

**WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**EDUCATE, CHALLENGE, & INSPIRE**

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<b>WESTBROOK BOARD OF EDUCATION</b> <b>Thursday, May 28, 2020</b> <b>Special Board of Education Meeting</b> <b>Google Meet</b>
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**MINUTES**

BOE Members Present: Lee Bridgewater, Sally Greaves, Zachary Hayden, Mary Ella Luft, Michelle Palumbo, Don Perreault, Christine Kuehlewind, Mike Esposito, Kim Walker

Also Present: Superintendent Patricia A. Ciccone; Business Manager, Lesley Wysocki, Administrators Tara Winch, Ruth Rose, Taylor Wrye, Madeline Illinger, Technology Director, Ben Russell, Atty. Anne Littlefield, members of the community

- I. **Call to Order** – Lee Bridgewater, Chair, called the Special BOE meeting of May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to order at 4:34 p.m.
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**
- III. **Public Comment** – No comments
- IV. **Discussion and possible action pertaining to contract with CABA for search firm services** – Board members received the CABA contract for the Superintendent Search in advance of the meeting for their review. Chair, Lee Bridgewater, provided each board member an opportunity to comment or ask questions. Attorney Anne Littlefield was available to answer specific questions.  
  
MOTION by D. Perreault to approve the CABA Superintendent Search contract and to authorize the Board Chair to execute the terms of the CABA contract. M. Palumbo seconded the motion. Vote: (Ayes) Z. Hayden, M. Palumbo, M. Luft, K. Walker, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, S. Greaves, L. Bridgewater Abstain – M. Esposito  
Motion carries
- V. **Discussion and possible action pertaining to appointment of Interim Middle School Principal** – Attorney Littlefield reviewed the terms of Policy 2151 – Hiring of Administrators. Per the terms of Policy 2151, Superintendent Ciccone brought forth a recommendation of a candidate to serve as the Interim Principal of the middle school. The candidate previously served in this position and comes highly recommended as a veteran middle and elementary school principal. Superintendent Ciccone suggested this person would provide consistency during the search for a middle school principal and is familiar with the District and middle school.

K. Walker commented that there are internal employees that may be interested in becoming candidates for the position. Questions arose as to how this would work when the assignment is over. C. Kuehlewind commented that an internal candidate would be more familiar with the distance learning process if that were to continue. Attorney Littlefield clarified that if the Board desired internal candidates be considered the position be posted and the Superintendent would bring finalists to the Board per Policy 2151 and may not be everyone who has applied. Also, the topic of restructuring came up. Z. Hayden said the budget has been approved for 2020-21 and that includes a full-time position. Discussion as to restructure should come later. The Chair commented that "Restructuring" is not on the agenda. It was noted that it would benefit the Board to have an Interim Superintendent on site to assist the Board in the restructuring discussions.

Attorney Littlefield suggested three options: 1) Act on the Superintendent's recommendation to authorize her to negotiate a contract with the recommended candidate 2) direct the Superintendent to limited search to generate a pool of candidates 3) table administrative restructuring conversation. K. Walker added a 4<sup>th</sup> option – to open up the interim search and decide if a person applying for the interim position can also be a candidate for the permanent position.

L. Bridgewater, Chair, commented that she is in favor of appointing the retiree and S. Greaves agreed. Attorney Littlefield said that it is extremely common to have retirees fill in as Interims.

MOTION by L. Bridgewater that the Board accept the Superintendents recommendation to appoint Sharon Weirsmen as the Interim Middle School Principal. Seconded by S. Greaves.  
Vote: Ayes: M. Luft, M. Palumbo, S. Greaves, L. Bridgewater  
Nays: K. Walker, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, M. Esposito, Z. Hayden  
Motion failed: 5-4

MOTION by K. Walker to direct the Superintendent to make a limited search for an Interim Middle School Principal. An amendment was made to add to the motion that a person serving in the Interim Position will not be disqualified from full consideration for the permanent position. Seconded by C. Kuehlewind. Vote: Ayes: Z. Hayden, M. Luft, M. Palumbo, S. Greaves, K. Walker, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, M. Esposito, L. Bridgewater Vote: Unanimous.

#### **VI. Discussion and possible action pertaining to appointment of Interim Director of Special Services**

Superintendent Ciccone advised the Board that at this critical time of distance learning, especially for students with needs, Madeline Illinger, Special Services Director, has offered to stay on as an Interim to provide the consistency these students need, while the District conducts a search for a new Special Services Director.

MOTION by S. Greaves to appoint Madeline Illinger as the Interim Special Services Director and to authorize Chair, L. Bridgewater and Supt. Ciccone to draft a contract for such services. Seconded by M. Palumbo. Vote: Ayes: Z. Hayden, M. Luft, M. Palumbo, S. Greaves, K. Walker, M. Palumbo, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, L. Bridgewater Nay: M. Esposito Vote: 8-1

#### **VII. Discussion and possible action on terms of renewal of individually contracted staff members**

This discussion was about non-union affiliated contracts and whether to continue with the two-year agreement or change to one-year. These agreements include Administrators, Food Service, IT Specialist and Facilities Director's contracts. Superintendent Ciccone said that negotiations for these contracts typically follow the negotiations for WEA and AFT. A question arose as to keeping with the consistency of two-year contracts or changing to one-year given the tenuousness of the times. D. Perreault was adamant to stay with two-year contracts; that it would be unfair to administrators to make this change; and either the Board Chair or Supt. Ciccone should be authorized to sign the contracts. Superintendent Ciccone and L. Wysocki provided information to the Board on past practice.

It was suggested that the process continue as it has in the past and that the Negotiations Committee will work on a structured process and the Policy Committee will also work on policy to support the process. L. Bridgewater, Chair, polled the Board on this suggestion and it was the consensus to agree to the suggestion. L. Wysocki added that these agreements also serve a purpose to provide proof for the auditors use.

MOTION by D. Perreault and second by M. Luft to allow the Negotiations Subcommittee to work with the Superintendent to address the renewal of individual non-unionized contracts. Ayes: Z. Hayden M. Palumbo, M. Luft, S. Greaves. D. Perreault, K. Walker, C. Kuehlewind, L. Bridgewater Nay: M. Esposito Vote: 8-1

MOTION by D. Perreault and second by C. Kuehlewind to have the Policy Subcommittee begin to develop a negotiations framework for our individually contracted staff members for 2022-23. Ayes: Z. Hayden, M. Luft, M. Palumbo, S. Greaves, K. Walker, D. Perreault, C. Kuehlewind, L. Bridgewater Nay: M. Esposito

VIII. Adjourn: Moved by M. Esposito and seconded by Z. Hayden to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Walker, Board Secretary

Cecilia S. Lester, Board Recording Clerk