

## **Hamilton-Wenham Superintendent Search Focus Group and Survey Summary**

The Massachusetts Association of School Committees conducted a series of focus group meetings and an online survey with stakeholders in Hamilton-Wenham to gain insight into concerns of educators, parents, citizens, and other interested persons for the superintendent selection process. The focus groups took place on December 12 and 18, 2019 and on January 8 and 9, 2020. The survey was available from December 12, 2019 to January 9, 2020. A total of 52 people attended the focus groups and there were 126 responses to the online survey. Participants and respondents were asked to advise the school committee on areas of strength and areas of challenge in the district, as well as the qualifications, skills and attributes that the next superintendent should possess.

### **Areas of Strength**

Among the many areas of strength identified, four recurring themes emerged: the teaching staff, a forward-looking vision for the district, strong academic achievement and a sense of community.

Teaching Staff – Respondents from all stakeholder groups view the educators in the district as an asset. They are described as committed and caring. Parents feel that teachers get to know their children and that teachers are passionate, supportive of their students and invested in their success. Educators who come to Hamilton-Wenham tend to stay, providing the district with a highly-qualified and consistent staff that serves its students well. The educators themselves describe a culture of community among the staff and a supportive, collegial environment. Staff turnover, sometimes a significant issue in school districts, is not a major concern given that many educators remain and are highly motivated for many reasons. The willingness to work in teams and to collaborate is also cited as a morale boosting element of work here.

Educators did note that the search committee as currently planned had a balance of non-educators over district teachers and administrators, and there was a consensus that this is unfair to them. *They asked that this point be relayed to the school committee.*

Forward Vision – Unique to Hamilton-Wenham, there was broad agreement that a strength of the district is the forward-looking view of education. In fact, a long-term plan is now in development and was to have been presented in initial form in late January or early February. In teaching and learning, the district is looking toward the future, seeking ways to deliver a meaningful education to the students that relies less on what has been done in the past and more on what will engage students and ensure their future success in a rapidly changing world. Several respondents noted professional development work that focused on the need to re-evaluate the way students are being educated to create a future-focus. Respondents also lauded efforts of the district to chart its own path, rather than copying what other districts do.

They hope that the school committee will select “a person who can bring people in and let them collaborate on the vision so that we can ‘make it happen.’”

It was also widely recognized that a strength of the district is in school leadership and central office administration. As staff look ahead for the next 5-7 years, they see opportunities to “invest in the long-term strategy” to address broad initiatives on curriculum, student services, and overall student success. There is great confidence in the potential of teachers and school-based professionals as well as the leadership team to “take the next deep dive.”

Also, in this sphere, was the recognition that the parents and faculty are mindful of the need to identify areas where improvement can be achieved. “We are all engaged in an internal process to learn how to get better, because we’re not reaching all of our kids,” said one teacher, an observation that was supported by colleagues.

Strong academic achievement – Stakeholders are proud of the school district’s reputation for high academic achievement. Students are high-performing and well-prepared for college and career when they graduate. The reputation of the district makes it attractive to families who want their children to be in the best schools, as well as to dedicated educators making career choices.

However, educators and parents were quick to point out, as one person noted, “Student success is way more than results on the MCAS or college prep tests. We want to produce students who are social and emotionally strong, articulate and able to confront and solve problems.”

Sense of community – A sense of community was mentioned from several angles. Parents expressed an appreciation for the engagement the schools have in the community, which carries through to involving students in the community. In addition, stakeholders feel that the small size of the district allows for a sense of community within the schools. Students from both towns interact regularly beginning at the elementary level, so consider themselves to be part of Hamilton-Wenham, not necessarily from Hamilton or from Wenham. Educators spoke about the culture of community among the staff, where a strong sense of collegiality and support among educators exists.

In addition to the four recurring themes, several other strengths were mentioned.

Support for the schools – Stakeholders expressed an appreciation of the support the schools generally receive from the two towns. Neither Hamilton nor Wenham have a significant commercial base, so funding for the schools comes primarily from the residential tax base. Taxpayers have funded the schools at a level that allows for strong educational outcomes.

Programs and extracurricular activities available to the students – Small districts, such as Hamilton-Wenham, sometimes struggle to provide a wide range of courses and extra-curricular offerings to their students. Stakeholders in Hamilton-Wenham lauded the district, however, for the variety of opportunities available to students. At the same time, there is a concern that more AP classes could be offered and some stakeholders held the view that more

opportunities, particularly in the area of foreign language, would be welcome. In addition, the class sizes in the district remain small, an important factor for many stakeholders.

### **Areas of Challenge**

Facilities – The most-often mentioned challenge facing the district is the condition of the facilities, particularly the athletic fields. There is a sense that this issue has existed for a number of years and has yet to be addressed. Stakeholders look at other neighboring districts that have upgraded facilities and feel they are losing ground as a district because the issue has not been addressed in Hamilton-Wenham. Stakeholders also believe that this is a looming budget issue that will impact the two communities.

Budget – At the same time stakeholders felt that the towns are supportive of the schools, there is also a concern over the status of the budget. As with many similar suburban communities, the lack of a commercial tax base and a lack of significant state aid combine to put pressure on the budget. There is a concern that these factors have caused some of the facilities issues the district is now facing. There is also the potential for cuts to programs and services in the future. Several comments were made about the number of administrative positions that have been created within the budget and whether or not this is the best use of limited resources.

Special Education Programming – Again, as with other similarly-sized districts, Hamilton-Wenham faces challenges to provide special education programming that meets the needs of each student in a cost-effective manner. There is concern about the district's ability to create programming that serves the needs of individual students. In addition, there is concern about whether more students could be better served by developing in-district programming rather than sending students out-of-district. There is opportunity here, but it was also noted that the district lacks the resources to serve all students with severe special needs in-house. Also, the district has some parents who unilaterally place their children out-of-district and subsequently appeal to get the district to pay the out-of-district cost.

Curriculum – There is some concern over the status of curriculum development in the district. Mentioned was a reliance on out-of-the-box curricula. Educators see a greater need to develop materials that meet the needs of diverse learners than are often provided by packaged curriculum. In addition, the need for more vertical articulation was mentioned so that students' knowledge and skill development are more seamless as they move from level to level. At the same time, there is concern that the number of new initiatives is high, and this does not enable educators to implement the new initiatives as fully as they would like before the next one comes along.

Social-Emotional Learning – Not surprisingly in a district with high achievement and high expectations for students, the social-emotional health of students is a concern that stakeholders expressed. There was not a sense that the schools ignore this area of student learning and health, but that it is an ongoing concern about which schools should remain aware and continue

to address. “We live in an anxious society,” noted one teacher, adding that “academic and social pressures are increasing at noticeable levels.”

Ranking of district – Among some stakeholders, there is a sense that the high academic ranking of the district is slipping. For those that sense this is the case, they feel the need exists to address any issues that are causing the rankings to decline.

Diversity – Like many smaller suburban districts, Hamilton-Wenham tends to be less diverse than a larger, more urban district. Stakeholders believe it is important to find ways to help students develop appreciation for diversity.

What we do not know. Several participants who understand finance and strategic planning warned of the need to anticipate the inevitable challenges of next decade. There is concern that a significant tax burden could be exacerbated if an economic downturn cuts results in budget cuts. In addition, a visionary superintendent, working with knowledgeable staff, will need to focus on college-readiness and career preparation given that “a lot of jobs to be filled in the next 10 years may not have even been conceived yet.” Another commented that “Not since the Depression or Post-War period have students faced such a fast changing, unpredictable, and uncertain future, but we have to get them ready. What creative energies will be needed to meet this challenge if we’re too busy doing test prep?”

### **The Next Superintendent**

Some characteristics of importance to a district seeking a new superintendent tend to be fairly universal, as is the case in Hamilton-Wenham.

Reflected in both the focus groups and in the survey comments, it is most important that the next superintendent possess superior communication skills. Communication skills, of course, actually incorporate a variety of separate skills. Stakeholders emphasize the importance of the superintendent being able to keep all stakeholders, including parents, staff, municipal officials and the community, informed of the needs and successes of the school district. Another parent suggested the right superintendent would also be “intelligent and foresighted, but able to relate to teachers, students and parents as an inspiration. They should want to succeed for the new superintendent.”

In addition to keeping stakeholders informed, respondents are looking for a leader who will be a champion for the schools, who will be able to articulate a clear vision and get people excited about supporting the vision. Related to this was the need for a “courageous leader who is willing to take risks in the face of skeptics or critics to move forward on innovation and change.”

A leader who is visible is also an important priority across all stakeholder groups. Respondents are looking for a leader who will be widely known and seen throughout the district. Educators believe the superintendent should know each teacher.

Outside of the school day, stakeholders seek a leader who will be present at school events and other important community events and one who interacts with parents, community members and town officials. During the school day, educators seek a leader who is in the buildings and in classrooms, known by students and whose presence in the buildings contributes to an understanding of successes and challenges of the district, helping to inform the decisions made regarding the needs and direction of the district.

There is also a desire for a leadership style that is inclusive and collaborative. Educators in the district would like to know that their opinions are heard, respected and included in decision-making. They believe they have much to contribute to the success of the district and would like to be part of the decision-making process, especially when a vision and goals for the district are established.

Given the challenges that stakeholders perceive regarding the school district budget, a leader with fiscal savvy and strong financial skills is important for the district moving forward. The leader should be astute in managing fiscal resources to address the facilities issues that currently exist. In addition to being able to set budget priorities, and craft and advocate for a budget to meet district needs, a leader who has the experience and know-how to access outside funding, such as grants, would be an asset to the district.

In addition to this, with the advent of the Student Success Act of 2019, the next superintendent should understand the aspects of the Act relevant to Hamilton-Wenham and be able advocate to legislators on the district's behalf.

Related to this financial management priority, community representatives value the collaborative and constructive relationship with local officials. The current Town Administrator of Wenham explained at one of the focus groups that several challenges confront any school leader including a limited ability to generate all the revenue needed to meet every municipal goal and that state funding is dependent upon the ability of the legislature to appropriate it. Property taxes are a major consideration for most home owners and that constitutes, for a meaningful share of the communities, the principal way in which they relate to schools. He noted convincingly that a superintendent must continue to work collaboratively with administrators in both towns and cited initiatives for coordinating efforts currently in place.

In order to continue the positive aspects valued by stakeholders in the school district, respondents are also seeking a leader who has a proven track record of understanding and recognizing good teaching and the ability to recruit and retain a highly qualified staff. This goes hand in hand with maintaining high academic achievement. It was specifically recommended that the search committee raise these concerns with the candidates.

There were also strong recommendations that the next superintendent have not only an understanding of school budgeting, but also of key systems and operations, including technology, building maintenance, and student services (transportation, food, etc.).

### **Suggested Selection Criteria**

Based on the feedback from the focus groups and survey, the School Committee may consider including the following criteria in selecting the next leader of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District:

- Communication skills that reflect a dynamic and accessible leader;
- Knowledge and experience in school budget and fiscal development, implementation and oversight and communication of budget issues to the public;
- Demonstrated success in improving and maintaining high academic performance;
- Understands and recognizes good teaching;
- Demonstrated knowledge of Special Education programming and its administrative elements;
- Knowledgeable of public policy, state operational mandates and regulations;
- A leadership style that is visible and inclusive;
- Capacity for innovative thinking and openness to new approaches to teaching and learning;
- Demonstrated experience in capital planning.

# What is your vision of education in the future in the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District?

My child just started in kindergarten this year, so I do not have a robust understanding or experience of the district yet. So far we are happy with things. I think communication and organization of the kindergarten application process was lacking and extremely strange compared to other places we have lived. I would hope this improves. I would also like to see some more outside funding, grants, partnerships, innovation for the district because keeping the budget so high and continually rising only attracts a certain type of family that can afford to live here. If you are able to keep quality and keep the budget in check I think diversity will follow.

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I'm not sure. I thought a new superintendent would guide us through that type of process.

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Academically rigorous, appreciative of diversity, community- focused

Equivalent to Manchester Essex or even Lynnfield or Lincoln Sudbury

education cost equals value of education other districts spend less but rate better than HW

To be a district that other districts look to on the north shore and state.

I want to be like Weston Schools

-More attention paid to social emotional literacy than testing - More time outdoors/moving/PE - Greater focus on quality science and math education - continued support of arts/music - continued retention of exceptional teachers

Every student should be coming of the School District prepared for whatever they wish to pursue next.

Same as it is now, to prepare students to be productive members of a global economy.

Too broad of a question

Communicate goals and objectives with the parents as well as the community. Be very transparent about the needs of the schools/students and work WITH the towns' politicians to achieve these things. Create a district that takes a holistic approach to education and find a way to meet the needs of as many students as possible, rather than creating two populations- those with Special Needs and those without.

Make learning more applicable to modern life.

My vision for the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District is one where content is taught and skills are developed in a way that continues to inspire students to be curious, pursue their passions, and be life-long learners and contributing members of our society.

Supportive learning environment for all students and teachers.

100% graduation 100% college or trade school acceptance and placement Growth in STEM focus

I have not idea where education is headed, but it does seem like it is changing and we (administration, faculty, parents, students) need to embrace that change and try to lead the charge. I am very pleased with the school system's ability to integrate traditional learning with new technology and hope that continues to evolve.

I hope that our schools continue to thrive and that community and governmental feedback be considered.

Students will learn how to learn so that they are valued members of the 21st century workforce who are prepared to tackle problems such as climate change and complex socio-economic issues. The School District will foster curiosity, open-mindedness, and kindness within its students to enable them to work in diverse teams and environments. College acceptance will not be promoted as the only successful outcome, recognizing the merits of the arts and the trades and the value in pursuing your passion. Providing some type of personal finance preparation would also be a lovely idea.

Better facilities

We should consider co-locating our schools to allow our elementary students more flexibility in groups and services. Although we require community service for a graduation requirement, we do not instruct students on what it means or have them reflect. Can we move our district to develop students who are more civic and service oriented?

We can be a district who is leading the charge for education that is focused on building a culture of curiosity, strengthening social-emotional skills, hands-on experiences and collaborative problem solving skills. We can prepare students to be lifetime learners.

It's a wonderful district because it's small however it needs a more diverse base in leadership. I would like to see a new superintendent be able to drum up enthusiasm from parents to be more involved on a macro level.

Provides abundant resources and support for the students to succeed, both academically and interpersonally.

To continue to create an environment of strong, compassionate learners

Welcoming, positive, high performing, inclusive.

Lets continue to drive for excellence and take the best from our great community and provide great citizens for the world.

HWRSD offers terrific programs given its small size. The district needs to innovate and look at the balance of academics and social-emotional development of students (as many students are either high achieving and very stressed or not engaged with their education - not many are 'in the middle' in this community).

To reduce our out of district students and be back in the top 10 in Massachusetts

21 century infrastructure. Strong Principals, and a need to advocate for funding Special Needs mandates. A focus on what goes on in the classroom (excellent teachers) and less on administration.

I appreciate the direction the district is heading by inviting Will Richardson to direct our work around 'what is learning?' I think this is an important conversation for the middle and high school as we prepare students for a future that may not rely on traditional schooling. I do think we would benefit from serious work with some cross grade work to identify how learning evolves from K-12 and how to we build off skills/learning from year to year. I think initiating an elementary literacy data team is a good start and I would like to see this happen with math and the report cards

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Efficient, appropriate, evolutionary, high quality education for our students with appropriate use of tax payer funding. More funding for the betterment of our students, and less funding to top heavy administrators or unionized pressures.

There is no reason we shouldn't be in the top 10 districts in the state. Small can lead to issues of scale, I get it, but we have every advantage in level of education and income of families and should be small but MIGHTY.

I think we continue to be a leader in the education of students in MA. I would like to see that our teachers keep the ability to innovate and to offer diverse courses for our students.

Strive to be the best school district on the North Shore



Children have current knowledge and tools for physical, mental and social emotional health. They understand the changing world due to Climate crisis. They have the understanding of how to have agency, purpose and willpower to feel they can enter the future with impact and hope.

At the forefront of the project-based learning initiative, HW will continue to foster the emotional and academic needs of all students.

I would love to see a district where staff are comfortable and collaborative across content areas and grade levels because communication is frequent and positive. I would love to see caring schools where students take leadership in creating the norms and culture. I would love to see building administrators and curriculum supervisors who are in classrooms and are positive role models in teaching and interacting with kids. I'd love to see administrators taking leadership roles in developing school culture and addressing cultural issues (bullying, etc).

I would like to see more opportunity for students at the secondary level to identify and explore their own academic related interests, in addition to meeting the core requirements. Can we help students to pursue an area of interest if it is not offered in the school currently? I would like our students to find passion (some do, but a large number are just trying to "get through")

An innovative school district that employs up-to-date research on learning to give our students the best that is out there.

HWRSD will become a regional leader in modern student learning?

I see classrooms in which the needs of ALL students' needs are met. A Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is implemented into the curriculum of all content areas. Special educators and general educators are able to work together to plan UDL-driven curriculum together.

employability of all graduates

HW has so much potential. The students, families and staff are wonderful. We are limited by a lack of leadership at the very top level, an under-funded budget, and perhaps, a lack of imagination. The future of this district will depend on what we do about those three challenges.

Leveraging our community's financial means and desire to be involved in order to try to innovate and offer a unique and well-rounded educational experience to our students.

I would like to see a higher reading success rate in the elementary grades.

Do right by the kids. Let educators educate.

My vision for education in the future is to create lifelong learners and dispell the myth that the college track is the ONLY track for our learners. How can we all support what's best for our learners and how to teach them how to be flexible, creative problem-solvers who can collaborate and compromise and be persistent and not entitled. Create a collaboration within our community where the families don't see us as simply servants or employees but rather team players who all have our learners best interests in mind. Invest in the future.

Creating life long learners for the 21st century by understanding the developmental needs for the learners in our district and prioritizing the "soft skills" that students need for success in life.

A supportive environment for teachers and students, parents. Where the voices of all are valued equally.

we value student and teacher agency and reimagine our schools so we are not continuing old fashioned school

To meet the changing needs of our students academically , emotionally, and socially in a meaningful way. To support our teachers and staff to develop professionally.

We need to change the way we think about schools to support our teachers and students.

The continued trajectory of modern learning- how are we making our learners more invested and successful in their learning?

We continue to work on modern learning initiative started by current principals.

Students have more opportunities for off campus learning. Students are more involved in becoming leaders of change where they are invested in making a difference. A focus on the Whole Child, where students practice basic life skills, common courtesy, the ability to self regulate, challenge themselves, and feel supported.

We need to re-evaluate how we are preparing students providing other arenas besides college prep courses.

A Superintendent that is true instructional leader, one that I can learn from and one that I would be honored to work for.

Teaching should not only help students attain skills needed, but also coach them to work for their own goals and passions. We need kids that know how to learn. Students should feel empowered by the learning process.

It would be great to further regionalize with Manchester-Essex or Ipswich. It is way too provincial around here.

To maintain it's high standards and be able to retain good teachers without over-burdening the community with higher taxes

I want the Superintendent to lead the district in an innovative and progressive direction.

Education will be a flexible concept in that not every student will be expected to show their skills in the same format.

HWRSD will create a learning experience for all students PreK-12 that meets their individual needs and helps them discover their strengths and talents. This will be done when the community, schools, and families come together under the leadership of a superintendent that will take the time to get to know them and will guide the change process.

Move toward more student agency Play based kindergarten

An environment in which all 21st Century learners have opportunities to succeed and show their growth in proficiency.

Very similar to my answer for #5: My vision is, as often as possible, to connect kindness and gratitude for our planet and toward one another to high standards and excellence in academics.

leadership

High ranking district where students have a competitive advantage heading to college

Should be Top 5 in the Commonwealth.

A district that creates an environment where students can learn to be life long learners. Who are prepared to be excellent in anything they do. Who have an intuitive understanding of fundamentals of mathematics, science, and critical thinking/reading. Again, a district where anyone would want to send their child if they could, where you'd be foolish not to send your child.

We provide a high quality education that exposes students to a wide array of knowledge, skills, and experiences that will help them become functional adults in a democratic society. This would mean we have the facilities, programs, and staff (teaching staff that is) necessary to bring this vision to fruition. Note, nothing in my vision requires endless

hours of screen time, self-promotion via social media, uncritical embrace of fads, shielding students from challenges, or an ever-growing cadre of administrators each forcing the teachers to take time away from students for their own purposes.



Solid academics with less emphasis on fancy buildings

Inclusion, diversity, and equality for all students. Strong support for students with an IEP. Support for AP classes and producing students prepared to engage global society in both civic and professional life.

High achieving at all levels

HWRSD needs to be more technologically advanced at all levels; usage, providing, educating, innovative.

Providing an education comparable to other top ranked school districts with similar demographics.

to develop well-rounded learners who understand the social engagement pieces of work as well as the educational components

A whole child approach - academic, social, emotional

A HW graduate will possess academic and social skills that will allow them success in a variety of life settings.

Growth mindset, experience driven, interactive, and joyful learning environment.

strong academics and real life skills to build success as responsible citizens

Focused on educating our students and preparing them for post secondary education as well as their adult lives. Placing a focus not only academics, but also acceptance for all. Educating our students using technological tools while also teaching them how to safely navigate the world around them.

Better handle on incoming student population. Better job at unifying parents around a school community theme. A better image...even the schools grounds are depressing!

We should aim to educate our children to become good citizens not just good college freshmen.

## **Proposed -**

### **Superintendent Screening Committee Charge**

#### **Authority Membership**

The Superintendent Screening Screening Committee is an ad hoc committee appointed by the School Committee.

The Superintendent Screening Screening Committee will have twelve (\_\_\_\_) members composed as follows:

- \_\_\_\_ Parents
- \_\_\_\_ Teachers
- 1 Principal
- 1 Central Office Representative
- \_\_\_\_ Community members

The Committee shall function as a governmental body of the Region as defined in the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Screening Committee interviews shall be in Executive Session under Exemption 8, and to the extent permitted by law, the Screening Committee shall maintain the names and any information about the candidates in strict confidence until it votes its recommendations. Names and information pertaining to Semi-finalists not chosen as Finalists shall be retained as confidential.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Committee's responsibilities shall be to:

1. Work with the MASC consultant in reviewing community input and feedback regarding the traits and management style desired for the next Town Manager.
2. Review with the consultant the selection criteria for evaluating the candidates.
3. Review those candidate's resumes and application materials recommended for interview by the consultant and evaluate this information based upon the established selection criteria. The current Interim Superintendent shall be interviewed as part of the process.
4. Work with the consultant to develop interview questions for the Screening Committee interviews.
5. Conduct interviews of the recommended candidates in executive session.

6. Review background and references as appropriate.
7. Recommend to the School Committee a minimum of three final candidates who best match the selection criteria, so long as all are desirable final candidates. Work with the Consultant to provide the key attributes each candidate should possess.

### **Deliverable**

It is expected that Superintendent Screening Committee shall begin its work on February 11 and shall submit its list of recommended finalists to the School Committee by March\* \_\_\_\_\_ (9th is a Monday. 11th is a Wed., but would affect the site visit schedule.), unless another date is agreed to by the School Committee .

### **Reference:**

Charge adopted by the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee on January 16, 2020.

\* The original last day for the screening committee to meet is the state primary election day. Although not prohibited by law, holding public meetings on an election day is discouraged. **The Screening Committee may need March 9 as their final meeting day.**

## Re: Screening Committee for Superintendent

Kotch, John <J.Kotch@hwschools.net>

Mon 1/6/2020 8:07 AM

To: Polito, David <D.Polito@hwschools.net>; Bailey, Michelle <M.Bailey@hwschools.net>; Leone, Vincent <v.leone@hwschools.net>

Hi All,

The following people have asked to be on the Screening Committee:

### **Elementary:**

*Mary Adamik*

*Kathy O'Shea*

Comment: Both have tremendous experience in our district. Mary has also served on many negotiation committees and has therefore worked with Superintendents and School Committees more closely over her career.

### **Middle School:**

*Catherine Frost*

Comment: She is an excellent choice and the only choice! She was a student at our school, a past VP of the Education Association and has worked with Administrators in various capacities in that role.

### **High School:**

*Maija Scarpaci*

*Bill Melville*

*Kristen Borges*

Comment: All 3 know our school well, with Bill and Kristen having much more experience in our district. Bill, in his role for the local Cable station, has a good understanding of School Committee meetings. Kristen is a Team Leader, has the longest tenure of the 3 as well as experience in other districts, which can be very valuable. She has also had to work with Administrators more directly in her role as Team Leader.

As I mentioned in my previous email, I feel it is **very** important that I be part of the Screening Committee as well. I have more experience than the vast majority of people in the district as not only an employee, but in dealings with numerous Administrators, School Committees and Superintendents as the Association President. Therefore, I can add a comprehensive view that would represent our employees in totality as well as institutional history that no one else would be able to provide.

Thank you and feel free to contact me either via email, a phone call (best to call my cell at

or in a meeting if you wish to discuss further.

Thanks,

John

**From:** Kotch, John

**Sent:** Friday, January 3, 2020 2:24 PM

**To:** Polito, David <D.Polito@hwschools.net>; Bailey, Michelle <M.Bailey@hwschools.net>; Leone, Vincent <v.leone@hwschools.net>

**Subject:** Screening Committee for Superintendent

Hi All,

First of all, I will forward to you the names of any interested teachers on Monday, as I wanted to give people more time following the Winter Break.

Secondly I was thinking more about the make up of the Screening Committee and have had numerous discussions with people about it as well. A couple of thoughts come to mind:

- There are 7 community members (4 "at large" and 3 parents), yet only 3 teachers.
- The people most affected by a Superintendent choice (teachers) are least represented because of this structure.
- This is disproportionate and although we definitely want community members, they should not comprise the majority of the committee.

#### Recommendations

1. Keep the 3 parents, one from each level.
2. Have less (pick a number!) "at large" community members. After all, the parents are already "community members" so why do we need 4 more?
3. Stay with 3 teachers, one from each level.
4. Add the Association President to the Committee. I realize that this is recommending myself! However, I have 25 years experience at HW (also, both of my children attended this school and I am a Curriculum Leader) and as Union President, I have worked with the numerous Superintendents, Administrators and School Committees over the years in everything from personnel issues to contract negotiations. Originally, I did not plan on being on the Committee, but I feel that my experience is important in this process and I can add insight and institutional history as needed.

I will be more than happy to discuss this in person with anyone. I just want to be absolutely certain that we fully represent the Hamilton-Wenham School District most appropriately as we go through this process.

Thanks,

John