

**School District No. 1J, Multnomah County, Oregon
Board Retreat of September 15, 2016**

INFORMAL MINUTES

A Retreat of the Board of Directors came to order at 3:14pm at the call of Chair Tom Koehler in the Mazama Conference Room of the Blanchard Education Service Center, 501 N. Dixon Street, Portland, Oregon, 97227.

There were present:

Board of Directors:

Tom Koehler, Chair
Amy Kohnstamm, Vice-Chair
Paul Anthony
Steve Buel
Julie Esparza Brown
Pam Knowles
Mike Rosen
Aliemah Bradley, Student Representative

Staff:

Bob McKean, Interim Superintendent
Amanda Whalen, Chief of Staff
Rosanne Powell, Board Office Manager
Caren Huson-Quiniones, Board Clerk

Chair Koehler stated that there were two goals for the Retreat: narrow down a Search Firm for the Superintendent hiring, and setting the agenda for the next Board Retreat. Chair Koehler asked the Board to share what they felt their best accomplishments had been in the last year. The list included: money placed into libraries; taking responsibility for the lead testing; beginning to review how the budget is prepared; obtaining the Roosevelt maker space; money that was placed into textbooks; ethnic studies; the extraordinary group of staff working on the budget; looking more closely at the literacy adoption and evaluation plan; moving items through the Committee process in an effective way; setting expectations in communications about lead in the water; the swift hiring of Courtney Wilton and Dr. John Burnham; hiring of a good Interim Superintendent through a good process and as a group; emphasis on hands-on learning and CTE through investments; and entering into Interest Based Bargaining. Director Knowles commented that she had nothing to add to the list as she has seen no details in the meeting of Board goals.

Joel Cisneros and Iris Chavez of the Coalition of Communities of Color, stated they were looking forward to hearing about the Superintendent selection process and how the community would be included in the process. Ms. Chavez added that they would like to bring their expertise to the search and questioned how the Search Committee would be structured and how it would function as a body. She was hopeful that the Board was looking at a track record of a search firm which included equity, community engagement, and the tenure of their candidates.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

George Perry of the Panasonic Foundation stated that he and Kaili Baucum had previously spoken to each Board member separately and asked them for the characteristics they wanted from a new Superintendent. The Foundation is a PPS partner; they do not conduct Superintendent searches, but they assist Board partners to determine the criteria in selecting a search firm.

Ms. Baucum reported on the Lessons Learned from the Interim Superintendent Search:

What Went Well: several candidates reached out; the District worked with partners (e.g, OSBA and CGCS); and, District received a good pool of national candidates.

What Did Not Go Well: was not inclusive enough (did not include teachers or PAT as partners); did not have a meaningful open house as the public thought they would have a chance to screen candidates; managing expectations; preparation for public engagement; figuring out who in the community should be involved and in what fashion; equity with interviewing here vs. skype; video conferencing did not work well; and, no Board member had any previous experience with a Superintendent search.

Would Like to Have: more diverse candidates; additional partners; more time to do what the Board was intending to do; and being clear on expectations.

SUMMARY OF PANASONIC FOUNDATION INTERVIEWS OF BOARD MEMBERS AND DISCUSSION OF CHARACTERISTICS DESIRED IN SUPERINTENDENT CANDIDATES

Ms. Baucum distributed a handout of the list of characteristics the Foundation had gleaned from Board members for characteristics of a new Superintendent. In addition to the list of characteristics prepared by the Panasonic Foundation, the Board offered the following desired characteristics for Superintendent candidates: capitalize on progress we are making; someone skilled and dedicated to get work off the ground; used to working with data to track progress and to course-correct; data based decision making; need to understand the data and the limitations of the data; proven record in improving outcomes; equity in the classroom; clear communication to the community of what is going well; inspiring and able to create momentum; experience in a diverse community; build a collective vision and skills to bring that vision to reality; fiscal responsibility; second language encouraged; to lead the Board through the budget process; the education of every child is equally important and meeting the needs of each child; strong educational background; educational leader; empathy for other people; diverse references; experience and belief in hands-on learning;

BOARD MEMBER REVIEW AND SCORING OF SEARCH FIRM APPLICATIONS; CONSENSUS ON SEARCH FIRMS TO BE INTERVIEWED

Board members scored each of the search firms using the following scale: background and experience (up to 25 points), work plan (up to 60 points), costs (up to 15 points).

At 4:35pm, the Board took a ten minute break.

By using the above scoring system, the Board consensus was to interview the top three search firms: McPherson and Jacobson; Hazard, Young and Attea; and, R&A Services. Director Anthony questioned how the District would go about checking references of the firms.

DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW PROCESS AND QUESTIONS

Director Anthony commented that the Board needs to ask if they recruit or if they represent candidates, and if they recruit, how they go about it. We should also ask the firms if they have a personal relationship with the Superintendents of the top 10 school districts in the country. Director Rosen noted that there was a significant cost difference between the search firms.

In addition to the search firm interview questions provided by Panasonic, the Board suggested the following additional questions: how do you go about finding diverse candidates; what is your community process; what do you recommend in terms of confidentiality; how do you determine

the character of a candidate; how much flexibility will they have in how they provide outreach to the community; and, the extent of which they perform background checks on candidates.

Mr. Perry reminded the Board that potential candidates will back off if they feel there is a lack of confidentiality in the process.

The Board consensus was to conduct interviews of the search firms publicly. Next steps for Board members included: determine additional interview questions for the search firms, phone references of search firms, and set interview date(s).

At 5:30pm, the Board took a five minute break.

NEXT RETREAT DISCUSSION, COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP, BOARD EVALUATION, FOCUS ON NEXT NINE MONTHS

Superintendent McKean read a statement about his first three weeks as Interim Superintendent and the working relationship between him and the Board as a team. Chair Koehler stated that the Board needed to determine their agenda for the next Board Retreat.

Facilitator Trevor Cartwright stated that the next Board Retreat would revolve around communication and asked the Board if they would like to also do a 360 evaluation of themselves. Mr. Cartwright defined the 360 evaluation as a process of evaluating the performance of a group. After identifying those persons who would evaluate the Board (parents, students, teachers, administrative staff, elected officials, civic leaders and community partners), that would be asked to answer performance questions about the Board. Responses to the survey would confidentially be sent directly to Mr. Cartwright.

Director Esparza Brown commented that she felt a self-evaluation was very important in order to work better together and share a vision. Director Knowles agreed, but was hesitant in having a 360 community evaluation right now. Director Anthony stated that there was a difference between transparency and making a public spectacle of themselves. Director Rosen mentioned that the Board needs to evaluate themselves, but wonders how a facilitator would handle that. Director Buel stated that Board members each have different goals and does not even know how to evaluate themselves; it would probably not be a nice discussion. Director Kohnstamm recommended a Board self-evaluation first, with a 360 evaluation to occur at a later date. Chair Koehler commented that everyone's input was needed on what the evaluation would look like and that he would like to commit to performing a 360 evaluation at a time certain after a new Superintendent is hired.

Director Esparza Brown stated that the next Board Retreat should include the following: how the Board works together, following processes, and communications. Director Buel mentioned that the Board needs to develop avenues to get things taken care of. Mr. Cartwright commented that he would follow-up with Chair Koehler about the Retreat agenda. Chair Koehler asked Director Esparza Brown to provide ideas on what the Retreat might look like.

ADJOURN

Chair Koehler adjourned the meeting at 6:10pm.

Submitted by:

Caren Huson-Quiniones, Board Clerk
PPS Board of Education