

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Stamford, Connecticut

March 30, 2009

The Special Meeting of the Board of Education was held on March 30, 2009 at the Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard. The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Ms. Nabel, President with the following Board members present: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo (5:50 pm), Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Absent: Mayor Malloy and Mr. King. Also in attendance: Dr. Starr (6:15 pm), Dr. Hamilton, Mr. Dunn, Ms. Gagne, Mr. Schneider, and a representative from the Stamford Advocate.

Salute to the flag.

Ms. Nabel indicated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss three job descriptions that are timely in nature.

Ms. Gagne explained the two job descriptions proposed for the Human Capital Development department, which were the Human Capital Development Manager and the Human Resources Generalist positions. Both positions are currently vacant. The Human Capital Development Manager position is proposed to replace the current Director's position which is and has been a non-union, confidential position since approximately 1999. The Human Resources Generalist position is proposed to replace the Receptionist's position, which is currently in the OSS unit. Given the existence of two openings in the department at this time and having assessed the department's needs over the last 6 months, including the work load, the department budget and the type of work that needs to be performed Ms. Gagne is recommending a change to the Director's position. This would include a lower salary and expanded role to address more labor relations responsibilities that were not addressed in the existing Director's position description. This current position description focuses on recruitment, which is an important part of the job; however, the labor relations part of the job which is absent from the job description needs to be addressed. Ms. Gagne stated that she is not requesting any additional monies in order to fund the two positions. In next year's budget the Director's position is \$115,824 and the receptionist's salary is \$57,378. She recommended a salary range between \$75,000 and \$80,000 for the manager's position and explained that she has the flexibility to recommend this range because of the non-union confidential status of the job. She stated that because the HR Generalist position is a City position in the Managerial Bargaining unit we would have to follow the existing salary structure which is \$68,400 to \$88,000 and she recommended posting the position at \$70,000. Given those recommended salaries and next year's department budget there would be a savings of \$23,000 which she would like to

apply to professional development for the remaining staff to address the lack of cross training in the department which needs to be addressed. Also, moving in the direction of Service Centers will serve the department better, but more importantly serve the whole district better. Ms. Gagne stated that if we are able to fund and post the HR Generalist position this year, she would like to be able to use that as the pilot program to start Service Centers. She added that she wanted to have four building locations served by the position, so that person would basically be able to answer all questions, i.e., from hiring, labor relations, investigations, grievances, and anything that might need to be addressed by those buildings. By utilizing this approach it will help free up the two administrative positions, hers and the Manager's position, to not only address the day to day operations, but to also look at the areas that she found in need of corrective action as well as making the department better. This covers the Human Capital Development Manager's position as well as the Human Resources Generalist position.

Mr. Mathews complimented Ms. Gagne for an excellent presentation for something that has been needed for years and he will fully endorse these positions.

There was discussion regarding the Manager's position and whether or not it should require a college degree.

Mr. Polo arrived at 5:50 pm.

Ms. Nabel asked to put the resolution on the table for a vote and amend, if needed.

Resolution 03-30-09:90

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and filling of Human Capital Development Manager effective March 31, 2009.

Ms. Heftman asked if the special requirement listed in the Generalist description, but not in the Manager's description, is because it is on the City side. Ms. Gagne responded that was correct. Ms. Heftman asked why it would not be on the Manager's side. Ms. Gagne indicated she could add that as a preference. Ms. Heftman asked what it would bring to the process. How does it limit the person, the manager who doesn't have it, as opposed to the generalist who does. Ms. Gagne responded that this certification is typically a certificate that is held in the private sector. It is not unusual for an individual who functions as a generalist in the private sector to be a member of SHRM (Society of Human Resources Management) and to have taken that exam and possess that certification. You can be certified under SHRM without possessing a college degree.

Ms. Heftman commented that we have to be careful about the fact that managers are going to be managing people that possess greater academic

experience and are more qualified to perform the manager's job than the manager since we have run into that on the City side already. Whatever requirements we ask of the generalist should be included in the manager's position. Her amendment would be to include that language.

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino to amend the posting to include a requirement that the successful applicant hold a college degree.

Mr. Mathews asked if we would be including the word "preferred." Ms. Nabel noted that was not included in the wording of the amendment. Ms. Heftman noted that someone else could propose that since her amendment requires the college degree. Mr. Mathews stated that if you eliminate the word preferred you are then eliminating from consideration people who have had a wealth of experience, but don't have a Bachelor's degree. He would like to see a large pool and by saying preferred it is quite clear what your preference is, but you are not eliminating from consideration those people who don't have a degree and may be exceptional candidates.

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti to amend the amendment to include the word "preferred" in the language and would read "a college degree is preferred."

Ms. Heftman noted that she did not disagree that you might be eliminating some people some people and don't disagree that someone who has worked their way up through the ranks would have the necessary experience, but that is technical experience and she would hope that somebody at a management level would have a broader knowledge base.

Ms. Nabel called for a vote on the amendment to have the word "preferred" in the requirement to have a college degree which is Mr. Mathews' secondary amendment.

The amendment was approved with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Ms. Heftman and Mr. Rubino

Ms. Nabel asked for a vote on the original amendment to the posting which was add the language that a "college degree is now preferred, but not required."

The amendment was approved with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Ms. Heftman and Mr. Rubino

Ms. Heftman moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti to amend the motion to require the addition of the special requirement in the Generalist's description be added to the Manager's position on page 3 of the Human Resources Generalist posting.

Ms. Wade asked Ms. Gagne if the PHR certification is a sufficient requirement or is there another certification that would be preferred. Ms. Gagne responded that she would prefer this one. Mr. Polo asked if this would promote problems or issues in whom you hire. Ms. Gagne noted that if the qualification is added with the specific language requiring certification within 18 months of appointment it is certainly reasonable to expect a person to pass the exam as a condition of continued employment.

The amendment was approved with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

The amended resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Resolution 03-30-09:91

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and filling of Human Resources Generalist effective March 31, 2009.

There was discussion regarding whether or not this would be an appropriate time to add a new position with the current economy. Ms. Gagne reviewed the overtime costs for the department due to the two vacancies and noted that there would not be any budget implications as this position was included in the 2009-2010 Operating Budget request.

Dr. Starr arrived at 6:15 pm.

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Ms. Heftman and Mr. Rubino.

Resolution 03-30-09:92

Ms. Lorenti moved, seconded by Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the revised job description for the position of Director of Safety and Security as presented and dated March 30, 2009, version 2.

Ms. Gagne stated that the recommended changes to this position are presented to you for the purpose of updating the position description so that it accurately reflects the job duties and responsibilities that the incumbent is presently performing as well as job duties that will need to be performed over the near future and into the long-term future. No significant language changes were identified. Ms. Gagne then stated that some simple changes were made; for

example in the existing Version 1 job description, the Deputy Superintendent, Carlton Moody, who was her predecessor, supervised this position. The organizational structure at that time was very different than the current structure. Mr. Moody was not only in charge of Human Resources, he was also in charge of food services, transportation, security, and a whole host of different areas. In the proposed new job description corrections were made to reflect the correct organizational and reporting structure. This position has reported to the COO for some time now and it has been updated accordingly. Also included are some new major responsibilities that speak to emergency management which will be a critical responsibility performed by this position. All of the changes are pretty straight forward. She also referred to the 4th bullet down indicating the need for clarification from the Board. The proposed language indicates that investigations, i.e. harassment investigations are to be performed by this position. Ms. Gagne noted that it is her understanding that the Director has been involved in past employee-related investigations as opposed to student related. She recommended that there be a very clear delineation and a separation of duties so that investigations involving employees remain in HCD, which she typically does whether it be harassment, inappropriate contact, whatever the case may be. She further recommended that she represent the Board's interests regarding employee-related matters and if a student interview is required the student interviews be conducted by the Director of Safety & Security. There should be a separation of duties between the two departments.

Mr. Rubino asked to add under Major Responsibilities "anticipate and deal with school security issues by suggesting policy changes or other needs." Ms. Lorenti referred to the 7th bullet and asked if that would cover Mr. Rubino's request. Mr. Rubino responded no it would not. Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak proposed "establishes and interprets security and safety related policies subject to the approval of the Board of Education." Mr. Rubino added "for all activities undertaken by the district."

Mr. Rubino was not sure if that would include a review of parking lot safety from time to time and things of that nature. Security and safety of the children is the responsibility of this position and it does not hurt to be redundant in the job description.

Mr. Mathews noted that he was hoping that we would see an updated contract relative to this position because he considers the contract that is in force to be invalid since it is a vendor contract. He added that he was hoping that at the time we reviewed this job description we would be seeing the revised contract for the position since there is someone serving in that position right now. In reviewing the job description, he would like to go over each and every bullet because he has problems with the language that is included and excluded from this job description. He would like the Board to consider holding this until a time when we don't have to do a major editing job and that is what would we have to do tonight and time is running short. It is also inappropriate to consider this job description and not have a contract before us. Ms. Nabel commented that Mr. Mathews and Mr. Rubino did make the point about the vendor contract being the wrong venue for this type of agreement. The changes she asked for in the yearly employment agreement of employees like this, she asked for template changes that called for more specificity in terms of what the job expectations are and the

evaluation. You would really need to have the finished position description to have an appropriate employment agreement based on the position description. Ms. Nabel noted that she was not putting off anyone's concerns, but for it to work in the logical way you need the right position description and then write the employment contract.

Ms. Heftman noted that in the interest of time and since this is not a time sensitive matter like the other two postings, perhaps this could be referred back to Labor Relations Committee and they can bring forward a motion. Dr. Starr noted that it would be helpful if an e-mail could be sent with all issues/questions so we can be prepared at the meeting.

Ms. Nabel asked for a motion to hold this resolution till our Working Board meeting on April 14, 2009.

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Mr. Polo to hold this resolution till our Working Board meeting on April 14 2009.

The motion was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Ms. Nabel suggested that members of Labor Relations do a very careful reading and send their proposed questions or proposed amendment to Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak.

Resolution 03-30-09:93

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti:

BE IT RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, that the Board of Education approve the posting/advertising and filling of Transportation Coordinator BOE effective March 31, 2009.

Ms. Gagne noted that the job description this evening is for a Transportation Coordinator and, you may recall, during the budget deliberations there was mention of an Assistant Transportation Manager position. She, along with Mr. Dunn and Mr. Schneider, had several conversations with the City regarding making that recommendation and it was determined by the City that it was more appropriate to put forward a coordinator position which would remain in the OSS bargaining union as opposed to moving it to a totally new position and into a new bargaining union. The Transportation Manager position would have been in the MAA unit. They also felt the salary range was more appropriate for the position to stay in the OSS bargaining union. The Transportation Coordinator position was put together after surveying several communities for like positions with the understanding that these were not only the qualifications, but the desired skills, knowledge, and ability that would be used in this position. Ms. Gagne stated a full time position is long overdue. This position was previously shared with the Research Department and because this type of work is very cyclical. Ms. Gagne added that the position has a very high demand close to the opening of school, through the summer and sometimes into October and November. By

dedicating a full-time position to the support of transportation needs constituents would be better served. Given the resignation of the incumbent it is probably an ideal time to determine how the Transportation Department can better serve the internal and external community. Ms. Gagne stated the proposed salary range is between \$48,950 and \$66,000 however we are looking to hire around \$50,000 and Mr. Schneider said he would be comfortable being able to cover the full time position and the associated overtime costs without having to request any additional funding from the Board.

Mr. Rubino noted that given the increased amount of hours donated to the Board of Education there will be down time. Ms. Gagne did not think she would be wrong in saying that there would not be any down time, but rather there would be a shift in duties. A lot of inquiry and customer service questions that Mr. Schneider has been handling in addition to his own duties, would be handled solely by this person so there could be a focal point of customer service. Mr. Rubino asked if we would be grieved if we reallocated any of this person's time to any other duties within the Board of Education. Mr. Dunn responded that we might be however, if the person did have any time at all there is enough on the 3rd floor between Finance, Food Service, and Transportation, that they could come in and pitch hit. The summary of one set of issues and that is all the transportation routes, then the first 3-4 months of the year when people start questioning the routes and asking for stop changes, and that has been continuing. You have the spike in the summer when you are setting up the routes, but then you have the parent who has issues and while Mr. Schneider is taking care of the parent he is not doing something else. If we have two people there who understand the process and can provide customer service, there is always down time. Mr. Rubino noted that he did not create a labor problem so why don't we put in a generic catch all under duties so that if you do have this person go into another department in the district we don't get in trouble. Mr. Dunn noted that there is constantly work that moves across finance and transportation as far as recording bills, forecasting transportation, forecasting special education, so there are things that in fact in a pinch either finance and/or the transportation department put their heads together. Ms. Gagne noted that the Union could have filed a grievance already, but they have chosen not to because they are waiting to see what happens with this position. This position is a new title with more comprehensive responsibility, but certainly since the incumbent has been gone the union owns the work. The only reason they have not grieved someone else performing the work in the interim is because the other two in the department are getting some overtime and it is not unusual for the manager to pick up the slack while a vacancy remains open. Mr. Schneider made a correction and noted that there is only himself in the department. We are the only department that manages a \$12-13M budget, pay our own bills, do our own customer service, lend ourselves out to the Research Department for mailings, and this does replace a position, Pamela Fox who was the major support for this department, in addition to Ms. Donatico. It really is not an additional position, but a reallocation of a position. Mr. Rubino noted that it is a new position and that another bullet should be added under Major Responsibilities to say "to perform other duties whether or not it is in this department." This can be a new bullet or added under the last bullet point. If you read the last bullet point you can make the argument that it has to be within the

area of transportation, but if you throw in the Superintendent and then say any other department then you would be alright.

Ms. Lorenti asked for clarification under Skills & Abilities. Where it states “responsible for evaluating and monitoring regular non-public and special education school transportation.” She wanted to know what the difference is between what the Transportation Manager does and what this position will be doing. She thought the Transportation Manager would be performing the evaluations. Ms. Gagne responded that when we wrote this, which was a while ago, the conversation with the City was still ongoing and we were recommending a managerial position. Since the Coordinator’s position is before you now it would be appropriate to remove that particular language. Mr. Dunn indicated that there were some other bullets that were worded more definitively.

Mr. Mathews asked to see this job description next to the job description of the Transportation Manager because this particular job description looks like it will require time well in excess of 40 hours per week. He would like to see where the differences are and how, in a supervisory capacity, the manager’s position requires more than this position. Mr. Matthews suggested holding this resolution until the next Working Board meeting.

Mr. Mathews moved, seconded by Mr. Rubino to hold Resolution 03-30-09:93 to the Working Board meeting.

Ms. Wade noted that this is time sensitive. Mr. Schneider responded that if the position is not passed it won’t go before the Personnel Commission and will not be filled until September or October. Ms. Gagne indicated the cut off date is approximately April 8, 2009 in order to go to the Personnel Committee agenda. Ms. Nabel asked for a vote on the motion to hold the resolution.

The motion failed with the following Board members voting in favor: Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, and Mr. Rubino. Opposed: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Polo, and Ms. Wade.

Ms. Nabel noted that we have a consensus on revising the Skills & Abilities section with the first bullet to read “to assist in evaluating and monitoring regular non-public and special education.” Under Major Responsibilities the suggestion was made to amend the last bullet to read “perform other duties in other departments as assigned by the Superintendent and/or his designee.”

The resolution was passed with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri-Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade. Opposed: Mr. Mathews

Mr. Rubino moved, seconded by Ms. Lorenti, to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. with the following Board members voting in favor: Ms. Heftman, Ms. Lahiri Hoherchak, Ms. Lorenti, Mr. Mathews, Ms. Nabel, Mr. Polo, Mr. Rubino, and Ms. Wade.

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Executive Officer