

Q & A for the Community:

Why has the BOE been silent and not taking interviews?

There is information related to personnel, litigation and other sensitive matters the BOE is not permitted to disclose to the general public. With that being said, the BOE at all times recognizes the community's interest in the district's operations and decisions. To that end the BOE has provided the opportunity for the community to provide public comment at BOE meetings and has received and considered all communications that are sent to the BOE. The board continues to improve in its engagement with community members.

Why was the separation agreement with Mr. Thomson placed on the agenda late?

The agenda is released the Thursday prior to each board meeting. The Board received notice of an agreement signed by Mr. Thomson settling all pending matters on Friday evening. All board members were given time to review the document and confirm there were no further questions for our legal counsel. The resolution to approve the agreement went up on the agenda early Saturday evening for board consideration at the Monday board meeting. The agreement with Mr. Thomson was released immediately after the board adopted a resolution to approve a settlement of pending matters and further authorized the board president to sign the same. Once the agreement was approved and signed, it was released.

Why wasn't Dr. DeBarbieri kept in the position?

We have had many years of interruptions to service in the superintendent's office. Dr. Davis was brought here due to her many years of experience to do a review of the district and provide guidance on options to move forward based on her analysis of all operations related to the superintendent's office. Dr. Davis has been working closely with Dr. DeBarbieri and will be providing an update at a board of education meeting regarding her recommendations in the near future.

Why was Mr. Thomson hired?

The board at the time did an extensive search and considered multiple candidates. The board at the time selected Mr. Thomson based on input provided by various stakeholder groups who helped create a candidate profile. The consultants conducted 13 different listening sessions to help us put together this profile. These sessions were publicized on the district website and conducted virtually due to the pandemic. There was a page dedicated to the superintendent search on the district website that explained each step of the process, a timeline, and updates.

Why can't names be brought up during public comment?

Concerns or praise related to individual employees or students should be directed to the administration. Comments on individuals in public are inappropriate since often individuals are not there to respond and comments may be about matters made confidential by contract, state or federal law.

How does a BOE work?

A school board only has the powers expressly delegated by the Education Law. No individual board member has any individual authority. The board can only act as a single body... Board action occurs during a board meeting with a quorum present except in limited circumstances. The board leadership, being the President and VP, work together with the Superintendent and Cabinet to set agendas and to ensure the policies regulating board operations are followed.

Can a superintendent's contract be written for one year at a time?

No. A contract with a Superintendent is for a period of not less than three and not more than five years.

Will the next superintendent's contract be written differently to protect the taxpayers' money?

The board is always mindful of its fiduciary duty to the district residents related to the expenditure of tax dollars. In order to attract candidates to the Superintendent position employment contracts often contain provisions that prohibit boards from depriving a Superintendent of their salary or employment benefits without some level of due process based upon the situation. The Board will continue to work with legal counsel in the negotiation and development of any future Superintendent contract to ensure the district's interests are represented.