

SPECIAL CALL BOARD MEETING
SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH CONSULTANTS
APRIL 14, 2004

The Board of Directors of the Davenport Community School District in the Counties of Scott and Muscatine, State of Iowa, met for a Special Call Meeting with consultants from the superintendent search team on Wednesday, April 14, 2004, pursuant to law and the rules of said Board. The Board met in open session in the Jim Hester Board Room at the Davenport Schools Administration Service Center, 1606 Brady Street, Davenport, Iowa, in said district. President Low called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM.

On roll call the following board members were present: President Susan Low; Directors Richard Clewell, Nikki DeFauw, Timothy Tupper, and Patt Zamora. Director Larry Roberson arrived at 6:45 PM. Absent: Director Alan Guard. Dr. Steve Williams and Dr. Leslie Huth from the firm of McPherson and Jacobsen were present for the meeting. The Board and consultants covered topics relating to the search for the superintendent. The consultants outlined areas to be reviewed including input from the community meetings on April 7 and 8, the compensation package for the superintendent; interview questions to use; details of the interview group process; and time lines to guide the search.

FOCUS GROUPS

Dr. Williams recapped details of the focus group meetings held at the three high schools, the Administration Service Center, Kimberly Center, and at the Operations Center. A total of 180 people attended meetings on April 7 through April 8 (plus meetings with principals and some staff members on March 31.) There were 33 people in the three community meetings; 46 faculty members attended; 41 administrators provided input; 12 classified workers attended one of the sessions; and 48 students talked with the consultants. Dr. Huth presented a brief visitation summary of the comments made in the 16-page report from focus groups. (The report will be included with the minutes of record.) Dr. Williams talked about the brochure developed and the criteria included. Director Roberson arrived at 6:45 PM, joined board members at the table, and got a fast review of materials already covered.

SALARY

Dr. Williams and the Board talked about data relating to salary offerings. Board members shared thoughts and opinions on this subject. After a lot of discussion the consensus was to offer “not less than \$130,000 with an attractive benefit package.” President Low talked about how the contract has been negotiated in the past with the President, candidate, and our attorney’s involved in writing the document. Then it is presented to the other board members to review and recommended additional changes before approval.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Board looked through a document listing potential questions to ask candidates during interview sessions. Board members agreed they would select two questions from each section which they felt were most appropriate to ask the candidates. They were asked to get their recommendations back to the Board Secretary. The consultants will make up a list of

questions for board members to ask during each interview. Every candidate should be asked the same questions; but if something comes up during the interview session, board members may ask additional questions. There are some questions the Board and other groups should not ask. The consultants want the interview groups and Board to have all their questions prepared by May 21.

INTERVIEW GROUPS

Dr. Williams talked about plans for setting up interview groups and how the teams would have captains. The consultants would like to meet with the captains on May 11 and talk with them about interview questions before the first set of meetings at the end of May. The consultants recommended having six interview groups in addition to the Board. The teams will interview the candidate for about 45 minutes and then spend 15 minutes in writing up some pros and cons about the person. The captains will put their response sheet in a sealed envelope and give it to the Board Secretary. After the Board goes through their interview sessions, they will review the envelopes from the other teams.

CANDIDATES & INFORMATION

Dr. Williams said the search company will provide data sheets on each candidate as they get closer to the interview time. The company will do a profile, background checks, collect data including resume and application, and make calls prior to bringing a candidate's name forward. The Board talked about scheduling because Director Zamora will not be available from May 7-25. Director DeFauw will not be available June 2. It was agreed the consultants would Federal Express information on May 14 to Director Zamora about all the candidates they had at that time. Director Zamora will receive some summary materials by May 5 on whoever the consultants have at that point so she can look it over and talk with President Low about her thoughts on the candidates.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

After discussion about schedules, it was decided the interviews could be held Wednesday, May 26; Thursday, May 27; and Friday, May 28th. The Board talked about a fourth day being Tuesday, June 1.* Director DeFauw was not available June 2. President Low felt it was important to have all the board members there for each interview session. The consultants didn't feel it was a good idea to delay the interview schedule because it has already been advertised and things were in process at this time. Director Tupper asked about the timeline for candidates giving notice with another employer. Dr. Williams said they tell the candidate that their name is coming to the Board on a short list. They ask the person that if the job was offered, what date he/she would be able to start.

The consulting firm was happy to work with the Board on details in the contract and to sort out these matters or the Board can use their own attorney. Director Tupper asked when the names would become public. Dr. Williams said as soon as the candidate agrees to an interview, the consultants will set up the schedule and relay the names of candidates.

*Note: We have learned the Kimberly Center graduation was planned for 7:00 PM on June 1. President Low suggested if we need a fourth meeting that we move it to June 3 instead.

QUALIFICATIONS

The Board talked about the qualifications needed for a successful superintendent and Board Policy #202.01 listing a doctoral degree. After some review, board members agreed it was not mandatory for the candidate to hold a doctor's degree, but it was preferred. They didn't want to rule out a candidate just because the person didn't have the doctoral degree, as long as the person was certified to be superintendent. The Board will look at minor changes needed in the superintendent's policy.

SCHEDULE PLANNING

Dr. Williams said usually on the day of the interview, someone meets the candidate first. President Low said in the past the Central Office staff has had lunch with the candidate each day. Dr. Williams recommended the Board meet for dinner with the candidate around 6 PM and then start their interview session around 7:00 PM. President Low suggested someone needed to plan activities for the spouse, such as a tour of the area or looking at housing. President Low talked about community meetings done previously and the Board getting feedback from them. Dr. Williams said after all the interview sessions it might be best to set aside any decision for 24 hours to give the Board time to reflect on all the candidates. Then the Board would meet for a closed session to discuss possible hiring options before actually making a decision.

MAY 11 CLOSED SESSION

The consultants will be back here on May 11, 2004 with applications, video tapes, and other items so the Board will have an opportunity to review these things in closed session. This session will probably take three or four hours. President Low said we will need to have written permission from the candidates in order to review their materials in closed session. Dr. Williams said McPherson & Jacobson will take care of this matter for us. The consultants will not sit in on the actual interviews but will work with the Board if needed.

HIRING OF PRINCIPAL

Dr. Williams brought up the issue a new principal at Central High and waiting until after the new superintendent was hired to appoint someone. The Board said they would not stop the process for this job if the administration had a recommendation for the principal. The superintendent would need to work with the person hired for the high school, and the principal answers to the Deputy Superintendent.

ADJOURNMENT

President Low adjourned the meeting at 8:28 PM.