

Lynn Superintendent Search Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
April 17, 2018 – 3:00 p.m.  
North Shore Community College, 300 Broad Street, Lynn, MA  
Room 314 and Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Thomas McGee (Chair), Donna Coppola, John Ford, Bob Buontempo, Meghan Collins, Miki Divirgilio, Anthony Frye, Mark Johnston, Jen Lange, Sheila O’Neil, Magalie Rowe, and Peter McGinn(participating remotely).

ALSO PRESENT: Robin Ennis, Office of the Mayor; Glenn Koocher, MA Association of School Committees

The chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in Room 314.

On a motion by Ms. O’Neil, seconded by Ms. Coppola, it was voted unanimously and by roll call to convene in executive session in the main conference room, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 8 (8), to conduct an initial interview for candidates for the position of superintendent of Schools. The chair announced that the school committee would reconvene in open session at the conclusion of the executive session.

Upon adoption of the motion, the search committee convened in executive session in the Conference Room.

The search committee interviewed [REDACTED].

At the conclusion of the interview, it was moved by Ms. Coppola, seconded by Mr. Ford to reconvene in open session. This motion was approved on a unanimous vote with all members voting in the affirmative.

On a motion by Ms. Coppola, seconded by Mr. Ford, it was voted to adjourn.

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas McGee, Chair

Attachment: List of Questions Used at This Interview

**Opening Question**

**[Chair]**

**Please tell us about yourself and why you are interested in being the superintendent in Lynn.**

**Internal Candidates: Also, please tell us what your three top priorities would be if you were to become our superintendent.**

**Accountability**

**[Anthony]**

As you lead the district, how will you use student performance data to prioritize use of resources including money, technology, facilities and most importantly human capital to maximize student outcomes?

**Follow Up:**

How will those resources be balanced to address the needs of low performing schools while maintaining services and resources at higher performing schools?

**Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Students** – [Miki]

Over the last several years, LPS has experienced a significant increase in the number of students presenting social and emotional difficulties and behavioral challenges. While many of these students are not technically qualified to receive special services, addressing their needs have strained the capabilities and budgets of LPS' teachers and administrative staff.

Please describe your experience in assessing and addressing these sorts of demands placed on teachers and staff.

**Follow Up:**

- What programs or strategies would you immediately suggest to steer LPS in a new direction to be better able to address the needs and circumstances of this growing fraction of LPS students?
- What long term strategies would you propose and implement to alleviate the strain this student population places on teachers and staff?

**Curriculum**

**[Mark]**

In trying to reduce our achievement gap in all needed subgroups, what curriculum changes would you implement in the first years of your administration?

**Follow Up:**

- What new strategies would you implement to ensure that students and their parents are fully engaged in our district wide curriculum?
- Please describe changes in curriculum that you feel are needed in preparing students to achieve 21st Century Skills.

**Additional Follow Up from "Teaching and Learning"**

- What does "good" teaching look like? How would you rate the importance of curriculum maps, timelines, standards/objectives/, instruction, and student engagement?
- How would you incorporate the different teaching styles of the teachers to allow them the autonomy to use their experience and expertise in the classroom?

- What new strategies would you implement to ensure that students and their parents are fully engaged in our district wide curriculum?

To accommodate the Department of Education's periodic updates to the curriculum framework, LPS teachers and staff receive supplementary training and guidance. Often times, however, LPS Special Education teachers and staff are late in receiving such training.

- What is your position on providing such training to Special Education teachers and staff?
- What will you do to ensure that Special Education teachers and staff timely receive such training?
- How will you measure the effectiveness and utility of such training?
- What will you do to hold administrators accountable for such training?

**Special Education**

**[Miki]**

Lynn Public Schools ("LPS") has an exceptionally diverse population, containing a broad spectrum of ethnicities, race, and languages. In addition, many LPS students require additional assistance and services to become successful learners.

What are your thoughts and long-term strategies to successfully address LPS' diverse and unique student populations?

**Follow up:**

- How will you support continuous and consistent improvement in and advancement of Special Education in LPS?
- How will you consistently support appropriate staffing, hiring, and training of Special Education teachers, administrators, and staff?
- What background, qualities, and characteristics will you look for when hiring a new Director of Special Education?

**Cultural Competency/Cultural Proficiency**

**[Magalie]**

After learning about how diverse the student body of the Lynn Public Schools currently is, can you describe the steps you will take to create a cultural competency training program for ALL educators and administrators within the Lynn Public Education system?

**Follow Up:** Based on that information, what steps will you take to proportionately recruit, train, and retain educators and administrators that reflect our student body, to work for the Lynn Public School system?

**Personnel Issues**

**[Donna]**

Since money spent on hiring central office staff is not always money spent directly impacting students, how will you affectively measure the value of central office personnel while ensuring a commitment to add personnel that directly influence student learning and social and emotional wellbeing and maximize funds going into classrooms?

**Before/After/Out of School Time [Jen]**

Quality and afterschool programming for students is going to be an important piece for the next superintendent and the need in Lynn is critical. Do you have a plan to address this need *in an urban district* like our city?

**Follow Up** - Are you open to utilizing the school buildings to implement these programs?

- What experience do you have building accessible Afterschool and out of school time programming and establishing partnerships with outside providers to expand and enhance afterschool programs offered to our students in the school building setting and in community based organization settings?
- How do you maximize use of school buildings with outside providers/what successful models of afterschool implementation and community partnering are you aware of/ What experience do you have with the Mass Afterschool Partnership?

**Technical School Questions: [Bob]**

What is your philosophy of a vocational technical education vs. a traditional academic education?

- **Follow Up Question:**
- Many vocational teachers leave LVTI to the higher paying regional tech schools after gaining teaching experience, teacher mentoring and obtaining certification. How would you address the common loss of investment in time, talent, and resources to attract and retain instructors for Lynn Tech Students?

**Budget and Finance & Relationship with Municipal Government [Chair]**

What experience do you have working with school and city finance teams to develop a budget recognizing that both the school and the city have challenges, including meeting your obligations under collective bargaining, that need to be met?

**Follow Up:**

- What does a successful relationship with the municipal finance team (City CFO, & Mayor) and the school finance team look like to you and what direct experience do you have in forming and sustaining this relationship.
- Describe a tough financial problem you have faced in your job and tell us what you did about it.
- How would you ensure that school finance information is regularly open and accessible to the City CFO, mayor, and finance team?

**Working with the Leadership Team [Meghan]**

Over the past year the city has struggled to garner enough confidence from the community to support the building of new schools. Give us an example of how you have partnered with community leaders to build support for a district-wide initiative such as this, and describe what steps you will take to work towards this initiative should you become Superintendent.

**Follow Up:**

- What is your vision for the district and how would you motivate teachers, school administrators and support staff to work toward that vision?
- What strategies would you use to incorporate the educators' knowledge and opinions into your decision making process?

**Parent Engagement [Sheila]**

What resources, supports, expertise, and other factors would make the biggest difference in increasing parent involvement?

**Follow Up** - Are they different for.....

- families of non-native English speakers;
- parents of students with disabilities;
- students at various grade levels
- How do these differences affect parent involvement?

**Educator Evaluation [Peter]**

What do you consider to be an effective use of the evaluation process? What examples would you offer for effective evaluation processes for teachers and administrators that actually work to improve performance and motivate teachers and administrators?

**Follow Up** - Describe a process that would work best, in your opinion over a reasonable period of time.

**School Safety [John]**

*LVTI acquired a third building (Annex) in 1999, before 9-11-01 and the student safety concerns that our country is facing today. Students walk 2/10 of a mile and cross Neptune Boulevard at varied times between the buildings to classes and shops seven periods every day. Scheduling efforts have minimized some student travel but there are still many students who walk between buildings regularly.*

What experience have you had in keeping all schools safe, and what would you look to assure is in place or look to implement?

**Follow Up:**

- Some of our school buildings and grounds are deteriorating and have become unsafe, such as worn out stair treads, walkways with holes in the concrete and pavement. There is often a long delay or no response to requests to remedy these hazards. What would you do to assure that such requests for repairs are responded to in a timely manner?

**Technology Infrastructure [Mark]**

In our meetings, surveys and focus groups, a major area of concern within the district was its technology infrastructure.

Describe how you plan to improve the technology infrastructure of the district? I.e. lack of hand held devices, reliable internet access, access to cloud based resources, etc.

**Follow up:**

- As the district leader, describe how you plan to enhance students' learning through the use of technology?
- What do you see are the most promising technologies on the horizon for today's educational environment?

**IF TIME PERMITS**

**Equity** [Jen]

**Support for Administration** – [Meghan]

**Relationships with the School Committee** [Donna]

Lynn Superintendent Search Committee  
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The search committee interviewed [REDACTED]

At the conclusion of the interview, it was moved by Ms. Coppola, seconded by Mr. Ford to reconvene in open session. This motion was approved on a unanimous vote with all members voting in the affirmative.

A brief discussion ensued during which some questions were edited. The edited copy of the questions will appear in the minutes of the meetings of April 18.

On a motion by Ms. Coppola, seconded by Mr. Ford, it was voted to adjourn.

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas McGee, Chair

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