**Superintendent’s Corner**

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Interim Superintendent

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It has been a very eventful week in the Amesbury Public Schools. I have some great news to share…

**High School Principal Search Update**

I am pleased to announce our finalists for the upcoming opening for high school principal at Amesbury High School.  We had over forty applicants for this position and reviewed the resumes carefully through a variety of criteria that included:

* Certification in Massachusetts as a high school principal
* Prior secondary teaching experience
* Prior experience in secondary administration
* Selection of candidates that best matched the desired skills identified through the student, teacher, parent and community surveys completed over the past couple of weeks

We were able to narrow down our candidate pool to five semi-finalists that were interviewed this week.  The search committee included a student, parents, teachers, school committee members, a community member, and Amesbury Public Schools administration members.  The committee was impressed with all of the five semi-finalists, but two candidates rose to the top in terms of best matching the skills identified for our high school.  The two finalists are Elizabeth McAndrews and Brendon Sullivan.

Elizabeth McAndrews is currently serving as the Dean of Students/Curriculum for the Amesbury High School and has been in Amesbury since July 2006.  Prior to that, she was employed by the Triton Regional High School as a history teacher, athletic director/teacher and AD/AP.  Ms. McAndrews holds a bachelor of arts degree in history from Dartmouth College and a master of arts in teaching from Boston University.

Brendon Sullivan is currently employed as an assistant principal/director of humanities in the Saugus Public Schools.  Mr. Sullivan has been employed by the Saugus Public Schools since September 2001, when he was first employed as an English teacher.  In July 2013, he shifted from a classroom teaching position to administration within the Saugus Public Schools system.  Mr. Sullivan holds a bachelor of arts in English from Merrimack College, a master of arts from Salem State University and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies from American International College.

The search committee will be conducting site visits to the schools of both candidates next week.  In addition, a community forum has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 9th from 3:00 – 4:30 in the library at the Amesbury High School.  This will provide students, parents, and community members an opportunity to meet both candidates, learn about their values and vision for the high school, and an opportunity to ask questions to the candidates.  Following the forum, feedback from attendees will be sought by the administration and will be used to help select the best candidate to lead the high school.

We are delighted with the caliber of both candidates and are confident that we will be able to select the most qualified candidate to continue the good work happening at the Amesbury High School.

**Massachusetts School Building Authority**

I received notification from Diane Sullivan at the Massachusetts School Building Authority that the MSBA board met this week and voted to move our Statement of Interest (SOI) for Amesbury Elementary School into the next phase of the MSBA process. This is a positive step as we pursue a new or renovated elementary school building. There were approximately 100 districts that submitted statement of interests to the MSBA. From that original group, the MSBA narrowed the applications down to approximately 45 districts that they visited during the fall to gain a better understanding of the district’s needs. This list was further reduced to approximately 25 districts that the MSBA board voted on to move forward in the process. A subsequent vote will happen in July, which will officially begin ‘the clock’ on the next phase, which is called eligibility. A number of steps are completed during eligibility. For more information about this phase in the process, check out my powerpoint presentation posted on the superintendent’s page of the district website.

**School committee vacancy**

There is a seat open on the current school committee, due to the resignation of Mr. Christian Scorzoni. Mr. Scorzoni was elected to the city council and is not able to perform both functions in the city. The process for filling this vacancy involves a joint school committee and city council, where they will interview potential candidates and take a vote to select the individual. If you are interested in finding out more about the process and potentially submitting an application to fill the seat, Applications or letters of Interest with Resume should be filed with the City Clerk’s Office no later than February 4, 2016 at 4:00 pm. Applications can be obtained in the City Clerk's Office. The applicants must be a registered voter and a resident of the City of Amesbury.  A Joint Hearing of the School Committee and Amesbury City Council will be held on February 9th to fill the vacancy.

Be well and have a great weekend!

Gary