



## **Epping School District Searches for a New Superintendent**

Valerie McKenney, Superintendent of the Epping School District tendered her intention to retire effective June 30, 2020 in early summer of 2019. The Epping School Board, in an effort to get the best possible replacement, began inquiring about Superintendent Search Services in the area. In late August, the Epping School Board interviewed two Executive search companies- The New England School Development Council and the Bryan Group, LLC. After hearing what each company had to offer, the Epping School Board selected the Bryan Group, LLC, which is a consulting firm that provides high-level capacity building services to organizations in the education and business sectors. Services include retained executive search, strategic planning, leader coaching, and organization development to include talent and performance management best practices.

The company urged us to select a comprehensive team of twelve individuals that represented the stakeholders in our community; administrators, teachers, students, parents and community members, which would be known as the Superintendent Search committee. The committee consists of two parents – Joshua Denoncour and Jordenne Sargent; two SAU office personnel- Bonnie Sandstrom, Business Administrator and Cathy Zylinski, Student Services Director; two teachers – Joy Page, Grade 7 Social Studies and Joanne McCann, High School Math, two students - Austin Clark, grade 9 and Kayla Orthman grade 12; Coby Troidl, Epping Middle School Principal; Greg Dodge, Epping Town Administrator; and two Epping School Board members – Deborah Brooks and Nicole Carleton with Ben Leavitt as the alternate.

The Bryan Group coached and instructed the committee through competency based hiring practices. The group met almost weekly to determine the competencies required for our community and school district. With help from over 400 Epping Community respondents in a survey designed to provide specific information about each stakeholder's group's priorities, we were able to determine a set of competencies that were focused on the following: Student learning and growth, leadership and supervision, interpersonal skills, management and administration, thinking and judgement and personal characteristics. Since early October, the Superintendent's Search Committee has met, worked individually and in smaller sub-committees for approximately 70 hours since September 2019 to determine the priorities for candidates that were the right fit for our community. We are proud to announce that we have two final candidates to present to the community and School Board.

William Furbush, Superintendent in the Pelham School District, is an experienced school leader with a history of facilitating and providing for improving achievement opportunities at the building and district levels for his students. He has a passion for Competency Based Education and personalized learning that shows in his current and past positions and through his lifelong learning demonstrated through his doctoral work at New England College focused on Competency Based Education . Prior to becoming Superintendent in Pelham, he was the

Assistant Superintendent in SAU #16 (Exeter district) as well as Principal at the Cooperative Middle School in Stratham, NH for several years. His diverse background also includes teaching German in York Middle School, serving as a non-commissioned officer in Iraq, serving on his own community's school board, as well as other education administrative positions over the past 22 years. He understands that culture and climate are essential components to successful changes and has worked hard to show strengths in collaboration and consensus building, while putting students at the forefront of his decisions. The committee thinks his focus and result-oriented mindset will be a great fit for the Epping School District.

Adam Houghton is currently the principal of Rochester Middle School, where he was also Assistant Principal before taking this position. Prior to that, he worked at SAU 23 in North Haverhill for over ten years, where he was a computer teacher, Director of Technology and Assistant to the Superintendent. He moved to his position in Rochester where his work to implement Competency Based Education and its impact on students and the school community is an essential component to best serving a school district in NH. Adam has worked to build his professional portfolio with building level Administration experience understanding that this is critical in eventually opening doors to a Superintendent position. His experiences have allowed him to gain knowledge in community building, curriculum oversight, budgeting, educational technology, and grant management. His previous Administrative and Technology background would be welcomed in the Epping School district. He comes highly recommended by his current and former districts who report he is exemplary in his ability to set a vision for his school, work with stakeholders to develop a path to achieve that vision.

A community Meet and Greet is scheduled for Tuesday January 28th at 6:30 starting in the Middle School gym. The committee will meet to review all community input. The Epping School Board will be presented with the candidates and the committee's recommendations on January 30th.