

BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT 64
Minutes of the Special Board of Education Meeting held at 6:00 p.m.
February 1, 2023
Jefferson School - Hendee Rooms
8200 W Greendale Ave, Niles, IL

Board President Pearl called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members in attendance were Phyllis Lubinski, Carol Sales, Gareth Kennedy (by phone, joined in person at 7 pm), and Larry Ryles. Board member Dr. Nicole Weitowich submitted her resignation on January 27, 2023. Board member Tom Sotos joined the meeting at 6:08 p.m. Approximately 20 members of the public were present.

Board of Education meetings are videotaped and may be viewed in their full length from the District's website at <http://www.d64.org>. The agenda and reports for this meeting are also available on the website or through the District 64 Educational Service Center, 164 S. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Member Ryles led the pledge.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received from the members of the public present. One public comment was submitted via email and will be included in the February 16 regular meeting packet.

DISCUSSION REGARDING HOW TO PROCEED WITH FILLING THE SUPERINTENDENT VACANCY

Vice President Sales thanked Dr. Martin for organizing this meeting and gathering the search firms to present on short notice.

PRESENTATIONS & INTERVIEWS OF EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRMS

Dr. Martin introduced School Exec Connect, the first firm to present tonight. Dr. Bhavna Sharma-Lewis and Dr. Tim Shimp presented for the firm; both are currently seated superintendents in the area. They gave a resume of the firm and themselves, and explained the search process and plan noting this was a tight timeframe and that it will be necessary to move expeditiously. They would hold focus groups, meet with all stakeholders, prepare a survey for the community, and then create a profile of the desired superintendent. They preferred face-to-face interviews over virtual ones and did formal background checks. They would present the chosen candidates in closed session meetings. They emphasized the personalized approach the firm takes for the search, the fact that they are very active and seated superintendents, and their involvement in many organizations. They will go back for other candidates if the Board is not satisfied at first and provide a 2-year guarantee if things don't work out. They provide boards with comparable districts' salary data to remain competitive. A member asked if the firm thought this process was being rushed, and they

answered no. The firm was contracted by the District in 2018 for the last search, but the representatives stressed that the company had undergone some changes and their survey was different. Member Ryles asked if there was a shortage of superintendents, and they answered yes but that it didn't mean less quality. They noted the national average is less than 3 years in the position. They do provide and actively recruit minority candidates, but could not say without further research if candidates had special education backgrounds in the history of the firm's recent searches. They believed that the candidates for the April board elections should be involved in the search process and creation of the profile, although this could be done separately from the current Board. Their out-of-state candidates tended to be Midwest-centered and the only issue would be around logistics.

The next presentation was from BWP, by Dr. Mark Friedman and Dr. Glenn Schlichting, both local. In addition, they mentioned that they engage the help of a current seated superintendent in San Diego, Brady Leighhangela, to help with their efforts. The firm promised to provide advice on interim versus permanent for a superintendent, timing, and expediting the process. The firm has nine partners and forty associates and is rooted in Illinois, with strong connections to all educational associations. It has an excellent track record, with 98% of candidates placed since 2006 having remained on the job a minimum of three years; 95% receiving successor contracts, and a 95% rating of satisfaction between superintendents and boards. No one placed was ever found to be negligent or criminal. The firm has a built-in mentoring program. An extensive list of placed candidates in nearby districts was provided. The firm anticipated phase 1 to be completed in February, phases 2 and 3 between February and March, and phases 4 and 5 in April. Both representatives stressed that while round 1 will see 5-7 candidates, and round 2 will narrow between 2 and 3 finalists, only one right candidate is necessary. They did not see a difference in candidate pool qualities between spring and fall searches. They said they already had candidates in mind, including a list of established interims, and could help provide the Board with interims if needed; there was no additional fee for that. They stated their results speak for themselves and the Board members could call surrounding districts to check on candidates that were placed there. Member Ryles inquired about closed versus open searches, the representatives stated their last two searches were closed, this was better as public searches placed the candidates in awkward situations if they then needed to go back to their districts. Member Sotos asked how many placed superintendents used the mentoring program offered; they said all the time. They also stated they have numerous connections, a wide network through professional organizations, and advertising as well. They complimented the District on its reputation, good standing, and wonderful strategic plan in place. They said there are various ways to handle running candidates in the election and involvement in the search varied from district to district. They recommended filling the Board vacancy quickly, the sooner the better. Member Kennedy asked about the firm's national reach and out-of-state candidates. Dr. Schlichting explained that in the past Illinois was a desired destination, but changes in the pension system in 2011 had put caps on salary, years of service, and other disincentives for people out-of-state. Therefore their number had been greatly impacted and the volume of choice was down. Unique circumstances could draw a candidate from another state. He also confirmed that he and Dr. Friedman would be in charge of the search should their firm be selected.

The third presentation came from HYA, by Dr. James Gay and Mr. Richard Nogal. The firm has associates and resources nationwide. The representatives stated that given the shortage of educators, it was vital to get

quality candidates. They presented the firm's history, with 35 years and 1600 searches nationwide, and 130 current associates. They publish a comprehensive portal during the search to make it a very transparent process and stated it was normally a 16-week process. They also provide transition help with workshops and prefer face-to-face meetings with candidates. They insist on getting the right data to the Board so they can make an informed decision. They believe in engaging community members and customizing the survey to help guide the Board's decision. They have an aggressive recruitment process, make phone calls and visits, to find the right person. Responding to a question from Board member Lubinski, they stressed that while social-emotional learning is important, academics were equally important to move forward. Member Ryles asked if the pool was larger during a closed search, Mr. Nogal disagreed and stated he preferred open searches. He said a closed search was much less transparent and made it difficult to conduct a thorough vetting process. President Pearl asked about election candidates' involvement in the search, and the response was that candidates should not be involved in the process but transparency was necessary. The involvement of candidates could come at a later time. The representatives confirmed they were flexible on the terms of the contract and payments. They named a couple of districts locally where they had helped: St Charles Elmhurst, West Aurora. Both noted that Dr. Jane Westerhold, their partner, was the one with knowledge of the area. They also recommended filling the Board vacancy as soon as possible.

The Board took a five-minute break following the presentations.

BOARD RECESSES & ADJOURNS TO CLOSED MEETING

At 8:40 p.m. it was moved by Board member Ryles and seconded by Board member Sotos to recess from the special Board meeting and adjourn to a closed meeting to discuss: the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors, or specific volunteers of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor, or a volunteer of the District or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with this Act [5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1)].

The votes to adjourn to the closed meeting were cast as follows:

Ayes: Sales, Pearl, Ryles, Lubinski, Kennedy, Sotos

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

BOARD ADJOURNS FROM THE CLOSED MEETING & RESUMES THE SPECIAL MEETING

At 9:15 p.m. the Board resumed the special meeting.

APPROVAL OF SELECTED EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

Member Kennedy stated that all three firms were good and the Board appreciated the presentations. They had decided to engage BWP in part due to their local connection, the fact that they had listened to the last board meeting and seemed well-prepared, and had answered questions thoroughly about the national search.

ACTION ITEM 23-02-1

It was moved by Board member Sales and seconded by Board member Lubinski that the Board of Education of Community Consolidated School District 64, Park Ridge-Niles, Illinois, approve the selection of BWP to conduct the superintendent search.

The votes to adjourn to the closed meeting were cast as follows:

Ayes: Ryles, Pearl, Lubinski, Sotos, Sales, Kennedy

Nays: None

Present: None

Absent: None

The motion carried.

The Board then discussed possible dates for the next special meeting to approve the contract with BWP and receive a presentation with options for the search. February 9 and 13 were considered as possible dates. Dr. Martin will reach out to BWP and determine whether either date is convenient and will let the Board know when the meeting is scheduled. The contract with BWP could be approved at the regular February 16 meeting if legal counsel doesn't have enough time by February 9 or 13, but the special meeting and presentation would proceed.

DISCUSSION OF THE INTERVIEW PROCESS FOR CANDIDATES FOR BOARD VACANCY

Dr. Woitowich's resignation letter was submitted to the Board secretary on January 29, 2023. The Board now has 60 days to fill the vacancy. Based on the responses from the search firms, member Kennedy noted this should happen sooner rather than later to allow the appointed member to participate in the search process. Member Sotos stressed that it was important to let the community know what the process would be. The members discussed the process and agreed on an application deadline of February 21, and a special meeting to interview the candidates on February 27 starting at 6 pm. The meeting will be open, candidates would receive questions ahead of time, be interviewed in a random order, and would be asked to refrain from social media and communication while waiting for their turn in a separate room. President Pearl confirmed that the Board would essentially follow the same process as it did for the last vacancy in 2022 when member Rebecca Little resigned.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:35 pm. it was moved by Board member Lubinski and seconded by Board member Kennedy to adjourn the special meeting. The motion was carried out by unanimous voice vote.

Signed Date: March 6, 2023.

President

Secretary