

**COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 17, 2006**

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	<b><u>BOARD OF EDUCATION</u></b>	Elona Street-Stewart, John Brodrick, Tom Conlon, Al Oertwig, Tom Goldstein, Anne Carroll
	<b><u>ABSENT</u></b>	Kazoua Kong-Thao
	<b><u>STAFF</u></b>	Su Yeager, Marilyn Polsfuss
	<b><u>OTHERS</u></b>	Roger Barr, Nancy Noeske, Bill Larson, Doug Belden, Kevin Driscoll

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Ms. Street-Stewart, Acting Committee Chair.

**II. AGENDA**

Ms. Street-Stewart convened the meeting, stating she would chair the meeting in Ms. Kong-Thao's absence. She stated there was one item on the agenda for the meeting which is a report from PROACT on the progress of the **superintendent search** for Saint Paul Public Schools.

**1. PROACT Search -- Report on Superintendent Search**

Ms. Street-Stewart welcomed Dr. Nancy Noeske, President & CEO of PROACT Search and turned the meeting over for her report. Dr. Noeske stated the requested due date for applications for the superintendent position was January 6, 2006. She then reviewed the "Applicant Summary Report" which gave the demographics of the applicant pool as it exists to date. She reviewed the formal recruiting process which included: (1) school district superintendents, deputy superintendents and chief academic officers nationwide, (2) university, college and community college presidents and academic deans, (3) Harvard, Annenberg and Broad Institute educators listings, (4) professional education, foundation, business and community leaders nationwide, (5) state school superintendents nationwide, (6) Minnesota superintendents of districts with enrollments over 5,000 students and others recommended by various sources, (7) individuals recommended by the Saint Paul Board of Education members, staff and community members and (8) individuals known to or lists maintained by PROACT Search, Inc. As a result of these efforts applications have been received from 32 individuals to date. She then reviewed the breakdown of candidates under the following categories:

- Gender
- Persons of Color or White
- Current and former positions
- Traditional/Non-traditional candidates
- Years of experience
- Representation of sections of the country
- Past or present connections with St. Paul/Minnesota
- Experience in City/Schools
- Degrees earned

Sixteen states and the District of Columbia were represented in the applicant pool; 31% of the candidates have present or past connections to Saint Paul or Minnesota. She further

indicated that this is the first time in the 70 searches they have conducted that the female applicant pool is higher than the male and also in terms of person of color (24 out of 32). She offered further observations as to the reasons behind this response. Dr. Noeske offered the observation that the perception of the St. Paul District is as a very progressive district with a national reputation as being better than average in terms of an urban area. Additionally, she noted the tenure of past superintendents speaks well of the district.

Questions were raised and addressed regarding superintendent licensure requirements and procedures. Mr. Larson was asked to provide a succinct description of the licensure process for both traditional and non-traditional candidates.

Dr. Noeske then moved on to the "Report on the Community Survey and Stakeholder Meetings." She reviewed the process used to obtain input from interested community members/stakeholders through participation in 10 community forums and 25 focus groups which involved close to 300 people. Additionally 56 telephone or in-person interviews were conducted with school and community leaders as well as interviews with members of the Superintendent Search Advisory Committee who could be reached (approximately one-third of the committee). The Advisory Committee also did a focus group input session among its members. All told close to 400 people provided input into the process. A summary of responses from the focus group meetings, community forums and interviews included summaries of (1) what is the district doing right, (2) what are the greatest concerns/issues facing a new superintendent, (3) what are the qualities/characteristics necessary in the new superintendent, and (4) where does the district need to go in the future?

The survey and the working draft of the position profile were distributed to hundreds of stakeholders at the forums and meetings and were made available on the district website. The survey was offered in four languages. The results of the surveys were compiled and broken into responses from (1) parents, grandparents and guardians of children in the district (42%), (2) students and employees of the district, including teachers, principals, district-level administrators (40%) and (3) members of the community including residents who are active in a number of community-based organizations (18%). Results of the survey were summarized under the following areas: (1) greatest strengths, (2) greatest concerns, (3) issues, (4) most important characteristics of the next superintendent, (5) how can you, your organization and the community support the Board of Education in hiring the best superintendent possible for the district?, (6) suggested questions for the Board to ask candidates and (7) other comments.

\* The Board requested that this report be put on the Superintendent Search website so it is available to the community and interested individuals.

Mr. Larson noted one of the comments he felt was significant but which only occurred twice was diversity as a strength and as a challenge: "diversity is the strength of the district, but the district doesn't understand how to use that diversity to strengthen itself." Dr. Noeske noted they heard this idea in the interviews as well noting the demographics of the teaching pool does not match the demographics of the district.

Mr. Barr then presented a draft of the "Executive Summary of the Community Perceptions on the Saint Paul Public Schools and the Superintendent Search." He noted all members of the Advisory Committee express their appreciation to the board for its wisdom in seeking community input and thank both the board and PROACT for the opportunity to participate in this important process. He then review the methodology noting the questions addressed in the summary were (1) where do the Saint Paul Public Schools need to go in the future, (2) what kind of leadership does the district need to take it here it needs to go, and (3) what questions should the Board ask during the interviews? He indicated this summary would be most valuable once the Board moves into the actual interview process for the finalist candidates as it reflects the communities views on what is critically important almost program by program. He noted the summary would be finalized at the Advisory Committee meeting of January 31.

- \* The Board requested that this report (once finalized) be put on the Superintendent Search website so it is available to the community and interested individuals.  
Dr. Noeske then moved on to the Revised Profile (1/10/06) the revision of which was based upon some of the common themes heard in the focus groups, forums and personal interviews incorporated into the initial working draft to make the final version reflective of community desires and concerns. She indicated this would now be used as a tool for screening applicants; it represents the ideal and she noted no candidate would fit perfectly with every point within the profile.

**MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Mr. Conlon, that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education accept the Revised Profile.**

**Motion carried.**

**MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Mr. Brodrick, that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education extend its heartfelt appreciation for the Superintendent Search Advisory Committee's superb work and tireless engagement in supporting the Board in this important decision-making process.**

**Motion carried.**

### III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by  
Marilyn Polsfuss  
Assistant Clerk, Board of Education