

Notes for Superintendent Search Work Session

Date/Time: Thursday, January 19th, 6:30 PM

Location: Administration Building, 1500 Colvin Boulevard, Tonawanda NY 14223

Participants: Patrick Heyden, President of the Kenmore Administrators' Association; Michael Schuh, President of the Kenmore-Tonawanda School Employees Association; Peter Stuhlmiller, President of the Kenmore Teachers Association; Elaine Ablove, Vice President of the Kenmore Teachers Association; Dawn Stinner, President of the Ken-Ton Special Education Parent Teacher Organization; Stephen Brooks, former Board of Education member; and Gennie Vitko, President of the Edison Elementary School Parent Teacher Association; Stephen Bovino, Interim Superintendent, Robin Zymroz, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction & Student Services; Margaret Puzio, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; John Brucato, Assistant Superintendent for Finance; and Gina Santa Maria, District Clerk, as well as Board of Education President Jill O'Malley, Vice President Andrew Gianni, and Trustees Christine Cavarello, Christopher Pashler, and Thomas Reigstad.

1. Introduction of Participants

2. Guidelines for Discussion

- a. President O'Malley reiterated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the past process in hiring the previous superintendent and considerations for the 2017 recruitment procedure, individuals would not be discussed.

3. Consideration of Past Process

- b. Several members of the team gave feedback about the past overall hiring procedure.
 - Survey of the public
 - Committee/interview structure
 - How finalists were narrowed down
 - Final selection process
- c. Concern was expressed that in the last process, interview committee members were not told that the sheets they were taking notes on would be turned in to consultants and that these sheets would be what the Board would use to consider committee feedback.
 - Also, during this process, committee members were not permitted to deliberate amongst themselves after the interviews.
 - Former committee members stated they would have taken more careful/detailed notes if they knew that this was their chance to give input into candidates.
 - Former Trustee Brooks added that the Board was not aware of this and that they did receive blank feedback sheets. It was also stated that some sheets were illegible.

- d. A concern was raised that the group wrote questions on cards to ask candidates during the interview.
 - Not all participants were assigned a question to ask.
 - Participants were not allowed to ask follow up questions.
- e. Feedback was given that there was less than 48 hours from the time of the final interview to the time the Board made their decision.
 - This did not give enough time to do informal background checks.
- f. The group was asked whether or not residency should be required as was with the previous search.
 - The majority was that residency should be preferred but not required.
 - Discussion was added that perhaps requiring residency at some point with contract renewal should be considered.
 - Individuals also mentioned that non-resident distance should be taken into consideration (ie what if candidate lives 2 hours away?).
 - The group agreed that the focus should be on the candidate being accessible and visible in the District
- g. The group was asked whether or not previous superintendent experience should be required.
 - It was noted that if superintendents are happy in mid-sized or large sized districts, they probably would not leave. Requiring prior superintendent experience may mean the candidate pool would vet candidates from small districts.
 - With one exception, the group agreed that previous superintendent experience should be preferred but not be required.
 - Comments were made that principals from large districts may better understand the scale of work here.
 - Several members stated that central office/Assistant Superintendent experience should be required.

4. Considerations Moving Forward

- a. The group agreed that slowing the process down at the end once the finalists were selected was important to allow for peer reference checks and onsite visits by the BOE and other participants.
 - Peer representatives will be selected with assistance from BOCES if needed and will contact their counterpart in the District the candidate is from. For example, the Board President in Ken-Ton will contact each Board President from the finalist's Districts.
- b. A point was made that the search should canvass all of NY State, which the group agreed to. (Note: there was no discussion emphasizing a national search)
- c. The interview committee:
 - Composition will be similar to the last search, however selection process will be reviewed and discussed.
 - The group will be allowed to debrief and discuss after each candidate.

- The group will be allowed to ask follow up questions related to interview material.
- There will be a rubric developed with key performance indicators so that everyone knows how to properly score candidate questions.

The consultant:

- Discussion ensued regarding the past process, a process Erie2 BOCES has used and the proposal from Erie1 BOCES.
 - Interim Superintendent Bovino formally recommended to the Board that Erie1 BOCES be used for this Superintendent search
 - This was unanimously approved by the Board.
 - A meeting will be set up with President O'Malley, Interim Superintendent Bovino and Erie1 BOCES Superintendent Lynn Fusco to discuss this committee's recommendations and how it will shape the process.
 - A meeting will be set up with Trustee Reigstad, Interim Superintendent Bovino and Erie1 BOCES Superintendent Lynn Fusco to discuss and construct the job posting.
- d. There will be a survey created for stakeholder input.
- e. Other matters:
- A tab will be added on the District website for the Superintendent Search. This tab will contain relevant notes and links to keep people informed about the process.
 - There will be an aggressive timeline: The Board would like the new Superintendent of Schools to be approved at the May regular meeting.
 - Mr. Bovino agreed to stay until a suitable candidate is found.
 - The Board agreed that they would not settle and if this process did not yield a suitable candidate, they would re-evaluate and begin the process again.
 - There are two other local districts that will begin searches in the near future: West Seneca and the City of Tonawanda