

The Grinnell-Newburg Board of Education met in a Work Session on December 2, 2015, at 5:00 p.m. at the Grinnell-Newburg Community High School in the Board Room, 1333 Sunset Street, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Members Present: Barbara Brown, Meg Jones Bair, Jeff Knobloch, Helen Redmond, Dustin Smith, and Jeff Smith.

Members Absent: Jonathan Nance.

Also in attendance at the table: Board Treasurer/Secretary Lisa Johnson.

Administrators Present: None.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

President Brown called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m. Board Secretary Johnson called the roll. Six members were in attendance.

2. Board Discussion

A. Presentation of Proposals from Superintendent Search Firms

Jeff Herzberg stated he is a team of one and he typically takes on one or two at the most jobs a year. His position at the AEA helps him to understand the challenges and issues facing school districts today. He is also a part time superintendent for a smaller district. He has completed six successful searches in the past five years. He focuses more on the quality of candidates rather than the number. He stated the entire process typically takes 6-8 weeks. If hired right away he would want to start working with focus groups to get a better idea of what the district is needing.

Knobloch asked about filtering candidates. Herzberg stated he typically narrows it down to a dozen or so and then brings those to the board. Brown asked if the board could see other applicants if desired. Herzberg stated whatever the board would like he could arrange. Jones Bair asked about methods for faculty and students who are not a part of focus groups to get input. Herzberg stated in other districts he has used a survey to gather more input.

Mike Billings from McPherson & Jacobson introduced himself and stated he would be joined by Dennis Bar as a consultants if they are offered the position. He will be the lead in the process. He said what stuck out to him was the district's mission to partner with students. He explained that he believed he could be the same to us as well- "a partner the district can count on." The process would

include listening to what the district needs and working together to get the best placement possible. He anticipates this opening will be very desirable nationwide and draw a large number of candidates.

He explained he would use a 5 phase process, starting by working with the board to develop the criteria to judge the applicants. After collecting the applications the firm would narrow the applicants down to 10-12, and bring those to the board. The board would narrow the pool down to a handful to bring in for an interview. He would coordinate the interview process with the board. Once a candidate is selected and has accepted, he would also help to develop the goals for that person.

He noted an advantage of using a firm is the resources he has available to him. The turnaround of requests is quicker with a team. Knobloch asked about applicant materials. Billings stated the board can have access to as much of the information as they desire. Brown asked for an estimate of the expected applicant pool. Billings believes it is very desirable and could be as many as 50 or more. Jones Bair asked about outside input into the process. Billings explained the board can decide how much or little outside input they want to accept. D. Smith asked about the candidate pool and how many apply on their own, in comparison to how many candidates the firm seeks out. Billings stated approximately 75% of candidates apply. They seek out approximately 25%, contacting people they believe would be a good fit. Redmond asked about advertising nationally, considering other employers in the community recruit and drawn in candidates nationally. Billings stated they search nationally, mostly by using their website.

Dale Monroe, Linda Brock and Ned Sellers from Ray and Associates presented on the process their firm uses. Sellers began, explaining they start with a survey of the community, staff and students, asking what they want to see in their new superintendent. They interview various groups based on the board's desires. They develop a profile of Grinnell, and create a brochure. Applicants will be narrowed down through phone interviews and video interviews, done by the firm. They will bring 8-12 candidates for the board to narrow down, using a matrix. Typically 4-6 candidates are brought in for interviews, then the pool is narrowed down to 2-3 candidates for final interviews. The level of involvement of others may be tailored depending on the district's desires. Brock stated the three of them would be working directly with the district. She stated this would be a 2-year contract, and if the candidate doesn't work out they would do another search without the fee.

Brown asked about the firm working for candidates versus the district, and how

they get candidates. Monroe stated they work for the district. They do have numerous candidates who routinely check their website for openings, but they also have a number of different advertising methods that reach far and wide. Brown asked about what applicant materials the board will see. Monroe stated they would see it all. Additionally, the firm will do background checks and check references, more than just the listed ones as well.

J. Smith asked about longevity of placements. They stated nationally they are at 6 years, despite the national average of a tenure for a superintendent, which is 3-4 years. Sellers stated the length of stay is also very highly determined by the board and the tenure of board members.

J. Smith stated he doesn't believe we need a special meeting to ask Grundmeyer to come in. Others agreed. Knobloch stated he is not impressed with having a national search because a every state has very different rules with which schools have to operate under. He stated, in full disclosure, that he is personal friends with Herzberg, but he also believes the process could be more tailored with him. He did, however, like Ray and Associates best of the bigger firms.

Brown stated she thinks we can tailor the process no matter who we use. She asked how the board believes these personalities will interact with the community. Jones Bair like Ray and Associates and their video interviews. Redmond also like Ray and Associates and believes they can help promote the diverseness of our community.

The board discussed and agreed to another work session on Monday to further discussion in order to bring a contract to approve to the December 9th meeting.

3. Adjournment

Motion by Jones Bair, seconded by D. Smith to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 6-0.
Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Board Calendar:

Regular Board Meeting

6:00 p.m., December 9, 2015