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Hingham Superintendent Search FAQs

1) Why is Hingham hiring a new superintendent?

- In January 2018, Dr. Dorothy Galo confirmed her plans to fulfill her contract through the 2018-2019 school year and retire at the end of her term in August 2019. Dr. Galo has worked in the Hingham Public Schools for 54 years as a teacher, administrator and as superintendent since 2001. The School Committee announced that it will conduct a full, open search for a new superintendent to be hired for the 2019-2020 school year.

2) Who is responsible for hiring the new superintendent and managing the search process?

- School Committees in each city or town are responsible for hiring the superintendent according to Massachusetts General Law. In Spring 2018, the Hingham School Committee began the process by researching how other school districts conducted superintendent searches. The School Committee chose to hire a consultant to advise and assist in the search process. After reviewing five proposals from nationwide consultants, the School Committee contracted with the New England School Development Council (NESDEC).

3) What is the timeline?

- September - NESDEC announces the position with an application deadline of October 29, 2018.
- Late September/Early October
 - Focus Groups are held with the school staff and community to provide input about the attributes, experience and knowledge that the new superintendent should possess. The groups also provide an opportunity for participants to identify immediate tasks which the new superintendent should address. Focus groups are facilitated by a NESDEC consultant.
 - Online Survey is available for anyone who cannot attend a focus group or wants to share additional information.
- Mid-October
 - The School Committee compiles a *Successful Superintendent Candidate Profile* using the valuable information gathered by

NESDEC through the community needs process. The Candidate Profile will highlight the qualities in a Superintendent most important to the Hingham community, and will be used by the Screening Committee and School Committee to evaluate the candidates.

- The School Committee will appoint a Screening Committee to assist the School Committee by reviewing the applicant pool and interviewing candidates.
- November - The Screening Committee meets to narrow down the field of candidates by:
 - Reviewing applications and resumes from all candidates
 - Selecting 8-12 candidates to interview
 - Recommending approximately 3-5 finalists to the School Committee
 - Please note: The Screening Committee will conduct much of its work in Executive Session (not public) to ensure confidentiality for all candidates.
- Early December - The School Committee publicly announces 3-5 Finalists
- Mid-December - Finalists visit Hingham for staff and public interviews.
- January - The School Committee votes on Hingham's next Superintendent.
- July 2019 - New Superintendent starts in Hingham.

4) What is the purpose of the focus groups?

- The purpose of the focus groups is to develop a Successful Superintendent Candidate Profile, which will be used by the Screening Committee and School Committee to evaluate Superintendent candidates. The groups are designed to obtain participant input about the attributes, experience and knowledge that the new superintendent should possess. The groups also provide an opportunity for participants to identify immediate tasks which the new superintendent should address.
- These focus groups are facilitated by NESDEC (New England School Development Council), the consultant hired by the School Committee. All comments from the focus groups and the online survey will be anonymous and organized by NESDEC into categories and groups (for example: administrators, staff, parents, community members, students, etc.). NESDEC will compile the comments to provide the School Committee with a community needs assessment report. This report provides valuable information to the School Committee to create a *Successful Candidate Profile*.

5) Who is invited to the focus groups?

- All Hingham parents/guardians and community members are encouraged to attend the four Parent/Community focus groups. The groups will be facilitated by a NESDEC consultant and are designed to allow participants to drop in at any time during the sessions.
- For more information: [\(link to press release\)](#)
- The focus group sessions for parents and community members will be held:

Thursday, September 27 th	8:30 - 10:30 AM	Middle School
Saturday, September 29 th	9:00 AM – Noon	Hingham Town Hall
Tuesday, October 2 nd	8:30 - 10:30 AM	Foster School
Tuesday, October 2 nd	7:30 - 9:00 PM	School Department Conference Room

- Separate focus groups are scheduled for school staff, town department staff, special education parents/guardians and high school students. NESDEC will address specific topics with these invitation-only groups.

6) What if I cannot attend a focus group?

- Community feedback is extremely important during the process of hiring our next Superintendent. An online survey will be available if you are not available to attend a focus group, or for anyone to provide additional feedback. You may access the survey at: <https://hinghamschools.com/school-committee/superintendent-search/> .
- The survey will be open Thursday, September 27th through Monday, October 8th at 11:00 pm.

7) What is the Screening Committee?

- While the School Committee has the sole authority to appoint the superintendent, the Committee wishes to have the benefit of input from a Screening Committee made up of various members of the community and schools. The Screening Committee responsibilities include reviewing applications, interviewing chosen candidates and recommending several candidates to the School Committee for further consideration.
- The Screening Committee includes 15 members comprising a balanced representation of staff and community members who have a strong understanding of the responsibilities of the superintendent.
- NESDEC (New England School Development Council), the consulting firm hired by the School Committee to assist with the search, recommended the composition of the Committee based on past successful searches in other districts. The recommendation included a group of 9-12 people with expertise and knowledge of the superintendent’s roles and responsibilities who represent a balance of the community and staff. The School

Committee agreed to follow this recommendation and adapted it to the Hingham community and school district structure. The goal was to represent as many Hingham constituencies as possible, while keeping the committee to a manageable size.

8) How will the Screening Committee be selected?

- The School Committee has invited select groups to appoint or recommend their representatives to the Screening Committee. Those groups include the School Principals, Department Directors, Teachers, PTOs and SEPAC. In addition, the Town Administrator will appoint a Town Hall staff member familiar with the role of the Superintendent. The School Department Central Office recommended, and the School Committee has appointed, Business Services Director, John Ferris, to represent the School Administration. The School Committee will appoint two At-Large community members and School Committee Chair, Michelle Ayer, has appointed School Committee members, Liza O'Reilly as Chair of the of the Screening Committee and Carlos DaSilva as Vice Chair of the Screening Committee.
- For more information: [\(link to press release\)](#)

9) How can I volunteer to serve on the Screening Committee?

- The School Committee will appoint the At-Large members as the final two representatives on the Screening Committee. The School Committee is accepting applications from anyone who expresses an interest in serving by completing an [online application form](#). The deadline to apply is October 5, 2018.
- The position requires a significant commitment of confidentiality and time. In addition, individuals applying should:
 - Be available to attend several evening and Saturday meetings including all the candidate interview sessions
 - Abide by the State Ethics and Open Meeting Laws
 - Understand that much of the business of the Screening Committee will require a high degree of confidentiality as potential candidates' names and application materials will be reviewed and discussed.
 - Have knowledge and experience with the role and responsibilities of the superintendent
- There will be three parent representatives on the Committee. Any parent wishing to serve may also contact their PTO president or SEPAC chair, as appropriate.
- Please contact any other appointing bodies directly.

10) Why are Screening Committee meetings held in Executive Session instead of being open to the public?

- Screening Committee interviews and discussions of candidates are conducted in Executive Session in compliance with Massachusetts General Laws. However, a portion of the Screening Committee work will be held in public session such as the orientation sessions.
- The Hingham School Committee is committed to a full and open superintendent search and welcomes all qualified candidates to apply for the position. To encourage as many candidates as possible, it is important to protect their privacy and not jeopardize their current employment status. Massachusetts Open Meeting Law allows for a screening committee to conduct the preliminary screening process in executive session to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all candidates. The Screening Committee work is the only aspect of the search conducted in private.
- The Screening Committee will recommend 3-5 finalists to the School Committee. Once announced, the names of the finalists, their resumes and all School Committee deliberations will be open and public. Opportunities will be available for the public and staff to meet the finalists.

11) How can the public and staff participate in the search process?

- There will be many opportunities for parents to participate and voice opinions during this process including:
 - focus groups in late September/early October and an online survey.
 - once the 3-5 finalists are announced, all School Committee deliberations will take place in open public meetings, which the community is encouraged to attend and watch.
 - the finalists will be invited to Hingham to meet the community and staff.
 - community feedback is strongly encouraged at all stages of this process. As your representatives, the School Committee will make the final hiring decision, so please contact them with questions, concerns or feedback at any point.

12) When will the next superintendent start?

- According to the timeline developed by the School Committee and NESDEC, the Committee will vote on the next Superintendent in January and plan for the person to be in Hingham in July 2019. The exact start date will be negotiated between him/her and the Committee.

13) Where can I find more information about the Superintendent search?

- <http://hinghamschools.com/school-committee/superintendent-search/>