

KENT ISD
RESOLUTION FOR REGULAR MEETING ON MARCH 18, 2024
PRESENTED BY: DR. MIKE WASHBURN

The KISD Board of Education formally thanks Superintendent Ron Koehler for his three years of extraordinary performance as Superintendent. As most know, Ron was a long-time assistant superintendent at KISD and was fully retired. When the Superintendent Search, following Superintendent, Ron Caniff's retirement in December of 2020, the Board conducted a national search for his replacement. Unfortunately, Board members were not satisfied with the candidates selected for consideration. Rather than doing another search, they asked (retired) Ron Koehler if he would consider returning as Superintendent to give the Board more time to select a permanent Superintendent.

Ron agreed, believing the assignment would be for a single year. He met with the Board who set priorities and goals and was evaluated twice during the year. His great successes were noted by the Board in his evaluation, and Ron agreed to continue as Superintendent for at least another year. That morphed into 3 1/2 years, but during Ron's formal evaluation last March (2023), he announced to the Board he would likely retire following the 2023-2024 school year.

At the same time, as they had done during each of Ron's prior evaluations, the Board discussed succession planning. It was noted that many Superintendents are retiring and/or leaving the profession; the candidate pool with a national search might likely parallel the prior one.

As an option, Mr. Koehler, named Ron Gorman, former administrator and Interim Superintendent with the Grand Rapids Public Schools, his new Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Services. Board members discussed the potential opportunity for them to work with Dr. Gorman so they might have an "internal" candidate in the future.

On February 12, 2024, the Board and Ron Koehler met for his mid-year evaluation. As he had experienced a health setback during the months of October 18 through January 15, Ron Gorman filled in as Interim Superintendent during his absence, while being mentored by Superintendent Koehler, from his home. As Ron Koehler has returned to good health, he shared with the Board his desire to retire on June 30, 2024.

Board members then discussed whether they wanted to do another traditional search or follow their succession planning of naming Dr. Gorman, the next Superintendent. They unanimously felt very comfortable moving forward with Dr. Gorman, especially after hearing glowing remarks from Superintendent Koehler, about Gorman's work as both Assistant Superintendent and Interim Superintendent.

The Board instructed their consultant, Mike Washburn, to talk with Dr. Gorman to determine his interest and discuss a tentative transition with the two administrators. Dr. Washburn informed Board President Andrea Haidle that there was a green light with both the current and future Superintendents.

The goal was to make Superintendent Koehler's contract be comparable to the next Superintendent so that no further studies would be needed. Informally, all Board members were in support of Dr. Gorman's contract, and compensation was comparable.

At their evaluation meeting on February 12, 2024, Board members discussed their desire to make their decision on hiring the next Superintendent at their regular meeting on March 18, 2024. As discussion points have been successfully met, the following resolution is presented:

A motion by _____, seconded by _____, move that the Kent ISD Board of Education hire Dr. Ron Gorman as their next Superintendent. Dr. Gorman will begin his work as Superintendent on July 1, 2024. This appointment is contingent upon the successful negotiations of his employment contract.

Laura Featherston, Secretary
Kent ISD School Board