

Revised

The Regional School District 13 Board of Education met in special session on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 7:00 PM remotely.

Board members present: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, and Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor

Board members absent: Mr. Yamartino

Administration present: Dr. Serino, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Moore called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to approve the agenda, as presented.

In favor of approving the agenda, as amended: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding (a) confidential attorney-client privileged communication regarding information related to the superintendent search and (b) appointment and employment of new superintendent (both proposed for Executive Session).

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of confidential attorney-client privileged communication regarding information related to the superintendent search and appointment and employment of a new superintendent, asking Mr. Pietrasko and Mr. Maher to attend.

In favor of moving into Executive Session for the purpose of confidential attorney-client privileged communication regarding information related to the superintendent search and appointment and employment of a new superintendent, asking Mr. Pietrasko and Mr. Maher to attend: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion carried.

The Board entered into Executive Session at this point.

Possible action regarding appointment and employment of new superintendent of Regional School District 13

Dr. Taylor made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hicks, to, in accordance with and subject to the provisions of section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes, appoint Douglas Schuch as Superintendent of Schools, effective January 28, 2021 and to move further that the chairperson of the Board be authorized to finalize and execute the proposed contract on behalf of the Board with respect to Douglas Schuch's employment as Superintendent of Schools.

In favor of appointing Douglas Schuch as Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with and subject to the provisions of section 10-157 of the Connecticut General Statutes, effective January 28, 2021 and to authorize the chairperson of the Board to finalize and executive the proposed contract on behalf of the Board with respect to Douglas Schuch's employment as Superintendent of Schools: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanello, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion carried unanimously.

Introduction of new superintendent

Mr. Moore thanked the members of the Board of Education who collectively served as the superintendent search committee. He also thanked the search consultants who did an outstanding job and reviewed the search process. The search consultants issued 18 applications that were reviewed and evaluated by the search committee and seven highly-qualified candidates were chosen for interviews. Initial interviews were held and three candidates were selected for a second comprehensive interview. Each of those interviews took from four to four-and-a-half hours. After those comprehensive interviews, the Board selected Doug Schuch to serve as the district's next superintendent.

Dr. Schuch is currently the superintendent of Bedford County Public Schools in Bedford, Virginia where he has served since 2009. He also serves as an adjunct professional at Longwood University. Prior to that position, he served in several leadership positions in Stafford County Public Schools in Stafford, Virginia from 2001 to 2009. From 1994 to 2001, he was a middle school physical science teacher and a high school physics teacher in Fairfax, Virginia. Dr. Schuch also served in the U.S. Navy from 1990 to 1994 as a meteorology and oceanography officer. He earned his bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering from Duke University, a Master's of Education in curriculum and instruction and Doctor of Philosophy in education leadership from George Mason University.

Mr. Moore feels that Dr. Schuch is a great person to follow the leadership and strategic planning initiated by Dr. Serino. Mr. Moore then read a quote from Dr. Schuch, "I believe that each learner has an innate desire to learn and it is our responsibility, as educators, to cultivate that desire through personalized, relevant and contextualist experiences. I view learning as a socially-embedded process that depends on strong, collaborative relationships and high levels of trust. I also believe that learning happens anywhere and that an open-wall approach can leverage resources and provide learning experiences that are generally inaccessible within the traditional learning paradigm. I feel strongly that learning needs to be competency-based with clear expectations for achievement that can be demonstrated and measured through a variety of methods."

Mr. Moore then welcomed Dr. Schuch into the District 13 community.

Dr. Schuch stated that he is humbled and honored to serve the learners, families, and employees of Region 13 and the communities of Durham and Middlefield as their next Superintendent of Schools. He thanked the members of the Board of Education for conducting such a comprehensive selection process.

Dr. Schuch appreciates that Mr. Moore and other board members feel that his experiences, beliefs and approaches to education match the vision and values of the district. He also acknowledged the unconditional love and support of his wife, Denise, who is fully committed to their move to Connecticut. They have been blessed with two daughters, Julianne and Emily, who both currently attend college in Virginia and also support their move.

Dr. Schuch spent most of his formative years in the Pittsburgh area and is a die-hard Steelers fan. He was also thrilled to learn that the high school's mascot is the Blue Devils as that was Duke's as well. Dr.

Schuch also really enjoys the outdoors and has a passion for endurance sports. He added that while he won't be officially starting his position until January, he will be trying to learn as much as possible about all of the schools and the communities. He will participate in some meet and greet Zoom events though he would much rather be doing that in person.

Dr. Schuch also thanked Dr. Serino for her leadership in the district, including successfully operating the schools amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. He looks forward to collaborating with her to make the transition as smooth as possible.

He, once again, thanked the members of the Board of Education.

Mr. Roraback welcomed Dr. Schuch and asked him for the proper pronunciation of his name. Dr. Schuch explained it is pronounced like "shook." Mr. Moore added that Dr. Schuch just completed a 112.8-mile mountain race in the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia in 38 hours with an elevation gain of 30,000 feet. Mrs. Booth added that they are very excited to have him join the district.

Scheduling of Zoom meetings with superintendent: town officials, administrators, faculty and staff, parent and students

Mr. Moore will set up a meeting with the two First Selectmen and asked Dr. Schuch for some dates to meet with the administrators and faculty. Dr. Schuch offered tomorrow night and next Monday through Thursday nights. The following week is also good, except for the 12th when he has a board meeting in Bedford. Mr. Moore will come up with some dates and then they will offer a general Zoom meeting for parents and students. The hope will be to keep the meetings to an hour.

Mr. Moore thanked Dr. Schuch for accepting their offer and being willing to take on the huge responsibility of the district.

Public Comment

None.

Mr. Hicks recognized that Mr. Yamartino is not present tonight as he is attending his father-in-law's funeral. Mr. Hicks asked that the minutes reflect that the board is thinking of him and sends their deepest sympathies to him and his family.

Adjournment

Mr. Hicks made a motion, seconded by Dr. Friedrich, adjourn the regular meeting of the Board of Education.

In favor of adjourning the meeting: Mrs. Booth, Mrs. Caramanella, Dr. Friedrich, Mrs. Geraci, Mr. Hicks, Mr. Moore, Mrs. Petrella, Mr. Roraback and Dr. Taylor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debi Waz

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