Barnstable Community Horace Mann Charter Public School – May 1st, 2014, Special Board of Trustees Meeting.

**Present:** Andrea Wood, Chairman, Alicea Sader, Vice-Chair, Molly Sproul, Secretary, Brad Goodwin, Clerk, Trustees: John Burnett, Molly Fedele, Anna Griswold, Patty Horgan and Steve Thompson.

**Absent:** Steve Galvin

**Call to Order:** Secretary Sproul duly noting that this was a properly posted session turned it over to the Chairman Andrea Wood who opened the meeting at 5:33p.

**Guests/Public Comment:** None

**Preparing BOT questions for the four finalists:** Trustees Horgan and Galvin, having served on the Principal Search Committee, gave the meeting members an overview of the process, including a list of their eleven questions, and a grading matrix, which allowed the PSC members score, and then rank, the candidate on a scale of one to five (poor, less than satisfactory, satisfactory, and so on).

Trustee Griswold arrived at 5:37p.

Ms. Wood then asked for traits that each trustee thought were key in a new hire, and all agreed to return to the title of Principal (versus School Leader).

Wished for attributes – in no particular order:
- Decisive/Ability to prioritize (Andrea)
- Ability to delegate (Steve)
- To multi-task with focus (John)
- Visible (Steve)
- Approachable (Alicea) who then went on to share a story about the principal at Silver Hill in Haverhill, whose principal (Margaret Shepherd) when “under stress, did not hide in her office, but visited the kindergarten wing to remember why she was in this profession.”
- Know every child by name (Molly S)
- Disciplinarian (Molly S) – which led to a discussion on what kind of disciplinarian and for whom – students, staff, parents.
- Handling of behavioral issues (Steve / Patty) – with Trustee Horgan going on to describe the Positive Behavior Integration System (PBIS) commonly used today.
“Gets the trust” / “When the Principal walks into the room – the tone should change.” (Steve, Patty)

- Command respect (Anna, Molly S)
- Anna brought forth issues and concerns about communication, which included the need for a media savvy leader, the ability to be a “marketing person” to better promote the school; she finished her comments lauding former Chair Ron Bearse for speaking at a Rotary Club about BCHMCPS.
- “We need to correct the disconnect now taking place.” (Many Trustees)

Conversation ensued about whether the principal should be the “spoke of the wheel” or a CEO who oversees and empowers; which led to examples of over-control and micromanagement versus committees not knowing what a similar committee was doing. “A well run structure will help take the weight off the new Principal.” (Horgan)

- Build relationships and be a unifier (Molly F)
- Inspirational (Alicea)
- Have a working knowledge of Facebook (Anna), which garnered talk of e-mail blasts, blogs, e-mailed newsletters, and ultimately the need for timely communication from the leader to the staff.

- “Look for a leader who refrains for using the letter “I” – but instead talks about the entire team” (Molly S) .... “Which will lead to the building of a stronger staff” (Andrea)

- “Someone who embraces what we have.” (Patty, Molly F)
- “Discover what’s in your managerial tool-box?” (Molly S)

Here the Trustees talked about raising school from a Level Two (out of five) to a Level One, and how “incremental improvement” is key. Ms. Horgan, Mr. Thompson and Ms. Sproul brought forth points on how the Barnstable County Horace Mann Charter Public School might have done itself a disservice when moving from Marstons Mills to Hyannis East – “by not re-setting the bar” (with the Department of Education), “since we just didn’t move to a new location, we merged two schools into one.” From there the conversation moved to budget cuts over the past three years (from $2.6M in 2012 to $2.3M today). Trustee Burnett, mused about the reserve fund with (a) the need to have it, citing the overage on the gas and electric bills, and (b) the Barnstable District awarding more money to Hyannis West due to their lack of such a financial safety net.

- Person who can write grants / bring in money (Steve, Molly S)
- BCHMCPS is an incubator of innovation (Patty / Steve) someone who gets the parents involved, need for a parent-wide CORI check, so that “all parents can immediately pitch in to help, either in class or
“on an outing.” “What incentives would you use to build the group of parents?” (Anna)

- Conflict resolution – how do you handle different points of view (from staff, students, parents and/or District leaders). (Alicea)

**Grouping the questions / Process (6:45p)**

Chairman Wood started to group the questions under Organization, Leadership Style, Accelerated School plus (ASP) Educational beliefs/knowledge, Financial, Communication; and went over the upcoming time-line for the interview process.

- Teams of two will visit the four schools, with the Franklin and Mansfield on one day, and Chatham and Falmouth on the other.

- Mr. Galvin will handle the communication with the four candidates to schedule them in at either 4:30, or 6p on the 12th and 13th.

- Trustee Fedele urged the BOT to move into executive session following the last interview on the 13th (and not schedule yet another day) “I’m concerned that one or two of these candidates could be looking at other positions too…we should be expedient…”

Ms. Griswold left at 7p.

- Reference checks were discussed, and Chairman Wood, thought Ms. Poyant, and Mr. Smily could help out Ms. Horgan and Mr. Thompson (each handling one finalist).

**Formation of questions (7:06p):**

1. Molly S. – As a principal, what are the most important ways you will support the staff? How do you bring out excellence in others? And how do you deal with mediocrity? Please use examples.

2. Molly F - Describe the role of the principal in handling challenging disciplinary situations. Give an example of how you handled a challenging situation involving student behavior.

3. Steve T. As a charter school we have a responsibility to be an incubator of innovation for our school and for the district. Given the current trends in education, describe how you would envision us fulfilling this goal.

4. Alicea S. - We are a school choice state. Please give us concrete examples of how you have increased enrollment and or stemmed the tide of students leaving your school. What strategies would you use to build a demand for our school?

5. Patty H. - Given the increasing demands placed on schools, what do you think are the key components to maintaining high staff morale?
6. Steve G. - Describe a situation at your school where you were able to mediate in order to resolve a conflict.

7. Andrea W. - Given what you know about our school’s performance, what recommendations would you make to elevate student achievement?

8. John B. – Over the past 3 years our allocation from the district has been consistently reduced as our needs have increased. How would you address this challenge?

9. Anna G. – The parents of our neediest students are often not involved in the school. What strategies would you use to engage them?

10. Steve T. – How do you decide what tasks to delegate and what to do yourself? How do you manage the process?

11. Molly S. – You have gone through a rigorous interview process. Tell us the one thing you would like us to know that has been left unsaid.

**Assignment of questions (8:23p):** Each Trustee will ask a question, with two trustees asking two.

**Auction / Parent’s Social – May 16th,** Chairman Wood handed out invitations to the Oyster Harbor’s Event.

**Next Meetings:** May 12, 13\(^{th}\) (4:30 start times) and the 19\(^{th}\) (6pm).

**Adjournment** – On a motion by Ms. Wood and seconded by Ms. Horgan, the board adjourned at 8:38p (6-0-0). Mr. Burnett’s paperwork is not yet finalized and Ms. Griswold had left earlier.