

**Sudbury Public Schools  
Sudbury, Massachusetts  
School Committee Special Meeting  
Tuesday November 30, 2010**

**Present:** Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jeff Beeler, Vice Chairman;  
Dr. Rich Robison, Michele MacDonald, Lisa Gutch

**Also Present:** Dr. John Brackett, Superintendent; Dr. Robert Mealey, SEA; Art Bettencourt,  
NESDEC Executive Director; Dr. Carolyn Burke, NESDEC Associate

**Open Session**

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

**1. Superintendent Search Planning**

**(a) Communication Mechanism**

Susan Iuliano will represent the School Committee as its liaison to NESDEC. The Superintendent's office will serve in that role for the District.

**(b) Timeline**

The Committee discussed with NESDEC the merits of proposed timelines and the use of electronic and printed advertisements as these factors relate to the quality and size of the applicant pool. Mr. Bettencourt suggested that the pools in January and February will probably be similar. Additionally he stated his belief that the District is unique in being a high-performing K-8 district, which will attract a particular subset of the candidate pool. Mr. Bettencourt also noted that the District could extend its search if needed.

The Committee agreed to proceed with an electronic advertising campaign that could start as early as next week. The Committee will continue to consider the option to place a print advertisement in *Education Week*, which would not appear until the generally widely read January 12 issue. In addition to advertising in the on-line edition of *Education Week*, NESDEC will place advertisements on the American Association of School Administrators' website, as well as at Boston.com. The anticipated starting date for review of applications is February 1.

**(c) Brochure**

A direct mailing campaign to approximately 700 contacts was included as part of NESDEC's proposal. Mr. Bettencourt stated that most high-performing districts make use of a printed brochure, although some opt for an informational letter. Mr. Bettencourt noted that in some cases, there is a public expectation that the qualities of the District are presented in brochure format. The District will incur postage costs in either case, but will save on printing fees with the informational letter. Use of a brochure has a greater influence on timelines.

The Committee expressed a range of opinions on the value of a printed brochure, given the centrality of electronic communications, as well as the ability to post such materials on its website and use links in its print and electronic advertising. The Committee also recognized the value of multiple "hits" using multiple formats.

Mr. Bettencourt will draft a brochure. He suggested the Committee consider whether to include salary and benefit information, which approximately half of all searching districts opt to do.

(d) Needs Assessment

The Committee proposed utilizing 10 focus groups in its RFP. Mr. Bettencourt indicated that most districts use six, explaining that if there are too many, there is a risk of drawing too few people to each group. He also expressed NESDEC's willingness to reach out by phone or in person for one-on-one interviews. The Committee is in favor of utilizing multiple formats for receiving public comments, including public meetings, on-line surveys, and direct emails. Response analysis will be performed separately for each format. Some concern was expressed surrounding the anonymity of on-line surveys; however, the general consensus was that individuals are more receptive to responding if it is an option, rather than a requirement, to self-identify.

Mr. Bettencourt described the two broad questions requiring response from the focus groups:

- What are the qualities, characteristics, skills, and experiences required for the position?
- What are the tasks and challenges that must be addressed within the first six to twelve months?

The Committee agreed on the following seven focus groups:

- SALT (1)
- Faculty/Staff (3)
- Parent/community, including day and evening (2)
- Citizens-at-large (1) in a non-school location

NESDEC will reach out to select public officials by phone.

(e) Screening

The Committee previously discussed having a screening committee comprised of two of its members and various other stakeholders. Mr. Bettencourt suggested targeting a committee of 11-12 people. The Committee agreed that the screening committee would be responsible for reviewing all applications, selecting and interviewing some number of applicants, then narrowing the selection for presentation of candidates to the School Committee. This second round of interviews with the School Committee marks the start of the public process.

NESDEC will provide applicants' materials to the screening committee and provide training on the selection and interview process. Mr. Bettencourt suggested that NESDEC not be present at interviews in order not to detract from the process. The proposed timeline has the screening committee making its recommendations to the School Committee by February 18.

Mr. Bettencourt suggested the Committee interview candidates after February vacation, at which time it should also have a model contract prepared.

After some discussion, the Committee tentatively agreed on the composition of the screening committee, with its two Members serving as the Chair and Vice Chair:

- Lisa Gutch and Rich Robison for the School Committee
- Parents (at least 2 and possibly as many as 4)
- Central Office administrator (1)
- School principal (1)
- Teacher (2-3, one of which will consider candidates from the viewpoint of the SEA, but will not represent the SEA)
- Support staff (1)

- Public official (1)
- Non-parent community member (or a parent without a child in the District) (1)

The Committee gave some consideration on how it would select screening committee members. It will prepare a communication that outlines responsibilities and guidelines for availability that will be circulated to prospective candidates

## 2. Other Business

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Michele MacDonald to request that the Board of Selectmen call a Special Town Meeting on January 18, 2011 and a Special Town Election on January 25, 2011 for the purpose of funding roof, boilers, and window replacement at the Peter Noyes School under the Massachusetts School Building Association Green Repair Program. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

Superintendent Brackett confirmed with the Committee that the School Building Committee referred to in the warrant language is the Permanent Building Committee, which includes three non-voting SPS liaisons. At present, SPS is represented by Jeff Beeler, Joe Kupczewski, and Superintendent Brackett.

## 10. Adjourn

**VOTED:** On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch to adjourn the Special Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 9:35 p.m.

Yes Susan Iuliano  
 Yes Jeff Beeler  
 Yes Rich Robison  
 Yes Michele MacDonald  
 Yes Lisa Gutch

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary