

February 8, 2023

The Newaygo Public Schools Board of Education held a special meeting on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 in the Newaygo High School Library. Vince Grodus, President, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vince Grodus, Morgan Heinzman, Melissa Swinehart, Jami Schultz, Thomas Frisbie and Reid Sherwood

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sara Smith

Also Present: Pete Haines, Michigan Leadership Institute

Visitors: 0

#### Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Heinzman, seconded by Mr. Sherwood, to approve the proposed agenda for the special meeting of February 8, 2023.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion: Carried

#### Public Comments – Items on the Agenda

There were no public comments.

#### For Action

Motion by Mr. Frisbie, seconded by Mr. Heinzman, to enter into a closed session for the purpose of reviewing applications for the Superintendent position.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE

Mr. Grodus - Aye; Mr. Heinzman - Aye; Ms. Swinehart - Aye; Ms. Schultz - Aye; Mr. Frisbie - Aye; Mr. Sherwood - Aye.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion: Carried

Time: 5:02 p.m.

The Board entered into closed session.

Motion by Mr. Heinzman, seconded by Mr. Sherwood, to return to open session.

#### ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: 5

Nays: 1

Motion: Carried

Mr. Haines contacted each of these candidates and set up interview times as follows:

Monday, February 27 at 5:30 p.m. - Mr. Jaym Abraham, current Principal in the Caledonia Community Schools.

Monday, February 27 at 6:45 p.m. - Mr. Martin Prout, current Superintendent of North Huron Public Schools.

Monday, February 27 at 8:00 p.m. - Mr. Mark Brenton, current Superintendent of Bellaire Public Schools.

And

Tuesday, February 28 at 5:30 p.m. - Mr. Aaron West, current Principal in the Spring Lake Public Schools district.

Tuesday, February 28, at 6:45 p.m. - Mr. Ben Gilpin, current Principal in the Western School District (Parma).

#### Formal Communications

Mr. Haines indicated he would work with Board President Mr. Grodus and Board Secretary Ms. Swinehart after this meeting to prepare a press release conveying the information to the public.

#### Public Comments - Items Not on the Agenda

There were no public comments.

#### Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Sherwood, seconded by Mr. Heinzman, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion: Carried

Time: 7:26 p.m.



Melissa Swinehart, Board Secretary



*"Inspiring all to seize opportunities, explore interests and achieve potential"*

## **Superintendent of Schools Job Posting**

The Board of Education of Newaygo Public Schools is conducting a search for its next superintendent. It is expected that the superintendent will be in place by TBD.

### **About the District**

The Newaygo Public Schools are located in beautiful Newaygo County in the heart of West Michigan's four season recreational area. Newaygo County is located 40 miles east of Muskegon, Michigan and 45 miles north of Grand Rapids, Michigan and is home to 24 lakes, 356 miles of rivers and streams and over 100,000 acres of national forest.

The district's student enrollment is 1,590 students who attend excellent, maintained facilities. There is one elementary building, a middle school and a high school. The district employs 90 professionals and 50 support staff to accommodate the student body. Newaygo Public Schools values the partnerships it has with parents and the community which has resulted in higher student achievement.

### **NPS Mission**

In collaboration with parents and community, NPS will provide every student with an enriched academic foundation in a safe environment that will encourage individuals to be confident in their abilities and inspired to succeed.

### **Points of Pride**

- \$22.6 million bond issue passed in 2017 - Newaygo Elementary Addition & Renovation
- Increase in Student Population in 2019
- Strong State Test Scores
- Competitive Contracts for Teachers, Support Staff, and Administration
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) in All Buildings
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Program in All Buildings
- Behavior and Academic Services Offered at Elementary and Secondary Levels
- Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum
- Teacher-Led Literacy Nights
- Participant in Newaygo County Promise Zone
- Kickstart to Career Program for NPS Students-Beginning with Class of 2031
- Early College & Dual Enrollment Options for High School Students

- Additional Specialized Staff: School Resource Officer, On-site Nurse, On-site DHHS Success Coach, 3 -Title I Teachers & an Elementary Literacy Coach

Additional information regarding Newaygo Public Schools Points of Pride is available at [www.newaygo.net](http://www.newaygo.net).

### **District Demographics**

Enrollment: 1,531  
 Instructional Staff: 86  
 Secretary Staff: 10  
 Support Staff: 77  
 Administrators: 13  
 Foundation Grant: \$9,150  
 Non-Homestead Levy: 17.4804 mills  
 State Equalized Value: \$474,165,552  
 Budgeted Expenditures: \$19,059,562  
 Projected Fund Balance: \$3,723,792 (2023)  
 Current Bond Debt Millage Rate: 4.5  
 Building Grade Demographics: Elementary K-4; Middle School 5-8; High School 9-12

### **Selection Criteria**

Michigan Administrative Certificate or equivalent  
 Minimum of a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership/Curriculum, or equivalent  
 Minimum of three years successful experience building principal or central office experience

**The Newaygo Board of Education has determined that the following criteria are those which are the most highly sought in a new superintendent:**

- ✓ Exemplifies the highest level of personal and professional ethics, personal integrity and trust
- ✓ A visionary leader with the ability to engage all stakeholders in the pursuit of a clear vision for the district that focuses on student achievement, communication and use of district resources
- ✓ Leadership experience in a traditional public school setting that reflects a record of success in positions of increasing responsibility and that includes: three years of building principal/central office experience, at a minimum; however, non-traditional candidates with proper credentials and background may be considered
- ✓ Is a student-centered instructional leader who puts students first, connects with students and is committed to meeting the needs of each and every child
- ✓ Understands the dynamics of a small community and the role of the school district within the community
- ✓ A school leader who is approachable, treats everyone with respect and dignity and who is open to ideas and suggestions from a variety of sources within the school community
- ✓ Demonstrates effective communications skills (writing, public speaking and listening); and excellent interpersonal and public relations skills

- ✓ Dedication to education excellence and the success of all students
- ✓ A school leader who understands student growth and the impact it has on facilities, finance and staffing
- ✓ Demonstrated knowledge of and experience with effective curriculum, instruction, professional development, assessment and best practices to improve teaching and student achievement
- ✓ A commitment to a philosophy of continuous improvement through collaboration and research
- ✓ Demonstrated knowledge of and experience in public school finance and fiscal management; inclusive of bond issues, sinking funds and related expenses
- ✓ Knowledge of facility maintenance and operations: support services, facility studies, improvements, bonding opportunities and facility utilization
- ✓ Demonstrated success in human resource management, including collective bargaining, contract administration and employment practices
- ✓ An individual who sets high expectations for self and others; holds staff at all levels accountable; and who accepts responsibility for results
- ✓ An individual who has demonstrated a solid working relationship with staff while experiencing challenging external factors affecting public education.
- ✓ Demonstrated track record of direct involvement and knowledge of politics of public education at the local, intermediate, state and federal levels
- ✓ Demonstrated ability to be visible throughout the district and actively engaged with the school, parents and community activities
- ✓ Proven leadership ability with skills in implementing change, collaboration, successful systems, creative problem solving, intelligent risk taking and team building

### **Salary and Contract Information**

The Board will offer a regionally competitive comprehensive, multi-year contract with a salary commensurate with experience.

### **Application Procedure**

Interested candidates should complete and submit the Michigan Leadership Institute on-line application found at [www.mileader.com](http://www.mileader.com) or <http://www.applitrack.com/mileader/onlineapp>

Completed on-line applications must be submitted no later than 4:00 PM on **February 3, 2023**

No "hard copy", fax or emailed copies accepted. All materials will be treated confidentially through the screening process only upon the written request of the candidate.

All questions regarding the search should be submitted to Pete Haines, Michigan Leadership Institute, [hainesp1@gmail.com](mailto:hainesp1@gmail.com).

**Applicants are advised not to make direct contact with any member of the Board of Education**

### **Search Timeline**

**Application deadline – February 3, 2023**

**Selection of candidates for first interviews – February 8, 2023**

**First Round of Public Interviews – February 27 and 28, 2023**

**Second Round of Public Interviews – TBD**

**Site or in-district visit - TBD**

**Start date – TBD**

The Board may make exceptions to this profile, process and/or timeline to ensure selection of the best possible candidate. The services of Michigan Leadership Institute have been secured to assist the Board in the search process and in the screening of candidates. The Board of Education will make all decisions with respect to process, evaluation of candidates, and appointment of the successful candidate.

### **Board of Education**

Vince Grodus, President  
Morgan Heinzman, Vice-President  
Melissa Swinehart, Secretary  
Sara Smith, Trustee

Tom Frisbie, Treasurer  
Jami Schultz, Trustee  
Reid Sherwood, Trustee

The superintendent search will be conducted with due regard to the Michigan Open Meetings Act (Public Act 267 of 1976) requirement of open meetings for all public body deliberations, decisions and interviews.

**Newaygo Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer.**



## **Proposed Next Steps Superintendent Search**

1. Schedule the interviews and an opportunity for the board to discuss candidates.
2. Determine what expenses the board will pay for candidate travel and communicate that at the time candidates are called.
3. Make arrangements for someone to meet and greet candidates, and arrange for a comfortable place for them to wait.
4. Arrange for letters of regret to be sent to those who will not be interviewed.
5. Determine roles of board member(s), board attorney, and search consultant in negotiating the employment contract with the final candidate. Confirm any changes that should be made to the superintendent contract prior to making an offer.
6. Discuss and evaluate candidates:
  - Discuss the process to be used for narrowing the field of candidates
  - Determine if there is one or more leading candidate(s)
  - Determine if you will invite one or more back for a second interview, and if the candidate's spouse (if applicable) will be included, and/or if you will schedule a visit to the community of the leading candidate.
7. Discuss announcement of appointment including:
  - Who will be the spokesperson
  - Communication channels
  - Timing

## Checklist of “Do’s & Don’ts” for the Board of Education Candidate Interviews

1. Dress for the occasion and prepare for questions – remember you are being interviewed also.
2. If unable to meet the candidate prior to their entering the interview room, rise from your seat and introduce yourself as they enter the room; shake their hand.
3. When you are the only Board member asking a question, keep your eyes focused on the candidate while others’ heads are down taking notes. Don’t let the candidate talk to the walls.
4. If you asked a question and the answer goes “on and on”, interrupt! You are in control of the interview. Simply state, “Thank you. I believe you answered my question”, or “Thank you, but we need to move on to other questions now.”
5. Be sure you don’t send messages to the candidate with body language by nodding your head or stating, “I really like that answer,” or frown when the candidate says something disagreeable. Let their answers be directed to the questions and NOT your expressions.
6. Drinking or eating in front of the candidate can be considered rude. They know that they do not have your complete attention. Wait until a break.
7. At the end of the allotted time and the chair concludes the interview, everyone should rise and extend a “Thank you” to the candidate.
8. Do not ask questions pertaining to religion, race, ethnicity, gender, marital status, handicapping condition, age, or sexual preference.  
*Examples of potential discriminatory questions:*
  - Do you have children? Are you pregnant?
  - What does your husband think of your taking this job?
  - So, is that a Polish name?
  - How old are you? Why is someone your age interested in this move?
  - Do you have any health problems?  
*Example of legal questions:*
  - Do you have any responsibilities that would conflict with meeting the responsibilities of the job and job attendance?
  - If offered this position, how long would you intend to serve?
9. Do not contact candidate between rounds of interviews unless authorized to do so by the full board.
10. Listen to community comments regarding candidates, but be cautious about your comments to citizens regarding candidates.
11. Attempt to reserve final judgements regarding candidates until you have had the opportunity to hear the opinions of all board members on each candidate.



12. Do not make the following common interview errors:

**First Impression Error** – making a judgement too early in the interview. You may miss critical information later on.

**Contrast Error** – a tendency to be overly for or against a candidate based upon previous interviews.

**Similar to Me Error** – giving higher rating to people just like yourself, especially in non-job related areas such as hobbies, gender, hometown, etc.

**Halo Effect** – generalizing one positive or negative trait over several dimensions of qualification.

**Primary, Regency Effect** – not treating all information equally, relying on either the first or the last impression made. Review all interview notes.

**Attractiveness Bias** – relying on the candidate's physical attractiveness for making judgements about their suitability for the job.

**Misinterpretation of Nonverbal Cues** – over interpreting or wrongly interpreting body language; being aware of cultural differences in behavior.

**Benefit of the Doubt Error** – excusing or overlooking inappropriate comments or behavior because the interview is a stressful situation. The candidate should be on their best here and you can expect less decorum when on the job.

**Judgmental Bias** – revealing your own value system when reacting to an interviewee's response.

Respond in a non-judgmental manner so the person will respond candidly and honestly to questions rather than saying what you want to hear.