

Superintendent Search Process Summary

Amidst the pandemic and resulting crisis, our Board of Directors has been hard at work continuing the Superintendent search process for our next leader. As we prepare to announce our two finalists next week, we thought it would be helpful to review the process our Board of Directors has engaged in over the past year leading up to this moment.

Our Board of Directors has worked hard to ensure that this is the most inclusive and transparent search process possible, while respecting the privacy of candidates early in the search process.

Following Superintendent Shay Mikalson's resignation last winter, our Board of Directors appointed a Board Search Committee: Board member Julie Craig (Chair, 2019-2020), Carrie Douglass (Chair, 2020-2021) and Melissa Barnes Dholakia (Vice Chair, 2020-2021). Julie Craig is currently our longest-serving board member and went through the previous Superintendent search. While more recently elected to the Board of Directors, Carrie and Melissa both bring decades of experience in education as former teachers, school leaders and district leaders. Carrie was previously the head of HR for a school system in California.

The recruitment began in the spring of 2020 and included the following steps:

1. The Board Search Committee reviewed the search process from previous searches and discussed what should stay the same and what could be improved.
2. The Board Search Committee wrote a request for proposals (RFP) for a superintendent search firm, expanding our requests around board visioning, community feedback and diversifying the pool of candidates.
3. The Board Search Committee reviewed materials and interviewed four superintendent search firms and selected [HYA](#).
4. The Board of Directors met in several public sessions to review all community feedback collected and to draft a "Profile of a Superintendent" based on the values and priorities of our community and Board of Directors.

The Board utilized the following community feedback during that process:

- a. A community input survey for the Superintendent search, which received approximately 300 submissions.
 - b. 1:1 conversations with several dozen community leaders, including both grassroots and grassroots leaders.
 - c. Results from the [Excellence and Equity Review](#) process to understand the experiences and needs of our diverse community stakeholders, which also included 35 affinity-group listening sessions and a district-wide survey .
5. The Board posted the updated [job description](#) reflecting our community values and priorities and received several dozen high-quality applications.
 6. The Board of Directors participated in an "anti-bias interview" training through OSU Cascades.
 7. When schools shifted to distance learning, and the district began focusing on addressing the pandemic, the Board of Directors made the difficult decision to

pause the Superintendent search process and appoint an Interim Superintendent in order to provide continuity and leadership for our community during the tumultuous time ahead.

Once the 2020-21 school year began, the Board of Directors re-started the search process with the following steps:

The Board of Directors re-engaged with HYA and re-posted the job description, encouraging applicants to re-apply and began actively recruiting new candidates with a diversity of backgrounds and demographics.

1. When the application window closed, we had received dozens of applications from states and abroad. The pool was very diverse along every dimension - gender, race/ethnicity, geography, age and background.
2. The Board of Directors reviewed hundreds of pages of application materials - generally around 25 pages per applicant, including detailed resumes, cover letters, narrative answers to questions, and letters of recommendation.
3. In addition, We reviewed social media accounts, google searches, and district websites and district student achievement data for each candidate and their district.
4. The Board of Directors met twice (in executive session) to narrow down the pool to six semi-finalists. The Board Search Committee created a rubric with which to evaluate the evidence present or not present for each of the dimensions identified as priority competencies by our community and Board. The Board of Directors discussed each candidate one by one, rating them on the rubric using evidence present in their application materials and noting areas where we had additional questions. At the end of the process, they noted their excitement to move six strong candidates to the semi-finalist round. The semi-finalists included three women and three men, one African American candidate, one Latina candidate, one Native American candidate and three white candidates. They hailed from the Pacific Northwest, across the country, and abroad.

As part of our effort to make this process inclusive, representative, and transparent, the Board of Directors appointed 17 people to the broader Superintendent Selection Committee - the largest and most diverse Bend- La Pine Schools superintendent search committee in recent history. The search committee includes diversity of age, gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, position (classified and certified), geographic (Bend area and Sunriver/La Pine areas) and departments (teaching and learning and operations), among other dimensions.

1. The Board Search Committee solicited question suggestions from the entire selection committee and curated interview questions to ask each semi-finalist.
2. The entire selection committee completed 14 hours of interviewing and debriefing of the six semi-finalist candidates.
3. Three board members completed follow-up interviews with the four top semi-finalist candidates.
4. The Board of Directors met in executive session to review the feedback from the selection committee and decide on the two finalists. Most Districts only have one

finalist, and many do not involve the community in interviews whatsoever. We believe that Bend-La Pine Schools has traditionally gone above and beyond to give the community voice in the process, and that this year we have added additional opportunities for a large selection committee and the general public to provide input into the process and finalists.

5. The Board of Directors and search firm completed thorough background checks and reference checks on the two finalists.

On December 16 and 17, the two finalists will each complete seven interviews - all of which we will be recording and making available to be viewed by anyone in our community:

1. Classified and Confidential staff
2. Certified staff
3. District administrators and supervisors
4. Students
5. Community leaders
6. Selection committee
7. General public

You can submit question suggestions for any of the forums [here](#).

After viewing at least one interview forum, you can submit feedback about the two semi-finalist candidates here.

We are confident that by the end of this process, we will have hired a Superintendent that reflects the feedback and insight from our entire community, through surveys, focus groups, a diverse selection committee and a range of public interview forums. The Board of Directors thanks everyone who has been part of this process, in particular Andrea Wilson, board secretary and Lora Nordquist, interim superintendent.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Douglass, Board of Directors Chairperson