

Superintendent Search Preliminary Screening Committee Meeting
Monday, September 16, 2019
5:00 PM-6:00 PM
4th Floor Conference Room, Town Hall
333 Washington Street, Brookline, Massachusetts

Members present: Michael Glover (Chair), Susan Wolf Ditkoff (by phone), Jennifer Monopoli, and David A. Pearlman.

Other School Committee Members present: Sharon Abramowitz, Helen Charlupski, and Suzanne Federspiel.

Staff present: Mary Ellen Normen and Robin Coyne.

Others present: Kelly Race (Chair of the Committee for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations), George White (Town Meeting Member Precinct 9), Bob Weintraub (Town Meeting Member Precinct 9), and Ben Kelly.

Mr. Glover called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. He announced that Ms. Ditkoff will be participating remotely, by phone.

1) Review of Search Schedule

The Committee reviewed the draft schedule for the superintendent search. Members recommended that the schedule lead up to a possible February 27, 2020 School Committee vote to choose a new superintendent (vote should be no later than mid-March). The RFP should be issued as soon as possible so that search firm presentations/interviews can take place in October.

Members discussed the timing of the posting for the superintendent position, including whether the position could/should be posted before the consultant is hired. The draft RFP includes generation of a job description. Members suggested that the RFP include the most recent job description and ask vendors to provide feedback in their presentation. A separate document should be prepared that describes the district and where we are in our challenges. Ms. Normen will prepare revised schedules that show the posting before and after the search firm is hired.

2) Review of Draft RFP

Mr. Glover requested that all members review the draft RFP and send him comments no later than this weekend. The Committee will review the revised RFP at the next meeting on September 23, 2019. Mr. Glover asked that members continue to hold September 26, 2019, 5:00 PM-6:00 PM, for a possible meeting (Ms. Normen will not be available).

3) Discussion of Search, Interview, and Candidate Review Process

The Committee discussed public participation in the superintendent search process. Suggestions included creating a search advisory committee that could include administrators, teachers, parents/guardians, and students from different grade bands.

Members agreed on the need to provide transparency and opportunities for meaningful and inclusive public input. Some potential issues were raised: whether having a large and broad group at interviews would be manageable and efficient; whether it might deter some candidates from applying because of their need for confidentiality; and the range of stakeholder groups that

would want to be represented on the committee. It was noted that the search firm might have suggestions on strategies for getting meaningful public input.

Members of the public made comments: focus groups to gather input on what we are looking for in a superintendent aren't necessary and are time consuming and expensive; requested that a member of the Committee for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations participate on the Preliminary Screening Committee (has been the practice in town searches); stressed the need for citizen participation in the first stage of the search process; input from residents who no longer have children in the schools should be considered.

Mr. Glover adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM.