LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

William J. Samaras
Mayor and Chairperson

Jackie Doherty
Vice-Chairperson

Andre P. Descoteaux
Rober J. Hoey Jr.
Dominik Hok Lay
Connie A. Martin
Gerard Nutter

Tel: (978) 674-4324
Fax: (978) 937-7609

Personnel Subcommittee Meeting

Wednesday, February 20, 2019
City Hall – Council Chamber
6:30 p.m.

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Connie Martin, Jackie Doherty and Robert Hoey
School Committee Members Present:	Mr. Lay and Mr. Nutter
School Department Personnel Present:	Billie Jo Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Finance

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Chairperson Connie Martin called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m. The Subcommittee update is in response to the following motion:

> Motion by School Committee Member Connie Martin, which was approved at the February 13, 2019 School Committee Meeting:

"A motion to have a Personnel Subcommittee during the week of February vacation for further discussion"

The following agenda items were discussed:

1. **Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) Superintendent Search Presentation**
- **Contract with MASC**
- **Revised Job Posting**
- **Blue Ribbon Screening Committee**
- **Setting Timeline**

2. **Human Resource Position Job Posting**

Chairperson Martin introduced Mr. Glenn Koocher and Ms. Dorothy Presser from Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) and asked them to speak to the Subcommittee about the proposal for consulting services for a Superintendent Search. The following documents were provided to the Subcommittee from MASC:

- A Vacancy in the Superintendency (key decisions for the Lowell School Committee planning for transition).
- A copy of the last search brochure that the Lowell Public Schools used during their last search (the brochure can be updated and mailed to about 1300 people that MASC has on a recruiting list as well as be posted on MASC's website).
- Superintendent Search Information and Cost Proposal and Alternative - No Cost Services for the Lowell School Committee.
- Plan B proposal in case the search or negotiations doesn't work out with the district having a Superintendent in place.
- A copy of the previous job description from 2015.

Mr. Koocher stated that as a search consultant for the Lowell School Committee, MASC doesn't get paid until the district has a signed contract with a Superintendent. He stated that the district needs to move quickly to let candidates know that Lowell is ready to accept applications and that eighty (80) to ninety (90) percent of applications will come in the last four (4) or five (5) days. He stated that it's important to let MASC know if the district wants to use paid media and that the district will be responsible to pay for advertising in newspapers, but stated that most districts are mostly using unpaid advertisement. He stated that the district wants to plan to have focus groups, discussions with the community and that the staff will want to be invited to participate. He stated that electronic surveys bring a lot information and he finds they get more responses from surveys than people actually showing up, because people are very busy and don't want to attend evening meetings. He stated that focus groups can be done at different times during the day, at schools etc.

Chairperson Martin asked if the consultants would do the first look at the candidates and if candidates met the qualifications would they then be forwarded to the screening committee.
Ms. Presser added it is MASC belief that all applications should be seen by the screening committee.
Mr. Koocher stated that three (3) of the School Committee members could be on the screening committee, due do the fact that it's not quorum and the presence of the School Committee can make sure the essence of the search is preserved.
Chairperson Martin asked if MASC had received the revised job description.
Mr. Koocher responded that it may have been sent, but he was unsure. He stated that the job description needs a salary range and that applicants need to know the salary range.
Chairperson Martin stated that at the next school committee meeting they will vote on a salary range.

Ms. Doherty made a motion was made to establish a salary range for the Superintendent's position; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 3 yeas APPROVED

Mr. Hoey made a motion to have the administration poll the Committee to have a Special School Committee meeting on February 25, 2019; seconded by Ms. Doherty. 3 yeas APPROVED

Chairperson Martin asked Mr. Koocher to give the Subcommittee a landscape of what they are diving into right now.
Mr. Koocher stated that there are things that affect the numbers in your pool. He stated that there is no great shame to submit an application and to be considered as a finalist. He stated that the pools are not as big as they use to be because the job is like being the manager of a major baseball team and when you have a good season that's great, but it turns.

Ms. Doherty asked about changing the brochure.
Mr. Koocher stated that they will make the brochure to the Committee's approval.

Mr. Hoey asked about eliminating candidates without the whole School Committee seeing them and that he would like to see all candidates.
Ms. Presser stated that unfortunately, the law doesn't allow that and essentially you have to trust the School Committee members who are on screening committee.
Mr. Koocher stated that the way around that is too declare that there will be no Executive Sessions by the search committee or the School Committee otherwise the applications are considered confidential.

Chairperson Martin asked how we want to structure the screening committee and if the Committee wants to give them the right to go into Executive Session.
Ms. Nutter stated that if the School Committee has three (3) members on the screen committee can you still have the Executive Session.
Mr. Koocher replied yes.
Chairperson Martin stated that the recommendation would be that all candidates be forwarded to the screening committee. I think asking professionals to put their name out there is unfair and would limit us.
Mr. Koocher stated that he could ask the Attorney General if the Committee could observe, but not participate in the process.
Ms. Doherty stated that there is no way that the whole committee can be part of the process unless we have an open search.
Mr. Koocher stated that is correct.
Mr. Hoey asked if three (3) members of the School Committee are on it, how many you would have on the screening committee.

Ms. Presser stated that you want to have a variety of stakeholders such as parents, teachers, administrators, college representation and business partners and she stated that you should keep it around twelve (12) or (13) people, because you don't want it to too big or unmanageable. The consultant keeps the screening committee on track and School Committee sends out their criteria and screening committees adheres.

Mr. Koocher stated that you should build the most collegial group that you can.
Ms. Presser stated that you set the schedule so when the screen committee members commit to it; they know the dates that have already been set.
Chairperson Martin asked how we should populate the Blue Ribbon Committee. She stated that she'd like to see it at a manageable number and then read the Mayor's list on who he wants to see on the Blue Ribbon Committee.
Mr. Koocher said that they we will work with what the district provides, but the larger the search committee the harder to manage time.
The following was discussed as possible search committee members:

- Two (2) UTL members
- A representative from UMASS Lowell
- A representative from Middlesex Community College
- A member of the Principal's Association
- Three (3) parents from elementary, middle and high school that possibly the City Wide Parent Council can assist with.
- One (1) member from the general community at large that can submit a letter of interest to the Committee and the Committee can pick who that will be.
- One (1) from the LSAA union
- One (1) from the Clerk's Union
- Three (3) members from the School Committee
- One (1) from the CMAA
- One (1) from the African Community (maybe the City Wide Parent Council can help) and one (1) from the Latino Community (CBA)

Mr. Koocher stated that possibly the Chair of the School Committee could chair the search committee and the Chair of the School Committee should make the appointment of the three (3) School Committee members.

Mr. Lay asked if the number of finalist could be bumped up to eight (8) or nine (9).
Chairperson Martin stated that it makes it very difficult.
Ms. Presser stated that not sure how the candidates would feel with it being so large and that would be a lot site visits, etc. It's usually three (3) to (5) and that is dependent on the pool.

Chairperson Martin then spoke about the timeline.
Mr. Koocher stated the key dates that you want to think about are the closing dates and the time that you want the search committee to get their work to their School Committee. The following dates were discussed:

March 4th – open the search
April 2nd would be the final day for applications and all applications can be in the screening committee's hands by 6 p.m., with a memo from MASC with their recommendations.
On Monday, April 8th start the process with an orientation that will review applications, create questions for the candidates and make selections of who they want to interview.
Schedule interviews for the 22nd or 29th.

Bring finalist names to the School Committee on May 1st.
Site visits and interviews the week of May 13th with a deadline of May 31st.

Chairperson Martin asked if the Committee could please be provided with recommendations for focus groups.
Mr. Koocher stated that he can give provide a draft focus group schedule and draft surveys of what they have already done.
Ms. Doherty stated that they would like to hear back from staff, community, parents, etc. separately.
Mr. Koocher stated that the surveys can have separate links.

Chairperson Martin made a recommendation that they would like new voices and preference could be given to people who haven't been on the search committee before.

Mr. Descoteaux asked if all the candidates need to be asked the same question.
Mr. Koocher stated that they don't, but they need to be fair.
Mr. Nutter stated that he doesn't remember voting on the Superintendent's job description.
Chairperson Martin asked for a copy of the revised job description at the Special School Committee meeting on Monday.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to accept the report as a report of progress; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 3 yeas APPROVED

Assistant Superintendent Turner spoke to the Committee about the decisions for the Human Resources Director Job description and search and shared the recommendations that were made by the LEAP Network. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Addition of information about the district. This is simply an enhancement to the job description used as a selling point to potential candidates.
2. Compensation range check from $105,000 - $125,000. Assistant Superintendent Turner stated that the district should keep the range from the original $95,000, but increase to $125,000 range. This may improve our candidate pool while still allowing us flexibility with the salary offered and gives the district room to negotiate.
3. Addition of the Position Summary – summarizes the expectations of the role.
4. Title Change to Chief Human Resource Officer.
5. Reports to the Superintendent not the Assistant Superintendent.

Ms. Doherty thinks changing the title and the range is a good idea.
Mr. Descoteaux asked how the salary compares to other districts.
Assistant Superintendent Turner said that she can further investigate that and will look at both private and public.
Mr. Hoey stated that he believes that it should be an Assistant Superintendent.

Ms. Doherty made a motion to extend the salary range, change the job title to Chief Human Resources Officer and change the reporting structure; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Hoey. 3 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,

Billie Jo Turner

Billie Jo Turner, Assistant
Superintendent for Finance for
Jeannine M. Durkin, Acting
Superintendent and Acting Secretary,
Lowell School Committee

BJT/mes