

**Mansfield School Committee Meeting
Minutes for Wednesday, November 16, 2016
Town Hall, Room 2A&B**

An **Open Meeting** of the Mansfield School Committee was held at the Town Hall on Wednesday, November 16, 2016. The open meeting session was opened and called to order by Kiera O'Neil at 6:00 pm.

Members Present:

Kiera O'Neil, Chair
Lynn Cavicchi, Vice Chair
Linda Fernando
Lauren Scher
Jenn Walsh

Also Present:

Teresa Murphy, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Members Absent: None

Video Taping: Dana Hourigan 15 Evans Circle

Kiera O'Neil opened the meeting by explaining the interview process. The school committee opted to look internally first. One candidate, Teresa Murphy, applied for the position. Tonight the school committee will interview Teresa and make a decision on how to move forward.

Teresa Murphy made an opening statement. She reviewed her beliefs in education; most importantly it is all about the students. She then provided a brief history of her career in education. Her background crosses different socio-economic classes, religions, disabilities, school environments. Her vision for Mansfield is to maintain a comprehensive school system with expanded offerings.

The following is a list of questions posed to Teresa Murphy.

Jenn

1. *As Assistant Superintendent overseeing curriculum, teaching and student learning, how did you go about determining the strengths and weaknesses of our school district? What specific steps did you take to strengthen areas that need improvement?*
2. *What can a school district do about a marginally effective teacher and/or administrator? What will you do about a marginally effective teacher and/or administrator?*
3. *Can you tell me a little about how you've implemented technology advances in the classroom over the last year? How do you plan to continue to integrate technology and student centered learning?*

Lauren

1. *What do you consider to be the biggest fiscal challenges you will likely face as Superintendent of the Mansfield Schools? What role do you believe you can play in meeting these challenges?*
2. *What steps will you take to work with school administrators to set budget priorities with the knowledge that, within a given year, not everyone will be able to get what they want? Can you provide an example of a time in your career when you had to make a difficult financial decision and the steps you took to make this decision?*

Linda

1. *We understand the value in communicating and engaging with families and the community in order to keep all stakeholders informed of what's occurring in the district. How do you intend to "get out there" in order to share what's going on? How can you go about making the extra effort within the community so it's more than just "communicating"?*

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2. *How important to you are community ideas and parent/community input into District decision-making and budget talks? How would you go about establishing good public relations within the school community and overall community?*
3. *How would you ascertain the public's perception of the school system and what steps would you take to improve or sustain that perception?*

Kiera

1. *As superintendent, you have to serve many masters with different priorities: teachers, parents, students, and the state. How have you handled these conflicts in the past? Do have an overarching philosophy on how you manage servicing these groups?*
2. *What steps do you plan to take to ensure that the Mansfield schools are equipped to support the development of skills students will need to compete in the future economy?*
3. *As a long term employee of this school district, how do you believe your experience would be an asset to this role and what challenges does it bring?*

Lynn

1. *A superintendent is a strong leader only when they effectively allocate time, money, personnel, and resources in ways that align with the goal of achievement for all students. As district leader, how would you balance setting clear, non-negotiable goals about how the district is to be operated while providing school leadership teams with the responsibility and authority for determining how to meet those goals?*
2. *Motivating others to follow your lead, especially on the face of resistance, is a key leadership trait. Describe a situation in which you motivated others to follow your lead in the face of resistance. How did you accomplish that?*
FOLLOW-UP: Describe a situation/event where you met with participants that were of differing opinions or were hostile in nature. What did you do and what was the outcome?
3. *A key responsibility as superintendent is to hire, retain, develop, and motivate personnel in order to achieve the goals of the district. In looking for potential hires in various roles what do you look for? How would you define high potential?*
 - *Preparedness & work ethic*
 - *Concentration & focus*
 - *Competitiveness & self confidence*
 - *Stress management & humility*
 - *Adaptability & learning ability*
 - *Truthfulness & accountability*

The Mansfield High School Student Advisory Council asked two questions of Ms. Murphy.

1. *Although the superintendent is not the first level of administration that students approach with their opinions, concerns or suggestions, how accessible do you plan to be to high school students?*
2. *Since the school spirit or "Mansfield Pride" is a large component of the enthusiasm of the student body and the school district, how, if at all, do you plan to preserve this aspect of Mansfield High School?*

Assistant Superintendent Murphy responded to each interview question. She provided many examples of her work within the district and the community. Detailed answers can be found on the video tape of the meeting.

Teresa Murphy then presented her closing remarks. She has a wide range of experience over many years teaching on both the Pacific and Atlantic coast, in public and private schools, in large and

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small districts, and in suburban and transient environments. She has had the opportunity over the last year and a half to work closely with Mr. Gianetti and Mr. Vozzella on various aspects of administration and has learned a great deal. She is also working toward her PhD. Teresa pointed to the benefits of hiring from within: The committee and community know Teresa, she has 12 years of Mansfield experience; she has the skill set and the work ethic for the job. She already has strong relationships with department heads, town boards and parents. The district is very light on administrator longevity and her experience will be an asset. In summary she offers stability, continuity and an opportunity for growth. She thanked the board for their time and consideration.

At this point Ms. Murphy left the room. Kiera O'Neil listed the options available to the board. They may vote for Teresa Murphy as new superintendent or they may choose not to accept her and move to an external search.

Jenn Walsh made a motion to accept Teresa Murphy as our superintendent subject to successful contract negotiations. Lynn Cavicchi seconded the motion.

Lynn Cavicchi: Lynn supports her candidacy. Lynn has worked closely with Teresa and has seen her grow and seen her ability to move things forward. Zeff Gianetti has done a very good job at mentoring Teresa. The district is moving in a favorable direction. Losing 2 out of 3 people at central office will be difficult. To lose Teresa, as well, would be rough.

Lauren Scher: Lauren was very impressed with Teresa's role in all of the school committee meetings. She works to foster professional development; she listens yet has a clear vision of her own. Lauren was also impressed with Teresa's leadership at JJ. She is concerned that if we don't hire her, another district will scoop her up quickly.

Jenn Walsh: Jenn has worked with Teresa in several capacities and has seen tremendous growth. She likes that Teresa has ties to the community.

Kiera O'Neil: In this interview, Teresa gave good insight as to how she works and where being an internal candidate would be beneficial. Yet at the same time she adds different values than prior superintendents. She feels that Teresa's close community ties will be a huge benefit.

Motion Carries: 5 – 0.

Teresa re entered the room and was congratulated by the board. Teresa expressed her gratitude.

Documents Used: Interview Questions for Teresa Murphy

Motion to adjourn by Jenn Walsh at 7:42 pm; seconded by Lynn Cavicchi.

Motion U.C. 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Nugent
Secretary to the
Superintendent & School
Committee