

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 14, 2020  
WORK SESSION OF THE  
WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

January 14, 2019

**1. Opening Items**

**1.01 CALL TO ORDER**

The work session of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 1:03 p.m. at the Washoe County School District's Central Administration Building, 425 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada.

**1.02 ROLL CALL**

President Katy Simon Holland and Board Members Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor were present. Student Representative Nathan Noble and staff were also present.

**1.03 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Nathan Noble, Student Representative, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1.04 PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment at this time.

**1.05 ACTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA**

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees approves the agenda as presented.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: Pass (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

**2. Items for Presentation, Discussion, Information and/or Action**

**2.01 PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO REVIEW THE SUMMATIVE REPORT OF STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK GATHERED BY JG CONSULTING AND TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS, REVISIONS, AND/OR APPROVAL FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT JOB PROFILE, APPLICATION, AND TENTATIVE TIMELINE FOR UPCOMING SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH MILESTONES**

James Guerra and Dr. Jose Leyba, JG Consulting, presented the Summative Report gathered through stakeholder meetings and community survey. JG Consulting would continue to meet with stakeholder groups to receive additional feedback on the process. The feedback gathered throughout the process fell into five objectives: commitment to instruction, alternative educational program and career pathways; servant leadership; leadership development and staff support; purpose focused community engagement and inclusion; and school board and superintendent collaboration. They recommended the Board consider requesting a 90-entry plan from either the semi-finalists or finalists to outline how the candidate would begin implementing their ideas into the current goals and objectives of the Washoe County School District.

Trustee Taylor wondered if the objective related to leadership development was specific to staff. Mr. Guerra indicated leadership development was a common theme from all stakeholder groups, including staff, and included school site leadership development and central administration leadership development.

President Simon Holland requested additional information on the outreach efforts conducted to gather input from stakeholder groups and members of the community. Mr. Guerra explained the Board and District provided JG Consulting with a list of groups to be contacted as part of the process. In-person and telephone meetings were conducted depending on availability and timing. Some meetings were conducted in group settings and there were individual meetings with certain persons. The contact list and meeting schedule was much more robust than any other search JG Consulting had conducted, with 41 meetings conducted. The Trustees had emphasized their interest in an inclusive process and JG Consulting worked to honor that interest.

President Simon Holland wondered how long the community survey was open. Mr. Guerra stated the survey remained open and could remain open for as long as the Board desired. JG Consulting received over 1,200 responses to the survey. The survey data was available to the community through electronic links included in the Scope of Work document. Irene Payne, Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer, noted the survey was opened during the first week of December 2019.

Mr. Guerra reviewed the tentative timeline for the search process. It would be important for the Board to determine the major milestones during the process and settle on some specific dates. Some of the dates included in the timeline were based on when the Board had previously scheduled dates for meetings or work sessions. The intent behind naming a lone finalist in April was to allow time for the individual to begin meeting District staff, the community, and visit schools prior to the end of the current school year so they could prepare for the start of the 2020-21 School Year.

President Simon Holland expressed concern that the Board of Trustees had not adopted a formal job description prior to the proposed posting of the application. She believed the job profile was a great way to attract candidates, but felt it was also important for potential applicants to review the description that would include information on performance expectations. Emily Ellison, Chief Human Resources Officer, stated the job description was in development. She believed the conversation the Board would be having at the present meeting was an important step in the development of the description so what was in the profile would also be included in the description. The intention was to provide the Board the description for approval at the January 28, 2020 scheduled meeting of the Board.

President Simon Holland remarked the description was also important and could impact a potential candidate's interest in applying. The draft timeline had the application period opening on January 15, 2020 and would include the profile, but not the description. She wondered if the application period should not open until the description was approved. Mr. Guerra mentioned the profile was important for JG Consulting because it was something they would use when speaking with potential candidates and for advertising purposes. He noted there were some national conferences that would be occurring soon where it would be important for them to have the job profile available. The job description was more of an internal document to the District and part of that application process. Not all of those who submitted information to JG Consulting would be pushed through the District's application process.

Trustee Taylor asked if there was an impact to recruitment efforts if the job description was not approved until the end of the month. Mr. Guerra commented JG Consulting would continue to have conversations with interested parties and potential candidates with or without either the profile or description. The intention of the proposed timeline was to allow for a finalist to have an opportunity to gain an understanding of the District prior to the end of the current school year. The Board had the ultimate decision on when they wanted the application period to open and close, which would dictate other dates related to the search. JG Consulting would also provide information to any potential candidate when the job description from the District would be available for them to review.

President Simon Holland wondered if the application deadline of February 14, 2020 allowed for enough time for JG Consulting to recruit candidates at some of the national conferences that would be occurring in the near future.

Trustee Taylor agreed extending the deadline could be beneficial. Her concern with the proposed timeline was the possible in-person interview dates were scheduled for when the District would have spring break. She wanted to ensure JG Consulting had enough time to review the applications and propose semifinalists for the Board to consider for interviews. The Board held a discussion on other possible deadline dates that could be

considered, keeping in mind spring break, current meetings of the Board that were calendared, and national conferences.

President Simon Holland requested additional information on the interview process and if the Board would conduct two rounds of interviews with prospective candidates. Mr. Guerra explained JG Consulting would present the Board with a list of around 10 candidates to review, which would include the on-demand interviews, then the Board would select 3-4 candidates to invite to the District for in-person interviews with the Board. The review committee established by JG Consultants and comprised of members of the community would assist in the selection of the top 10 candidates. The Board continued the discussion regarding possible deadlines and noted any of the candidates included in the top 10 would be required to be noticed on the posted agenda pursuant to Nevada Revised Statute 241. The District wanted to be as transparent as possible throughout the process but the Board was not interested in prematurely releasing the names of individuals since it could jeopardize their current employment.

Trustee Kelley observed the Interim Superintendent had expressed an interest in submitting an application for the position. He wondered what the proper procedure was regarding communication with applicants because he did not want there to be a perception of an advantage. Mr. Guerra stressed it was important for the Board to maintain a working relationship with the Interim Superintendent or any other internal candidate. JG Consulting would have conversations with any internal or external candidates regarding the expectations on communications with the Board.

President Simon Holland remarked it would be important the Trustees do not have any conversations regarding the process or qualifications with any applicant as well. She stated the Interim Superintendent had been extremely clear of her intentions and had even requested to be removed from emails that contained any reference to agenda items regarding the search process if she had inadvertently been included.

Mr. Guerra provided additional information on the interview process. The recommendation would be to conduct no more than three interviews in 1 day, so if the Board invited six candidates to interview the process would take 2 days. If the Board did not decide on a single candidate after the first round of in-person interviews, the list should be narrowed and the Board would need to conduct a second round of in-person interviews with their top candidates. Ultimately, it would be up to the Board to make the final determination on the process. One aspect that had not been raised was the possibility of visiting the school districts where the candidates currently worked if the Board was interested in learning more about specific candidates.

President Simon Holland indicated she would be in support of holding a community meet and greet of some kind for the candidates as well.

Trustee Caudill agreed a community forum or meet and greet should be held. He was interested in determining possible dates as soon as possible so all potential candidates had an idea of when events would be conducted for travel arraignment purposes.

President Simon Holland commented that having been involved in similar processes in the past, a standard process was to have interviews on one day and then bring selected candidates back to conduct final interviews the next day. She would not be in favor of bringing people in for the initial interviews and then having them come back 2 weeks later for final interviews.

Trustee Raymond cautioned the process should not be rushed and she would be in support of slowing the process down a little. She understood the intent to have someone in place to get to know the District before the end of the current school year; however, she believed it was more important the Board find the right candidate and would not have a problem extending the timeline out somewhat.

Trustee Caudill noted the Board had a work session scheduled for March 31 to review the budget. He wondered if the work session could be changed to review the top 10 semi-finalists on that date and the conduct interviews April 14 and 15. The Board conducted a discussion on other possibilities for dates for candidate review, meet and greet, and interviews, knowing no events or meetings should be held during spring break.

Trustee Taylor remarked it was important for the Board to remain open to the possibility of bringing candidates back for additional interviews if necessary. If the Board was unable to make a decision between 2-3 candidates, it was important to leave the option open to bring each of them back if necessary.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Todd Bailey noted he had submitted a public information request regarding the superintendent search process and the request was denied. Some of the questions had been answered throughout the course of the current meeting and discussion, but he still wondered if all applications and videos had to be preserved as part of the public record and if the Board would have the ability to select a candidate to interview that was not part of the recommended candidates sent to the Board by JG Consulting. He was frustrated because the request was denied due to the word "opinion" in the title instead of using the word "position." While the Office of General Counsel was correct in not issuing an "opinion," it was frustrating that he would have to refile the request with a change in one word which stalled the ability of the public to receive information. He believed the current process was not transparent and would like to see more information on those applying for the position, as well as if the Board had the ability to select a candidate not recommended to them by the consultant.

President Simon Holland noted some of the questions being asked were not able to be answered because the Board had not made final decisions related to the process. Part of the reason for the multiple work sessions and agenda items on the superintendent search were to allow the Board to have the discussion on the process on the record and open to the public. The only discussions on the process were occurring during open meetings of the Board.

Trustee Caudill noted, based on the Board's discussion, March 10 seemed to be the best date for the Board to review the top 10 candidates from the consultant. Then the Board would have a selected number of candidates come the week after spring break for the first round of in-person interviews and then additional interviews could be scheduled at the April 14 meeting, if necessary.

Trustee Raymond remarked the National School Boards Association annual conference would be conducted April 3-6, so that time period could be difficult for candidates if they were attending the conference. The Board held additional conversations related to potential dates in early April for in-person interviews.

President Simon Holland summarized the proposed timeline as the posting of the job profile and application with JG Consulting as January 15, the deadline for applications as February 14, the top 10 recommended candidates to be reviewed on March 10, the first round of interviews scheduled for no earlier than March 31, and the second round of interviews schedule between April 7 and April 10, if necessary.

Trustee Taylor wondered if the timeline should be no earlier than March 30 to allow for additional flexibility because of the necessity for a work session on the tentative budget on March 31. President Simon Holland agreed the Board should be flexible on the dates for in-person interviews.

It was moved by Trustee Taylor and seconded by Trustee Caudill that **the Board of Trustees approves the timeline for the Superintendent Search as: January 15, 2020 - job profile and application with JG Consulting posted; February 14, 2020 - application closes; March 10, 2020 - top 10 candidates presented to Board of Trustees for consideration; and in-person interviews conducted between March 30 through April 10.** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

Mr. Guerra provided an overview of the feedback JG Consulting heard during the meetings with community members, Trustees, and staff. A comprehensive summary was provided in the work session documents. He mentioned if additional information was provided during future meetings, JG Consulting would present the comments during future meetings or updates to the Board and community.

President Simon Holland interjected on one of the comments included with the remarks from Trustees. The final bullet point was that the Board was open to a national search, but also wanted someone with a strong working knowledge of Nevada school law and education. She stated the Board had committed to an open, national search and the comment seemed to hint that the Board was looking for someone from Nevada. She would like the wording changed to show the Board was committed to the national process and looking for the absolute best person for the position. Mr. Guerra stated JG Consulting was committed to casting the widest possible net and looking at candidates from across the country. He believed the bullet showed the intention of the Board to have the required state certifications and if candidates were not based in Nevada, they would be required to meet Nevada certification requirements.

Trustee Caudill disagreed with President Simon Holland and thought the comment was more related to states that were similar to Nevada.

President Simon Holland requested clarification on the information and that it would be more used for JG Consulting as direction on what the Trustees, staff, and community were looking for in a candidate so they would gear their efforts to certain candidates. Mr. Guerra answered in the affirmative. The document would be used in the development of the job profile and marketing materials they produced. The information would also be available to the candidates selected to interview so they had a better understanding of what the District and community were looking for as they prepared for their interviews.

Student Representative Noble wondered if any geographical markers should be removed from the document so it would not discourage someone not from Nevada. Mr. Guerra added there was no geographical verbiage included in the draft job profile.

President Simon Holland asked if the comments from staff and the community were similar to what JG Consulting received during other superintendent searches. Mr. Guerra indicated there were some differences because every school district had unique aspects but those were more related to opportunities for improvement or challenges. He provided an example of a current search where the community was heavily interested in charter schools because there were five different types of charter schools in the school district. Dr. Leyba added the information would allow JG Consulting to speak with their contacts to determine if they were aware of individuals who might be interested in the position based on what the Trustees, staff, and community were looking for in a superintendent.

Mr. Guerra reviewed the proposed advertising plan, which was based on best practices learned by JG Consulting. He requested any additional local sites the announcement should be posted be provided to JG Consulting to allow for maximum reach. The announcement would direct individuals to JG Consulting's website where additional information on the process would be found.

Trustee Taylor believed the posting should be included on the Washoe County School District website and social media accounts to encourage local candidates. Mr. Guerra agreed and noted a link would be sent to the Office of Communications and Community Engagement for local postings.

Mr. Guerra concluded the information in the summative report and presented the draft job profile. The intent was to finalize the document at the current meeting and open the job profile on January 15.

President Simon Holland mentioned she would like to see the following changes to the draft job profile:

- In the first bullet, she would like the wording changed to "district" administration and not "school" administration;
- An increased emphasis on equity, inclusion, and diversity throughout the document;
- In the third bullet, add experience in labor relations or working with employee organizations;
- Experience in a comparable sized school district as desirable; and
- Include policy development experience in a public arena.

Trustee Caudill wondered if, based on the first bullet, the search was moving away from looking at candidates with alternative backgrounds, such as business leaders, with the inclusion of school or school district administration.

Trustee Kelley added he had a similar question regarding the third bullet and if the emphasis was on just finance or specific to school finance.

President Simon Holland noted the comments from the Trustees was to have that executive level experience, especially someone with both business and school district experience. The feedback included with other information provided showed the staff and community were interested in having someone with school district or education specific experience. Mr. Guerra provided alternative language for the first bullet to include the desire for experience with PreK-12 administration but not required.

Trustee Taylor requested clarification on how the Board should list the differences between required versus desired. She wanted to ensure absolutes for the Board were known and then what their additional desires for candidates known so the applicants were aware. Mr. Guerra noted it was the responsibility of the search firm to identify those desires and requirements of the Board so they were aware which candidates could be successful. Part of the reason for the discussion was to clarify for JG Consulting what the Board was interested in seeing in candidates. They did work with non-traditional candidates who might have started in education and then moved into either the business

or non-profit world or vice-versa. Generally, the common terms were desired or preferred. He provided an example of a doctoral degree being preferred, which allowed candidates without such a degree the option of applying.

Trustee Taylor agreed additional language related to equity and diversity needed to be included in the job profile. The Board and District had made a commitment to equity and she believed it should be included to highlight those efforts so candidates were aware. She would also like to see leadership better defined if possible and include the ability to demonstrate the candidate's leadership abilities and accomplishments. Finally, she was interested in seeing language related to building trust. Mr. Guerra reviewed different language JG Consulting had used during other superintendent search processes.

President Simon Holland remarked she had heard from various school leaders and school site staff that they would like someone in the position with school administrator credentials.

Trustee Taylor wondered if language related to someone remaining long-term should be included since the average tenure of a superintendent in an urban school district was 3 years.

President Simon Holland believed length of term would be something the Board should include during the interview process so it could be more conversational. She would not want to see language about someone staying for at least 5 years included in the profile. Mr. Guerra noted JG Consulting would not recommend someone apply for the position if the candidate expressed any kind of interest in using the Washoe County School District as a steppingstone. All of the superintendents JG Consulting had previously placed were still in those positions, which exceeded the national average in terms of tenure. Dr. Leyba added there were interview questions related to tenure the Board could consider, especially if they narrowed the number of finalists down to two or three. As JG Consulting got to know the District more, they understood the importance of a superintendent interested in remaining in the community and were able to speak with candidates interested in staying in one place for a long tenure.

Trustee Caudill requested additional information regarding the administrative license. He wondered what the process to obtain a license was, how much time it could take, and if Nevada recognized licenses from other states. He expressed concern that a potential candidate might not be willing to invest the time if there were a lot of hoops to jump through. President Simon Holland stated she did not intend to hint the candidates had to have the administrative license but must be willing to obtain one if hired. Ms. Ellison clarified Nevada Revised Statutes did not require the superintendent of a school district have an administrative license; however, if the superintendent did not have an administrative license, all academic functions would have to be delegated to an individual who did have such a license, such as a deputy superintendent. Nevada did have a

framework for provisional license to be issued if a candidate had one from another state. If the individual was coming from an area outside of education, the process to obtain a license could be a couple of courses or a full Master's program depending on their educational experience and degree(s).

Trustee Caudill declared if the Board were to make the license a requirement, the District should cover the costs of obtaining the license. He was more concerned about limiting the scope of the search to those who already had an administrative license in Nevada.

Trustee Raymond requested language be added regarding prior work with not only governing boards, but elected governing boards. She also requested the word "progressive" be changed to "forward thinking" based on the current political climate.

Trustee Minetto mentioned, as a retired educator, she had been through a number of different superintendents. She felt those superintendents with backgrounds in education viewed school districts more as a community and were in tune with working with students.

President Simon Holland believed it would be important to finalize any document at the current meeting so she would recess the meeting to allow revisions to be made to the current draft.

President Simon Holland opened the meeting to public comment.

Todd Bailey agreed the administrative license should be required and a time limit on obtaining the license should be placed on any individual who is selected. He felt since former Superintendent Pedro Martinez did not have an education background, all academic decisions were left to his deputy superintendent, Traci Davis. If the Board wanted a successful school district, any individual accepting the position should have an administrative license or a time limit on when they had to obtain one.

*President Simon Holland recessed the meeting for 25 minutes.*

Mr. Guerra presented the second draft of the proposed job profile. Pursuant to the discussion, the following changes were made to the first bullet: A professional education with experience as a teacher and administrator with preferably five (5) or more years of leadership experience in school administration (PreK-12 educational settings desired).

President Simon Holland requested an additional discussion by the Board regarding the third bullet and if the language should be "school finance." She would also like to see language regarding school or education funding. She appreciated labor relations and policy/legislative engagement had been included.

Trustee Kelley believed the term "school" should be removed so it would read expertise in finance.

Trustee Caudill agreed with the proposed removal of "school" and wondered if instead of "district budget management" the wording should be "organizational budget management" so the language was not specific to school districts.

President Simon Holland offered the following change: expertise in school funding, finance, organizational budget management, and the rest would remain the same.

Trustee Raymond agreed with the proposed language to the first and third bullets; however, she was concerned with "proven instructional leader" in the second bullet because the language tied back to a candidate having an education background.

Student Representative Noble noted the Board could add "desirable" or "preferable" to the end of the second bullet. He wondered if the Board would be interested in including additional language regarding student outreach. Mr. Guerra stated "preferred" could be added to the end of the bullet. The Board provided consensus to the proposed revisions to the second and third bullets. The remaining bullets included in the second draft were reviewed.

President Simon Holland requested additional clarification on including student outreach. Student Representative Noble believed language related to students and Student Voice should be listen in a separate bullet point.

Trustee Raymond agreed in the importance of Student Voice, but wondered if an interview question regarding student outreach would be more appropriate. She was concerned the inclusion could limit those interested in applying if they did not work directly with PreK-12 students. Additionally, she was concerned calling out one specific group over others could lead to tension between groups.

Student Representative Noble felt that including Student Voice and students as their own bullet point showed the uniqueness of the District.

Trustee Caudill understood both sides and agreed with the concerns of Trustee Raymond that if the Board included certain groups then other groups could feel left out, such as teachers. He believed the Board would be able to address specific interests during the interview process.

Trustee Taylor wondered if language related a commitment to engaging certain populations, such as students, teachers, and others would address Student Representative Noble's request.

Trustee Kelley agreed with Trustee Taylor and believed the ninth bullet point could be revised to include the inform. Student Representative Noble agreed.

President Simon Holland reviewed the proposed revisions to the second draft, with changes to the second, third, and ninth bullets.

It was moved by Trustee Kelley and seconded by Trustee Minetto that **the Board of Trustees approves Draft 2 of the Superintendent Profile with the following changes: bullet 2 - add "preferred" after students; bullet 3 - "Expertise in school funding, finance, organizational budget management, labor relations, policy and legislative engagement, as well as, the ability to maintain and increase outside funding sources;" and bullet 9 - "A visionary leader who builds trust, strengthens relationships, and engages with students, educators, families, members of the community, and nurtures existing partnerships."** The result of the vote was Unanimous: (Yea: Jacqueline Calvert, Andrew Caudill, Katy Simon Holland, Scott Kelley, Ellen Minetto, Malena Raymond, and Angela Taylor.) Final Resolution: Motion Carries.

Trustee Raymond asked when reference and background checks occurred. Mr. Guerra explained JG Consulting would conduct high-level vetting of candidates to determine if there were any outstanding issues that might need to be addressed. A comprehensive check would occur with the final two to three candidates. He noted the fourth page of the document (Verification for Superintendent) was an internal check for JG Consulting that would allow them to review a candidate's history prior to them being considered and hold conversations regarding potential concerns early in the process.

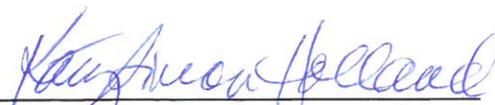
### **3. Closing Items**

#### **3.01 PUBLIC COMMENT**

Todd Bailey wondered if the Board approved the "Verification for Superintendent" form or if that approval would occur later in the process. President Simon Holland noted JG Consulting explained that was an internal document to them and would not take the place of the background check by the Washoe County School District.

#### **3.02 ADJOURN MEETING**

There being no further business to come before the members of the Board, President Simon Holland declared the meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

  
Katy Simon Holland, President

  
Angela D. Taylor, Clerk