

**Arlington School Committee**  
**Standing Subcommittee: Superintendent Search Process Committee**  
**Wednesday, May 20, 2020**  
**10:00 a.m.**

Meeting conducted by remote participation.  
The meeting was recorded.

**Draft Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

A roll call was taken to establish remote presence in the meeting

Paul Schlichtman, chair

Kirsi Allison Ampe, member

Jennifer Susse, member

Also present:

Leonard Kardon, Chair, Arlington School Committee

William Hayner, Member, Arlington School Committee

Glenn Koocher, Executive Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees

Kathleen Kelly, Field Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees

Jenifer Handy, Communications Director, Massachusetts Association of School Committees

Public Comment:

No public comment was submitted.

**Approval of minutes May 6, 2020**

On a **motion** by Dr. Allison-Ampe, **seconded** by Dr. Susse, it was **voted** to approve the minutes of May 6, 2020. Roll Call: Allison-Ampe, Yes; Susse, Yes; Schlichtman, Yes. (3-0)

**Approval of minutes January 15, 2020**

On a **motion** by Dr. Allison-Ampe, **seconded** by Dr. Susse, it was **voted** to approve the minutes of January 15, 2020. Roll Call: Allison-Ampe, Yes; Susse, Yes; Schlichtman, Yes. (3-0)

**Financial terms of a potential consulting agreement with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees**

Mr. Koocher described the financial bid from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC). He said MASC proposed a cost to the district of \$10,500 plus expenses. He said the travel expenses for MASC will be minimal, as we will begin using Zoom, and Ms. Kelly and Mr. Koocher live in Cambridge. The district would also be responsible for advertising expenses and postage. MASC can handle printing in-house, but the district would be responsible for any printing expenses for brochures or materials that are not printed in house or by MASC.

Dr. Susse asked about travel expenses for candidates. Mr. Koocher responded that candidates pay their own expenses to the first round interviews, and candidates from a distance can exercise an option to interview remotely.

Dr. Allison-Ampe asked about travel expenses for finalists, and Mr. Koocher said the district might want to reimburse candidates from out-of-state.

### **Overview of the search process and next steps, including remote focus groups and surveys**

Mr. Koocher discussed the first steps in the process. He said the two things we should start now are the development of a district profile, and to conduct surveys and focus groups.

The focus groups will center around what stakeholders want to see in a new superintendent. Interviews would also be conducted 1:1 with people who need to be met with directly.

Mr. Koocher said MASC uses an online survey, which can be customized for Arlington.

Mr. Koocher said priorities unique to Arlington would be incorporated into the promotional materials. Findings would also be compiled in a report to the school committee.

Dr. Susse said that Arlington has a high level of civic engagement, and the focus groups are important. Mr. Koocher said MASC would conduct the number of focus groups Arlington requests, and will work to bring in stakeholders identified by the school committee.

Dr. Allison-Ampe said the promotional materials should be prepared after the focus groups. Mr. Schlichtman said there are components that can be prepared now, primarily demographic data and the overall structure of the materials.

Mr. Hayner asked about including a salary range in the promotional materials. He asked what kind of applicant pool we would expect. Mr. Koocher said Arlington is perceived as a favorable town. The school committee has a good relationship with the superintendent, who is retiring. He said we should expect an applicant pool of about 30 qualified candidates, and we would probably find about a dozen who are worth serious consideration.

Mr. Koocher said the salary range needs to be higher if we are looking to entice a sitting superintendent from another district. Aspiring superintendents are less fussy. If there is a strong internal candidate, that would be a limiting factor for potential applicants. Mr. Koocher stressed that Arlington is a desirable district, and said Bedford just hired its new superintendent at \$210,000. He said that other elements of a compensation package would be a consideration for candidates. We could indicate a willingness to be competitive by stating on the promotional materials that a competitive compensation package is negotiable.

Mr. Schlichtman noted that we should start as soon as possible with staff interviews and focus groups, as they will not be as readily available after the conclusion of the school year. Dr. Allison-Ampe asked about how MASC would gather data from staff. Mr. Koocher said it is critical that staff members are free to comment without their supervisor in the meeting. Teachers should be separate from principals, central office staff should be separate from senior leaders.

Mr. Koocher said the focus groups should be on the district's Zoom account, as the district needs to keep legal possession of the proceedings. Mr. Koocher said school committee members are also welcome to participate in developing the district profile.

Mr. Koocher described the considerations for establishing a search committee to conduct the first round screening of candidates. He said he will provide a model search committee (appended to the minutes). He said 11-13 people is ideal; some districts have a larger committee. He said Bedford had a 19 member committee, but noted that larger committees have more difficulty in scheduling meetings that all can attend.

Mr. Koocher stressed the importance of having school committee members on the search committee, to ensure the process proceeds in a manner acceptable to the committee. He said the police chief is often a very good person to have on the committee.

Mr. Schlichtman said he would recommend approval of a contract at the May 28 school committee meeting.

Mr. Koocher said the next step would be to meet with the search process committee to plan the focus groups. Mr. Koocher said the search process committee should receive suggestions from the full committee for constituencies that should be included in the focus groups. Additional focus groups can be added as the process goes forward, ensuring that everyone who wants to participate can be involved in the process. He said we should meet as soon as possible after the next school committee meeting to move forward. Mr. Schlichtman said he would look to schedule a subcommittee meeting as soon as possible after the meeting.

### **Adjourn**

On a **motion** by Dr. Allison-Ampe, **seconded** by Dr. Susse, it was **voted** to adjourn at 10:57 a.m.. Roll Call: Allison-Ampe, Yes; Susse, Yes; Schlichtman, Yes. (3-0)

## **ARLINGTON SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH PROCESS POSSIBLE TIMELINE AND MODEL SEARCH COMMITTEE**

This timeline provides a longer-than-normal period for accepting applications in order to allow for the inevitable unpredictability of school start up in an era of COVID-19. The process can be sped up by shortening this process subject to the discretion of the school committee.

**Early June** Initial Focus Groups Scheduled

**June 8** Approved Survey Goes Up – Available to Community

**Between June 8-19** Focus Groups with Faculty and Community

**June 19-26** Additional Focus Groups

**By July 6** Focus Group and Survey Summary Reports Prepared for School Committee. Survey remains open for subsequent survey takers through September. Updates provided as needed.

**By July 24** Selection of Decision Criteria and Critical Skills/ Promotional Materials Developed  
Compensation Package Approved  
Announcement of Vacancy is Posted.

**Week of August 10** All Materials/Advertisements Approved and Distributed. Applications are available for prospective candidates.

**Week of August 24** Announcement of Vacancy with Materials Distributed Electronically to Recruiting List and other Potential Candidates and Referrals

**Week of September 7** Reminder Notice (Post Labor Day) of Vacancy and Promotional Materials Disseminated Electronically.  
Search Committee is appointed.

**September 14, 2020** Search Committee Orientation. (Search Committee members should be required to be available on this date as a condition of membership.)

**October 16, 2020** Friday, 3:00 p.m. Application Deadline. Completed applications are shared with search committee.

**Week of October 19** Search Committee Selects Candidates. Question Preparation is Finalized.

**Oct. 26-Nov. 9** Interviews Conducted and Finalists Identified. (This leaves 10 weekdays and two Saturdays for potential interviews. Search Committee members should be prepared to keep these dates free.

**Week of November 9** School Committee Receives Candidate Recommendations

**November 9-20** Finalist Interviews, Candidate Visits to Arlington, and School Committee Reference visits to Sending Districts.

**Week of November 30** Decision Made.

**MODEL SEARCH COMMITTEE** (First round screening)

1. Chair (School Committee Member)
2. Second School Committee Member
3. Third School Committee Member
4. Parent – Elementary
5. Parent – Middle
6. Parent – High School
7. Educator – Elementary
8. Educator – Middle
9. Educator – High School
10. Principal
11. Central Office Administrator
12. Citizens at Large (Parent or Other – may include special interest such as SPED or ELL)
13. Citizen at Large (Parent or Other – may include special interest such as SPED or ELL)

NOTE: It is important to ensure that the educators are well represented but do not outnumber the parents and community members. It is possible that a larger committee would be appointed if required to satisfy local preferences.