



Special Board Meeting of the Board of Education

Thursday, November 13, 2025 5:45 PM

This meeting was held virtually.

Board members present: Lilia Caballero, Kendell Ferguson, Erik Johnsen, Sandra LaNier McHenry, Sunny Spicer, Michael Williams, and Angela Zbikowski

A video recording of the Board meeting can be found on the district website at [this link](#).

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Board Chair Kendell Ferguson called the meeting to order at 5:45 PM. Attendance was noted.

2. Superintendent Search Process

McPherson & Jacobson consultant Steven Lowder guided the Board through the proposed search planning calendar. Also in attendance were consultants Mike Scott and Doug Nelson.

Expectations for the Search

Lowder presented two potential superintendent search processes: an open process, which includes community engagement, interviews, reference checks, and site visits, and a closed process, where finalist identities remain confidential until the final selection. The consultants recommended the open process but noted the risk of limited applicant interest in a competitive field. Board Directors expressed a preference for transparency and discussed conducting reference checks within a closed process.

Advertising Venue

Lowder presented options for advertising the position, including COSA and OSBA, as well as expanding the search to neighboring states like Washington and California. The consultants noted that any additional costs would be minimal. Board Directors questioned the need for advertising in neighboring states and were assured that a national search would still be conducted, with targeted outreach to specific states as desired.

Stakeholder Groups

The group discussed the importance of involving various stakeholder groups in the

search process, such as staff, students, and the broader community. Lowder recommended the Board provide suggestions for relevant groups, and that staff could assist with compiling a list. A suggestion was made to include the participants involved in the strategic planning process.

Establishing Selection Criteria

Lowder provided guidance on how to establish selection criteria for candidates. Board Directors agreed that each member would submit their thoughts on key criteria to staff by November 17. Lowder provided examples of criteria, emphasizing the list could include individual needs of the district.

Compensation

Lowder reviewed the revised compensation analysis, comparing large Oregon districts and local salary data. The Board discussed the pros and cons of specifying a salary range versus offering negotiable compensation based on experience. Directors agreed the salary should be clearly defined, with flexibility for additional benefits. It was emphasized that the compensation should fall between the current interim superintendent salary and the previous superintendent salary, considering the district's financial limits.

Establish Calendar

Lowder presented the proposed search calendar, with applications closing on January 6, interviews in early February, and a final decision by the end of February. Concerns were raised about the timeline, especially around the holidays, but some Board Directors felt an early process would benefit both candidates and the district.

Additional Discussion

Consultants reassured the Board that Medford's size and profile would attract experienced candidates, with assistant superintendents from larger districts likely to apply.

Board Directors emphasized the importance of having a new superintendent in place to handle key decisions related to bargaining, strategic planning, and budgeting. The Board expressed a desire for a smooth transition and felt that an open process would help reduce uncertainty for the district's staff.

Next Steps

- Board Directors will submit selection criteria to staff by November 17.
- The final stakeholder group list will be compiled with input from Board Directors and staff.
- Lowder will work with staff on specific dates for additional meetings and will finalize the planning calendar for the search process.

- The Board will review the final compensation range and make adjustments as necessary.

3. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 PM.

DRAFT