

**Malden Superintendent Search Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
February 16, 2017  
Malden Senior Center, Malden, MA**

**NOTE: THESE MINUTES INCLUDE REDACTIONS. THE NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NOT FORWARDED TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE FOR PUBLIC CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE REDACTED BEFORE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION OF THESE MINUTES.**

Present: School Committee Member Catherine Bordonaro (Ward 7), Chair; School Committee Member Mike Drummey (Ward 1), Van Huynh, Assistant Principal of the Salemwood School; Karie Carpenito, Assistant Principal of the Forestdale School; Peter Dolan, Assistant Principal of the Linden STEAM Academy; Teri Malone (Beebe School); Margie Briatico; (Ferryway School); Paul Degenkolb (Malden High School); James Mac; City Councillor Jadeane Sica (Ward 8); Marilyn Andrews (Special Education Parents Advisory Council); Dawn Marie O'Toole (DPTO); Hilda Torres, Executive Director of My Little Best Friends.

Also Present: Maria Luise (Mayor's Office), Glenn Koocher (Mass Association of School Committees), Advisory Committee Member Police Chief Kevin Molis.

### **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. At that time, all members were present except for Mr. Mac who arrived shortly thereafter.

The Chair spoke to the group about the importance of honoring the confidentiality of the process and participating in all aspects of the search during the preliminary phase. She asked that candidates who could not be objective or honor confidentiality to recuse themselves. All members affirmed a willingness to participate.

The Chair moved, seconded by Ms. Andrews to convene in executive session for the purpose of conducting an initial screening of the candidates subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The members voted unanimously and by roll call to reconvene in executive session and to invite Ms. Luise to be present as an administrative support. The Chair announced that Ms. Luise would join in the executive session for administrative purposes and that the search committee would reconvene in public to conclude the business of the meeting.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Mac arrived at the start of the Executive Session. The Chair facilitated a discussion of the candidates among the group. After discussing and reviewing each candidate, it was moved by Ms. Sica, seconded by Ms. Briatico and approved unanimously on a roll call vote to invite the following candidates for a confidential interview:

1. **Portia Bonner, Ph.D., Superintendent, East Haven (CT) Public Schools and Former Superintendent, New Bedford Public Schools**
2. **Dana Brown, M. Ed., Executive Director for High School and Community Partnerships, Bunker Hill Community College**
3. **Patricia Lally, Ph.D., Superintendent, Holbrook Public Schools**
4. **John Oteri, M. Ed., Headmaster, Somerville High School**
5. **[Name Redacted]**
6. **[Name Redacted]**
7. **[Name Redacted]**
8. **[Name Redacted]**

On a motion by Ms. Sica, Seconded by Ms. Briatico, it was moved and voted unanimously by roll call to reconvene in public session.

#### **OPEN SESSION**

The Chair polled the members to identify available dates for interviews. Without objection, the Chair declared that the following dates would be reserved for interviews at 5:00 and 6:30 p.m.

- March 1, 2017
- March 2, 2017
- March 8, 2017
- March 9, 2017
- Saturday, March 18 (Saved as a contingency or for deliberation)

Glenn Koocher of MASC will contact the candidates and set up the interviews.

Members reviewed the roster of questions submitted and, without objection, the Chair informed the membership that the questions would be put in an appropriate format so that the Search Committee members could conduct the interviews.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Ms. Sica, seconded by Ms. Briatico, it was voted to adjourn. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Catherine Bordonaro, Chair*

**Attachment:** List of Candidates *(not included on redacted version)*  
Questions Developed by the Members

**Malden Superintendent Search Committee**  
**INITIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE QUESTIONS**  
**Organized by General Topics**

**General Opening Question: Why Malden? Why Now?**

Why are you the best candidate for Malden, and why should you be our superintendent?

**STUDENTS, TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**1. Leading Changing (Kate)**

“Leaders establish the vision for the future and set the strategy for getting there.” John P. Kotter

In your experience, how do you successfully implement change, what are the key elements to creating change that is sustainable and how do you handle those resistant to change?

Follow up- With that, how do you handle if your administrative team does not share your strategies for implementing effective change

**2. Student Assessment (Margaret)**

As you lead the district, how will you work with faculty and the school community to set reasonable intervals of assessments throughout the year- intervals that allow for critical time for teachers to gain understanding of where students are in their learning, provide student feedback, and adjust instruction, as we continue to strive to improve and maintain high academic achievement?

High performing students and accountability are priorities in Malden. What are your experiences with standardized testing? Can you explain your vision for centralizing a student assessment program that will be used to monitor the progress of all students in meeting local and state learning standards?

**3. Mentoring Programs for Students and Faculty [Emmanuel]**

Have you any experience implementing or working with a mentoring program for teachers and for students? How would you think about developing a program for our teachers and our students and how would you measure success?

**4. Teaching – Different Styles [Bonnie]**

There are many mandates to follow “Best Practices” in all of the classes, no matter what grade or subject. 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?

## **5. School Safety [Peter Dolan]**

In the world we live in school safety has become a priority and focus. Can you explain to us what and how you have been involved with implementing school safety procedures or programs that help protect the physical, emotional, and environmental aspects of a district you have worked in?

Follow up:

It is 9:30 a.m. on Thursday and the front office staff have received a call from the dispatch center of the Police Department. You take the call and learn that there is an escaped prisoner being transported to the courthouse from the county jail and the van was in an accident. The prisoner is now on the loose and he was reported as last seen heading south in the direction of your school. In being extracted out of the van, the prisoner overpowered the correctional officer, took their gun, and then fled the scene on foot. What are your next steps as a principal?

## **6. Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Students [Van]**

As a superintendent, how would you address the social/emotional needs of the students in the district?

We know that our students have experience trauma, what will you do to make school a safe and supportive learning environment that addresses their mental health needs?

For traumatized students, steps need to be taken before student is ready to learn. What steps would you implement to ensure that a student is given the proper supports in order to enter a classroom and be ready to learn?

We are seeing more students being hospitalized for mental illness and often times students struggle when returning to school, what would you put in place to make sure students are well supported and set up to be academically successful?

## **INNOVATION AND CHANGE**

## **7. Teaching – Different Styles [Bonnie]**

Given the complexity of the educator evaluation system and the need for professional development to improve the professional practice of our teachers and administrators, how do you see yourself working with our staff to accommodate the ways in which teachers relate to students and manage their classrooms? Can we work effectively with a faculty that deploys different teaching styles?

## **8. Innovation Schools [Peter Dolan]**

We have one innovation school in our district. What do you know about innovation schools, their structure, and how they function?

Follow-up:

Can you give examples of quality innovation programs you would like to implement to improve the quality of instruction in our district?

Can you give us examples of programs that were not successful and describe the course of action you took as a result?

## PLANNING AND BUDGETING

### 9. Class Sizes (Terri)

Elementary class sizes throughout the district have been ranging from 25 to 30 students, and the classes continue to grow year after year. With the new construction of apartment buildings in Malden, and the projection of a big surge in enrollment of school aged children, what is your view on oversized classes and what would your plan be to address this growing problem?

### 10. How Do You Prioritize [Mike]

Because educators are constantly challenged by competing demands for their time and as we plan and implement budgets with limited resources each year, how do you go about prioritizing how we spend our money, allocate our time and resources, and set goals that we can achieve?

For example: if we were confronted with the following competing priorities: a) Early Education/PreK; b) Expanding High School AP Options; c) Reducing Class Sizes; d) Improving Middle Grade Math Scores; and e) Creating Elementary School Foreign Language Instruction. How would you go about deciding which to prioritize?

### 11. Budget/Finance (Dawn)

In the past, what have you done to prepare a budget on a large scale such as for a district, present it, defend it, and implement it? I'd like to hear how you would gather information, use district goals, and staff/parent/community input to prepare a recommendation to the school committee. How you would defend it before the board and the town officials, and manage a budget during a fiscal year?

*Possible follow up :* Malden has had budget issues and deep cuts in recent years. We understand this will be the norm for a few years to come. Through all this, classroom staff has been spared. How will you fight for our children and ensure staff will not be impacted by cuts?

### 12. Children at the Center of Decision Making (Terri)

School policy making and budget setting involves a lot of special interests and advocates concerns-and even political priorities. How do you weigh the many interests in making recommendations to the school committee when budget preparation time arrives, or during the year when you might need to recommend changes, and how do you put children at the center of that decision making process?

## TECHNOLOGY

### 13. Technology [James]

The Malden Public School system has recently initiated a Chromebook program where students are allowed access to a laptop and hotspot (if needed) to further improve their studies. What are your thoughts on the use of technology to advance student learning?

What do you think would be an appropriate process to identify our long term goals for technology that recognizes what technology can and cannot do?

## **SPECIAL CONSTITUENCIES**

### **14. Integrating with Community Day Care [Hilda]**

What has been your experience working with community-based early education programs, and how do you see our public schools building a collaboration with public and private community day care providers?

### **15. Special Education Law: Regulations (Marilyn)**

Please specify the disabilities and disorders, according to the federal guidelines for cognitive, physical, emotional and learning you have experience working with. Tell us about the programs you have created within the district to provide these students with FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education).

## **SERVING AND COMMUNICATING IN A DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

### **16. Living and Serving in Places that are Urban and Have Diverse Populations [Paul]**

Describe your experience with diversity in the places you have worked throughout your life.

Please share your thoughts on the importance of communicating with families in a diverse district with immigrants from across the globe. How do you plan to make your communication with and outreach to these families inclusive?

Many of our students come from cultures where the role of the school in society differs from the model we often see here in the United States. How do you plan to partner effectively with families that have diverse expectations and perspectives about education and success?

How can school districts with diverse student populations more effectively recruit teachers and administrators that reflect that diversity?

### **17. Ability to Speak Other Languages [Paul]**

Do you speak a language other than English? Have you studied other languages at all? How was your experience as a language learner?

### **18. Parent and Community Communications (Dawn)**

Based on your knowledge of communications and collaboration, how would you create a strategy for working with parents, community residents, business persons and officials (both local and state) to hear concerns, represent the district's interests, and keep the public – especially parents – informed about what is happening in the MPS? How can you encourage these groups to be supportive and make best use of their resources?

### **19. Communication with Staff [Bonnie]**

Communication is vitally for a smooth running and successful school district. Use would you use the educators in the schools to develop plans for student success? What types of groups would you form so the educators have a say in decision making?

## **STAFF CONCERNS AND FACULTY RELATIONS**

### **20. Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Staff [Paul]**

What can we do as a school district or you as a school leader to make the well being of our staff an important element in student and district success? What specific actions help achieve this goal, and how can we learn from students and teachers what might benefit each other?

### **21. Teacher Assessment (Margaret)**

What are the key characteristics you seek when assessing an outstanding teacher or administrator? What are some characteristics that you have found consistent among the most effective educators?

### **22. Sustainability (Kate)**

Describe any experience you have had as a school leader recruiting and retaining high quality staff that can dedicate themselves to not only the school they work in but also in the community. What do you see as the most important qualities in teacher retention?