation on the Initial Interview Committee to allow for a greater number of community stakeholders to take part. The School Committee *may* opt to designate members to observe the process.

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, seconded by Ms. Cronin, it was voted to adopt the framework for the Updated Proposed Superintendent Search timeline (7/13/15) as presented by Mayor Maher and send it to HYA for review.

The Chair stated that he will contact the Members to set up another meeting to discuss the scope of the next Superintendent's contract and financial consideration.

On a motion by Mr. Osborne, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to adjourn (10:35 AM).

Judith T. Martin
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Distributed Back-up Documents (copies on file in the School Committee office):

- ✓ Updated Proposed Superintendent Search timeline 7/13/15 – Presented by Mayor Maher
- ✓ Updated Proposed Superintendent Search timeline 7/13/15 – Presented by Hank Gmitro, HYA
- ✓ Proposed Initial Community Interview Committee
- ✓ Superintendent Search 1997 (Bobbi D'Alessandro)
- ✓ Superintendent Search 2003 (Tom Fowler Finn)
- ✓ Superintendent Search 2008 (Jeffrey Young)
- ✓ Remarks read by Karen Engels during public comment