

- **Correspondence:** None

2. Guests/Presentations:

a. Superintendent Search Process - Presentations

NESDEC - Dr. Art Bettencourt, Executive Director of NESDEC (New England School Development Council), Sally Dias and Carolyn Burke, search consultants all gave a presentation on how their firm would perform a Superintendent Search.

Dr. Bergen inquired as to how do you go about learning about us, so you can sell us? Can you describe that part of the process.

Ms. Carolyn Burke explained that the one of the first things they do is sit down and talk to the School Committee, also do a great deal of talking in the community, they will meet with teachers, administrators, staff, school committee, town to learn more about the community as well as read about the community and will get a sense through the focus groups, through the online surveys, through discussions, what it is people feel are the strengths, where they feel they would like someone to come in and work on, they set it in a context for us so we get to know the culture of the community.

Ms. Sally Dias added that it is amazing how candid people are in the focus groups about the District. The focus groups provide a lot of information.

Ms. Bilello inquired as to how do you make sure that we do everything by the letter of the law, how has it gone in other Districts to be sure that School Committees have a full transparent process?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they have not had an issue. They work in all New England States and the laws are different from state to State. Dr. Bettencourt advised that they share portions of the law that are in governing parts of the process that we are dealing with. Also provide the conflict of interest law. He also advised that they focus on these laws at the screening committee level. One of the first things that is done is going over the parameters.

Ms. Bilello asked what the process is to put the leadership together for the screening committee? How do you solicit involvement for the screening group?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they would suggest that you go to a constituency group and ask the group to recommend a representative.

Ms. Burke advised that when you have the design meeting with the School Committee, that is one of the elements that they design, they would ask the School Committee, what types of voices/representation would you like on the screening committee. The firm would supply the School Committee with possible groups. The firm will walk you through the entire process.

Ms. Schultz asked a clarifying question about the number of focus groups that will be held.

Dr. Bettencourt advised that the number of Focus groups is 6. Dr. Bettencourt also noted that they will also do facilitated interviews, i.e. with stakeholders, Town Administrator, finance people, etc.

Dr. Bergen inquired as to the timeline for the process.

Dr. Bettencourt advised the first step is to contact the contact person from the School Committee. The entire timeline would be about 120 days. We talk about advertising, talk about other advertising outlets that are fee based, begin talking about focus groups, when to schedule them, the application process, etc. We talk about your role as a School Committee. He advised that this is not the firm's search, it is the School Committee's search and they are there to guide you through the process.

Ms. Bilello inquired as to the active tiered recruiting, can you explain a little about beyond the advertising, what other avenues for recruiting are used?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they recruit in different ways, they each have their own network, and will network via email, telephone call, and/or LinkedIn.

Ms. Burke added that NESDEC has a board of directors, which has two Superintendents from each state. They are very active in their States so

we call on them for networking. We use the people who are affiliated with us and also people who are on our own Board for networking.

Dr. O'Malley inquired as to the fees for their services.

Dr. Bettencourt advised that there are two fees in the cost proposal. There is the consultant fee and then expenses. Those fees are fixed. The fee that is not included is for candidate travel and advertising is not included. He advised that there is a warranty with the search, NESDEC will stay with you until the search is done, they will perform another search if the first one doesn't work. He also advised that if the Superintendent hired leaves for any reason, except retirement they will perform the search again with no consulting fee within 2 years.

Ms. Lisa Trainor asked about recirculating candidates, sometimes a candidate interviewed in one district may be a good fit for Franklin, does the opportunity not present itself or is it something that you would bypass.

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they try very hard to focus on the quality of the applicant pool.

Ms. Lisa Trainor asked about the pre-screening on paper, how do you whittle down? Is there referencing beforehand, informal digging beforehand, or is it pretty much pen to paper?

Ms. Burke advised that all completed application packets are brought to the screening committee. This is where the successful candidate profile, the profile we developed through the focus groups and the community outreach is so important because when looking through the applications, this is the lense that is used, the Committee then chooses who they would like to interview. NESDEC does not pre-screen, they do not rule out candidates.

Ms. Trainor clarified that the initial screening committee is the same as the initial interview group?

Ms. Burke advised that they do not take two bites of the apple. Anyone who has a completed application, goes to the screening committee. We do not prescreen.

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they do not screen out applicants because it is not their search. What they prefer to do is put the screening committee and the school committee in a position where they understand the process of who they want to consider.

Ms. Burke advised that the work with the screening committee is very intense, there is a 3 hour orientation, it is 6 hours before they begin to interview. Ms. Burke also advised that they recommend 2 members of the School Committee to be on the Screening Committee.

Ms. Dias also commented that it is important for anyone serving on the Committees to be aware of what the responsibilities and what the time commitment is.

Ms. Trainor asked about the Regional search, are there are other States that come closer to successful Massachusetts candidates? Is there one particular state that you might dig a little deeper?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that what is unique to Massachusetts is how well the schools do and that is attractive to candidates. The other thing that is unique to Massachusetts is how the open meeting law works. He commented that in the State of Connecticut, if there is a search committee, everything is done behind closed doors till the very last decision is made. He feels that as the Committee goes through the applicants, the majority of the applicants will come from the New England area.

Ms. Bilello asked how many searches do you run and how many will you be running at the same time as the Franklin search? What would you say your success rate is? How many districts have you had to have an Interim Model because there wasn't a successful candidate?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that they run 12 to 17 searches a year, throughout New England States. Typically searches are based on their own timeline, timelines can vary a lot. There will be no more than 2 concurrently. In terms of searches where they had to go back out again, Dover-Sherborn is an example. That search had some very special concerns.

Dr. Jewell inquired as to the estimate of the cost. The candidate travel and advertising costs are passed on to the Committee, however, other things

mentioned, i.e. photocopying, telephone calls, postage, etc. Are these hourly fees, talking to a consultant, what are these expenses?

Dr. Bettencourt advised that the cost in the proposal are fixed expenses. All of the items mentioned by Dr. Jewell are included in the price that was in the proposal. These expenses do not go up or down.

- b. **MASC** - Not present, Dr. Sabolinski will contact them.
- c. **ECRA Group - John Connolly**

Mr. Connolly gave a presentation of how his company would perform a Superintendent Search.

Dr. O'Malley inquired as to the fee structure.

Mr. Connolly advised that the consulting fee is \$24,500, in addition there is an opportunity for various advertisements, there are 3 plans ranging from \$1,700 - \$4,000.00. Typically the Candidate expenses are between \$2,000 and \$6,000 depending on where they are traveling from. There is a cost of \$850 for an independent background check, credibility of academic degrees, etc. The Administrative expenses for copying, shipping and other administrative costs are 3% of the search fee which would be about \$700.00. Mr. Connolly notes that they are interested in the position and if the difference between us getting it and not getting it is a couple thousand dollars, we are prepared to talk to the School Committee about that.

Ms. Bilello inquired as to the community engagement. How do you help us as a diverse committee wrestle with those decisions, is that where you interview us individually to determine what is the best fit for our district?

Mr. Connolly suggested that the School Committee not lose the search, some Committees ask someone in the Community to chair the search committee. He feels that a member of the School Committee should be on the search committee. There are 2 important purposes for the search most importantly is to select best person, however, he feels that you will be a stronger board than you are tonight, it's the working together, team building. He recommends a search committee of 7-8 members, probably 3 members of the school committee.

Dr. Bergen inquired as to outreach and networking can you tell us about other ways you network, do you serve on a lot of boards, do you know a lot of people that you can pick up the phone and call?

Mr. Connolly advised that he knows a lot of contacts. It's not just knowing them, if there are new people in those positions, he will find them. His belief is that if he is fortunate to do this search, the people that you get are the people that he finds.

Ms. Bilello inquired as to how you solicit to get to the manageable 5 applicants, how do you soliciting involvement of our community. Are you bringing us just the 5? Will you be narrowing it to that core group?

Mr. Connolly advised that yes he would be narrowing it down. He could bring to Franklin the top 10 and explained how he came to the 5.

Ms. Bilello commented about searches that are underway, that it is a competitive market with a narrow pool, what do you feel that your search company can do for us to differentiate us from those other districts to put Franklin forward to make us attractive.

Mr. Connolly advised starting early, he advised that after the focus groups because that's our marching orders, that's how we learn everything about Franklin. It's convincing people about the opportunity and challenge of Franklin. He advised that if they have other searches in Massachusetts, they cannot also get into another slate in another school district.

3. **Discussion Only Items:**

Policy - First Readings

Policy - DJE - Bidding Requirements

Ms. Scofield advised the Committee that the amount for purchasing materials and equipment for construction or maintenance amounts exceeding, was \$5,000 - \$24,999.00, it has been changed to between \$10,000 - \$34,999.00. Thought it would be good for all to be aware of it.

Dr. Jewell commented that items cost more, it makes sense to raise margins for approval.

Ms. Goodman advised that these changes are consistent with changes in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 30B.

Policy - DKC - Expense reimbursements, Ms. Scofield advised that there was a paragraph was modified. It did read, ‘Any travel request with estimated expenditures of more than \$500 must be approved in advance by the Committee.’ That sentence was deleted. The sentence added reads ‘Travel requests must be approved in advance by the Superintendent.’ This is for any travel done by School Committee members and personnel and school department officials.

Mr. Light added that if it is travel by a School Committee member, it would still get the approval of the School Board simply to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. Mr. Light advised that there are various Administrator contract, i.e. School Business Administration, conferences, workshops, costs have escalated over the years, so having the Superintendent approve those requests is more efficient.

Policy JFF - Student Activity Account - Ms. Goodman advised the Student Activity Accounts in the next three (3) policies came about as a result of the changes in the guidelines that the Department of Ed has put forth regarding Student Activity Accounts. They have clarified a lot of questions that folks have had and they have issued audit guidelines as to how those activity funds are supposed to be managed and overseen from an accounting, auditing, school committee policies perspective. These policies recommendations are based on audit findings in the past year, that many districts have had. We have been asked to modify our policies to comply.

Specific to Policy JFF, students funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations; that funds shall only be for the benefit of students; added ‘and internal control practices’ and also added that ‘All student activities shall adhere to the *Student Activity Account Guidelines* for the Franklin Public Schools as the approved administrative procedures for student activity accounts.

Policy JFF-R - Ms. Goodman advised that this is the procedural part of how we implement JFF. These were necessary as a result of the audit process, we are not the only district that went through a Student Activities Account audit, there are many districts going through an audit process. Regulations talk about turnovers, folks who are collecting money in the buildings, how frequently they should be turning over that money to the Treasurer’s office, so the regulation in JFF-R adds that Student activity Advisors who collect funds shall turn over such funds to the Principal or Principal’s designee within twenty-four hours of receipt. The

Principal shall then turn over same to the Business Office who then turns it over to the Treasurer. This is spelled out in the JJF-R.

Mr. Light advised that this will not change the procedures that have been in place in the District. These procedures have been in place for 2 years. Mr. Light advised that in our Audit, the auditors are not just looking at the procedures, but they are looking at the policies in the District and because we are lacking the Policy we are having the finding, so this brings the Policy into compliance and make sure the policies reflect current practice.

Policy JJFG - Disposition of Student Activity Account - Ms. Goodman advised that the Disposition of Student Activity Accounts, basically outlines that after 3 years, if a Student Activity Club or Activity is inactive, it talks about the club assets be disbanded at the request of the Principal to be able to allocate that for the benefit of students. This policy would be communicated to students. It also addresses class accounts at graduation but there has been no change to class account. These are practices that are currently in place and are being reflected in the Policy.

Discussion ensued regarding awarding the Superintendent Search Contract.

Motion by Dr. Jewell to have MASC come to the next school committee meeting regardless of reason of not attending the August 23rd meeting; seconded by Ms. Schultz

Approve: 7

Oppose: 0

4. Action Items:

a. I recommend moving the following policies to a second reading at the next School Committee:

1. DJE - Bidding Requirements
2. DKC - Expense Reimbursements
3. JJF - Student Activity Accounts
4. JJF-R - Student Activity Accounts
5. JJFG - Disposition of Student Activity Accounts

Motion: Ms. Douglas

Second: Ms. Scofield

Approve: 7

Oppose: 0

b. I recommend approval of the budget transfers as detailed.

Motion: Ms. Douglas

Second: Ms. Scofield

Approve: 7

Oppose: 0

- c. I recommend acceptance of a check for \$2,705.29 from the Parmenter PCC for supplemental supplies at Parmenter Elementary School.
 Motion: Ms. Douglas Second: Ms. Scofield
 Approve: 7 Oppose: 0

5. Information Matters:

- **Superintendent’s Report:**

Enrollment Update - Dr. Sabolinski advised the Committee that the enrollment is changing daily, overall from a year ago, the District is down 139 in elementary which was anticipated, we have shifted staffing to accommodate the needs, the middle school is down 3, the high school is up 46. Enrollment is growing everyday. There will be a new enrollment update at the end of the first week of school.

Ms. Bilello asked how the numbers match up with the projections from Nesdec?

Dr. Sabolinski advised that it doesn’t match up as the numbers are from July 30 to July 30th. We receive their numbers in October. The elementary numbers continue to decline, the middle and high school numbers continue to grow. She also advised that this is a national trend.

Dr. Sabolinski advised that the Administrators had 3 days of training, they did some work together on academic return on investment, how to budget effectively and efficiently. The administrators also worked on high performing team and educator evaluations. There was a day that we all worked on the DIP and the SIP. Two of our Principals planned some athletic endeavors, the administrative olympics, there was a very intense volleyball game, some field hockey, etc.

Dr. Sabolinski advised the Committee that today was the start of new staff orientation. There were presentations by Peter Light, Joyce and Lisa Trainor with regard to instructional expectations, ensuring safe school environment, and evaluation. There was a total of 41 new staff.

Assistant Superintendent Light commented that this was one of the smallest groups of new teachers in long time in Franklin. They were an

engaged group of teachers with a wide range of experience. He felt they were a diverse group of teachers.

Assistant Superintendent Edwards gave credit to the rigorous hiring process that we have engaged in over the past year, it was executed well, she also commented that we started early this year so there was a good crop to start with.

Ms. Goodman gave a transportation update. Ms. Goodman advised that as of today 2,681 will be transported. In the last 14 days, 160 students signed up, 50 of those are on waiting list. We transport 934 middle school students, and 586 high school students on 31 busses. We have 1,169 elementary students on 20 busses, 240 charter students on 7 busses.

Ms. Goodman advised that there are 1,832 students enrolled in pay to ride, 849 are bus eligible. She advised that some routes have been consolidated due to reduced ridership at the Elementary level.

Ms. Goodman advised that the routes were posted on the Franklin School website on August 12th. Ms. Goodman would like to let the public know that we are trying to respond to phone calls as quickly as possible as well as google forms. She thanks the public for their patience. All secondary buses are running at 94% capacity and Elementary busses are running at 75% capacity.

Dr. Sabolinski advised that the administration will do bus counts weekly, for the first couple weeks of school.

Dr. Jewell asked how many students are being added daily, hundreds or single digits (10 or less)?

Dr. Sabolinski advised that in the last week we added 46 students.

Assistant Superintendent Joyce Edwards advised that this is typical of the trends that usually happens and it is what we expected.

6. School Committee - Sub-Committee Reports

- **Community Engagement -**

Ms. Schultz advised that the Community Engagement Sub Committee had a dinner meeting with High School administrators. Dr. Bergen advised

that it was a wonderful evening with great feedback, the administrators are anxious to respond. It is helpful to hear concerns directly.

Dr. Sabolinski will be setting up a meeting with the Middle School and Elementary Administrators as well.

- **Chapter 70 resolution** - None
- **Calendar Committee** - None
- **Policy Sub Committee** - Ms. Scofield advised that the Policy Sub-Committee's next meeting is on Monday, they will be going over the dress code policy. The school attorney Paige Tobin will be there as well as middle school representatives, the policy sub-committee has meetings scheduled through December.
- **School Committee Liaison Reports** - None
- Dr. Bergen gave an update on the Backpack initiative. A total of 274 backpacks were collected, 187 have been given out so far. Dr. Bergen advised that Michelle Branch from the Hockomock Area, has been coordinating it. The YMCA has been working with a Milford summer program, where some of the backpacks have been given out. The response from parents has been wonderful, they are very thankful.
- Dr. Bergen advised the Committee of the transition workshops she attended last week were very well attended.

7. New Business: None

8. Adjourn: Ms. Douglas made a motion move to adjourn, second by Ms. Scofield.

9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Childers