
EAST GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2915 Hall Street SE
East Grand Rapids, MI 49506

James E. Morse, Ed.D.
Superintendent

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SPECIAL Meeting of the East Grand Rapids Board of Education

Community Board Room at the James E. Morse Administration Center at Woodcliff, 2915 Hall Street, SE,
East Grand Rapids, MI 49506. Phone 616-235-3535.

Wednesday, June 7, 2006

7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The SPECIAL MEETING of the East Grand Rapids Public Schools Board of Education, Kent County, Michigan, was held on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 in the Community Board Room, James E. Morse Administration Center at Woodcliff, 2915 Hall Street SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Board of Education:

Present: Mrs. Beth Lent, Mr. Charlie Denton, Mr. Joe Camp, Mrs. Stacy Trierweiler, Mrs. Diane Bok, Mr. Brian Ellis, and Mrs. Julie Ridenour

Meeting Called to Order

Mrs. Lent called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Mrs. Lent announced that the schedule for Wednesday evening would be the second interview and then the Board will recess following that interview and will reconvene at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 8, 2006 for deliberation.

Public Comment – None

Second Interview of David F. Larson, Ed.D., Superintendent Candidate

David F. Larson, Ed.D.

David F. Larson, Ed.D., currently the Superintendent at Harbor Springs Public Schools in Harbor Springs, MI, was reintroduced to the Board and the audience.

Mrs. Lent welcomed Dr. Larson and described the format for the interview. Questions from the audience will be included at the end of the session, if time permits. The task of choosing the Superintendent is the responsibility of the Board as representatives of the community. The Board appreciates and seeks input from staff and community members during this process.

Dr. Larson then responded to questions from the Board regarding: what has he learned about this district that has impressed him favorably; his reactions to our Strategic Plan, challenges, any changes; has he had to overrule a direct report, how that was handled, what was the situation; his experience with Special Education and where does he see the future of Special Education; as a current Superintendent what strengths would you bring to this district and what challenges; explain his work with Legislative people in Northern Michigan and how has he gotten parental and community support in Harbor Springs; does he feel we educate our children in the United States to be competitive internationally; first interview

mentioned value of dissenting opinion, give examples and explain; we are all human, what is the biggest mistake in your career, what did you learn from it and how did you grow; talented and strong leadership team, how would he approach and work with this group; Kent ISD going through major changes (retirements, etc.) how would he step in and fill a role within the county; how are you characterized as visionary; what lessons were learned in the bond issue at Harbor Springs; what level of importance to you are co-curricular activities and where is it's place in this community, how helps kids (especially Middle School students) seeking or not seeking co-curricular activities; inadequacy of Foundation Grant Funding from the State of Michigan, how would he adjust to the challenge of coming to a district which has less; who has had the greatest influence on him in his life; parents in this district are active and engaged, how handle demanding parents, especially if parents are not happy with the decision; if hired, how long would he see himself staying in EGR; what would the first 100 days of his Superintendency look like; what would be the priorities if State of Michigan says the district has to cut half million dollars out of the budget; views on Schools of Choice; focus of the Board is teaching and learning, what experience and perspective does he have with negotiations with staff; diversity and cultural competency, how would he pursue this commitment in EGR; how would he assure win/win situation for everyone without turning it into giving everyone what they ask for; what does Professional Development look like in Harbor Springs right now; sense of humor, how would he describe his sense of humor; what des he see as the main challenges and opportunities for EGR to fulfill its mission; and finally, a key part of providing programs requires a buy-in of staff, administration and parents, how would he help the community to support ideas and programs, what would be his role

Dr. Larson did not have any questions for the Board.

Dr. Larson responded to questions from the audience in the following areas: his perspective of over involvement of parents in athletics.

Dr. Larson thanked the Board for the opportunity for a second interview and gave his closing statement. Mrs. Lent thanked Dr. Larson for his time and interest in the East Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Mrs. Lent then announced that the Board would recess until 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 8, 2006. At that time the Board will reconvene in this room to deliberate. Mrs. Lent recessed the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

June 8, 2006

Mrs. Lent reconvened the meeting at 9:01 a.m.

Public Comment –

Gerald Hickey – 640 Cambridge Blvd. SE – Thanked the Board for their time and effort in this process. He encouraged the Board to offer a site visit to Dr. Sara Shubel. He stated he felt her lack of experience in a few areas could be helped along by the competent staff here at East.

Dr. Rob Deane – 700 Plymouth Blvd. SE – Thanked the Board for their work on this effort to find a new Superintendent for EGRPS. He encouraged the Board to offer a site visit to take a look at the proven track record of Dr. David Larson.

Wendy Wohns – 600 Cambridge Blvd – She spoke of her support for Dr. Sara Shubel and encouraged the Board to offer a site visit to her Intermediate school district.

Rita Maddox – 929 Plymouth SE – She stated that the District has spent a great amount of time on our Strategic Plan and he hope that both candidates can take another look at that plan and respond to that plan in writing of how they could support and implement that plan.

Deliberation and Selection of Candidate(s) for Site Visit

Mrs. Lent stated that the Board has three options this morning: offer one site visit, offer two site visits, or appoint an Interim Superintendent to allow more time for the search.

Mr. Pridgeon outlined the three options for the Board. He then polled the Board for their vote on the above:

Beth Lent - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Charlie Denton - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Brian Ellis - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Stacy Trierweiler - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Joe Camp - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Julie Ridenour - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel
Diane Bok - Proceed with one site visit to Dr. Shubel

Mrs. Lent stated that she felt a visionary leader is what EGR needs now. Mr. Denton asked about the procedure to proceed, background checks, site visit, etc. Mrs. Bok asked if by choosing a visit to Ingham County are we precluding a visit to Harbor Springs. Following the site visit and deliberation, then a decision will be made whether to visit Harbor Springs. Mr. Ellis asked Mr. Pridgeon to describe the site visit. The Board agreed to visit Ingham County ISD on Monday, June 12, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The team will include all Board members. Mrs. Ridenour moved to make a site visit to Ingham ISD to learn more about Dr. Shubel. Mr. Camp seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Adjournment

Mrs. Lent adjourned the meeting at 9:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy L. Trierweiler, Secretary
East Grand Rapids Board of Education

* Minutes for this meeting will be available in the Superintendent's Office at 2915 Hall St. SE, East Grand Rapids, MI 49506. The phone number is 235-3535.

** If you plan to attend and have a special need and require accommodation to attend this meeting, please contact Dr. James Morse at 235-3535.

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06/08/06